



# FLEMINGTON EDUCATION PLAN

## Community Engagement Report

NOVEMBER 2019

## ABOUT THE FLEMINGTON EDUCATION PLAN

The Victorian Government recognises the importance of rejuvenating and transforming education in Melbourne's inner north-west and announced the Flemington Education Plan in the 2018-19 State Budget.

The plan aims to ensure that all learners have access to excellent educational opportunities. Schools involved include Flemington Primary School, Debney Meadows Primary School, Mount Alexander College and Ascot Vale Special School.

The Department of Education and Training is working with these local schools, Moonee Valley City Council, other key partners to develop the plan and ensure it meets the diverse needs of the community and the educational requirements of all local students.

While the Flemington Education Plan is being developed, the four schools are exploring opportunities to share resources and leverage each other's strengths. This includes working together to develop a range of shared programs and approaches to improve teaching and learning.

## ABOUT THE ENGAGEMENT

We engaged with students, teachers, parents and community members from Flemington and the surrounding area from 2 May to 14 June 2019. We did this via an online survey, 13 workshops and two pop-up community events.

Through our engagement we asked the community to identify the top things that contribute to a good school, what barriers exist for them in achieving a quality education, and what additional support would help to better provide a quality education.

This report provides a summary of what we heard from the community during this engagement.

# ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOT



**411**  
online survey responses



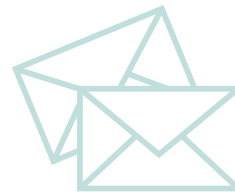
**30,497**  
people reached through social media



**13** workshops with:  
**267** teachers, staff, students and parents.



**3,326**  
individual comments received



**3800**  
postcards distributed to 25 locations



**37.6%** of survey respondents clicked through from Facebook



Survey respondents:  
**18.25%** were parents of preschool aged children  
**30.23%** were from culturally and linguistically diverse communities



**2 x community pop-up sessions** at an early learning centre and farmers market

# WHAT WE HEARD

*"A good school is one that helps students to reach their full potential, whatever that might be, and to engage with the world and their community. It's not just about 'excellence' or 'results'. It's about respect for others and appreciating the world, and stimulating an interest in it."*

*"Good teachers, engaged parents, inviting physical environment, good facilities, processes to solve problems with students/teachers/behaviour/bullying, safe environment, broader learning opportunities for science, the arts etc"*

*"A school that empowers the teachers to work with what creates a spark in the student eyes. A school that works with the community."*

*"A good school is about learning to live a full and interesting, but responsible and contributing, life!"*

## What makes a good school?

Online survey respondents believe that good schools are **safe, inclusive and well equipped**, where teachers and students are encouraged to interact via a curriculum that focuses on **individual student needs**.

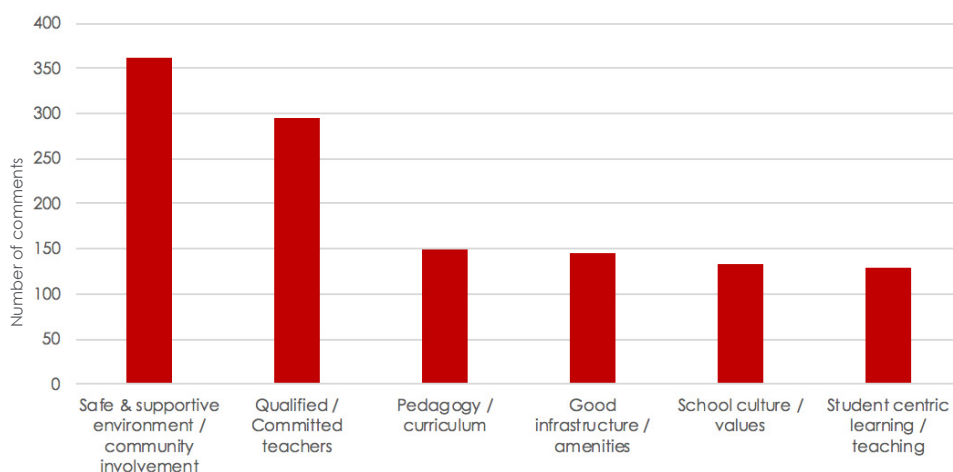
The most commonly expressed themes were:

- students need a place where they feel **confident, included and protected**
- there is an emphasis on **excellent teaching**
- schools also need **good quality facilities** for learning to take place
- a school's **values and culture** are a key factor
- student-focused **learning**.

During the workshops, students were asked 'what makes a good school?'. Students participating in the workshops across all the schools believe **good facilities, teaching and school culture** were all factors that make a good school.

The most common themes mentioned were:

- **facilities** that meet a good standard for everyone
- **student-centred learning** and teaching
- positive and inclusive **school culture** and values
- good **teachers**
- up-to-date **technology**



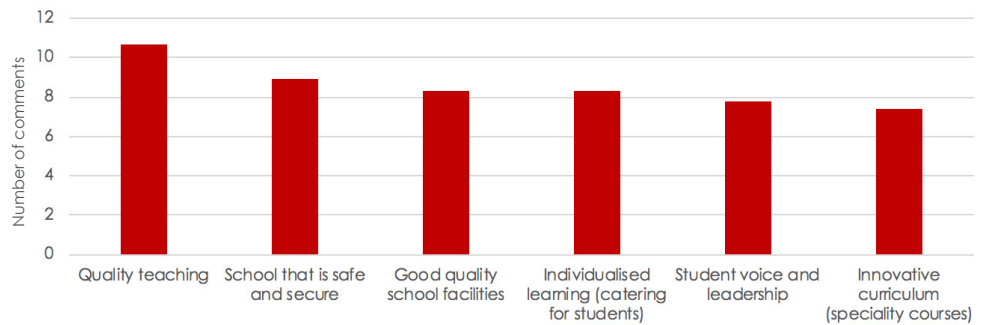
# WHAT WE HEARD

## What factors contribute to a quality education?

For this question participants were asked via digital and paper survey to rank a range of factors, with the results below representing the average ranking for each option across all the participants. To be as inclusive as possible, for this question visual aides were used to assist people who do not speak English as a first language. This enabled participants to answer the questions visually.

Consistent with the previous question, **teaching, good facilities, a safe and inclusive environment and student centric learning** were all seen as important to good learning outcomes.

That these results are reflective of the question about ‘what makes a good school’ reinforces that respondents feel that a ‘good school’ and ‘quality education’ are very closely related.



## WHAT WE HEARD

### Top factors when choosing a school

When choosing a school at any level, there are common features that parents and students are looking for. As we have heard consistently throughout this consultation, **teachers** are viewed as very important along with **accessibility from home, good facilities** and the **reputation** of the school. As students get older, they value **subject choice** and **specialty subjects** more highly.

The list below shows the results of participants ranking their top six factors when choosing a school from a list of options.



1. Teachers



2. Close to home



3. Facilities / physical environment of school



4. School reputation



5. Subject choice



6. Principal

### What do you value about your school?

Both students and parents contributed to this question, with quite different priorities. **Facilities** and **teachers** were the most valuable for all respondents, while students value **subject choices** and their **fellow students** highly.

The top survey responses were:

1. experienced, high quality **teachers** (both parents and students)
2. a sense of **community** surrounding the school (important for parents)
3. choice of **subjects** (important for students)
4. a positive and inclusive **school culture** (important for parents).

*"Great teachers who make an effort to connect with parents, fantastic extra curricular program (particularly sport and music), strong focus on culture and personal resilience."*

*"We truly believe in and act on student voice. It's such an intimate and diverse community, and we are truly challenging what education could be."*

*"The hard work of staff and sense of community."*



# WHAT WE HEARD

*“Resourcing of teachers and speciality teachers, bureaucracy about processes at school and generic responses rather than a specific response”*

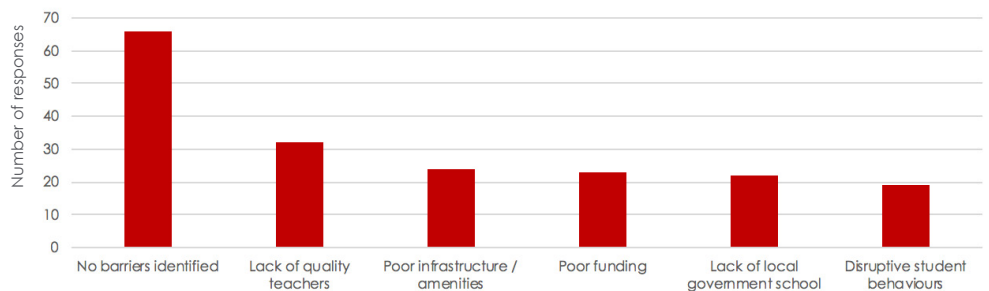
## Barriers to a quality education

Of the relatively low numbers of respondents answering this question, the vast majority did not believe there were any particular impediments to their child’s education. However, those who did identify areas indicated a **lack of quality teachers** and **inadequate facilities** as issues.

In the workshops, the following themes emerged:

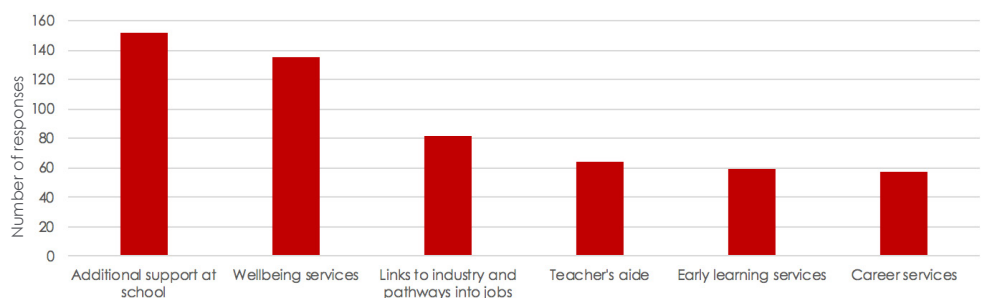
- Concern about a perceived lack of engagement between the schools in question and local community and industry
- **Funding** for a range of facilities, property and staffing
- More **assistance** for children with additional needs
- Access within the school for **allied health** services

### What are the barriers to quality education for your child?



Some respondents indicated that additional help with learning/teaching in the classroom and wellbeing services would help support their child obtain a quality education. A subsequent question asked what wellbeing services would be helpful. **Mental health** support and **counselling** were the top answers.

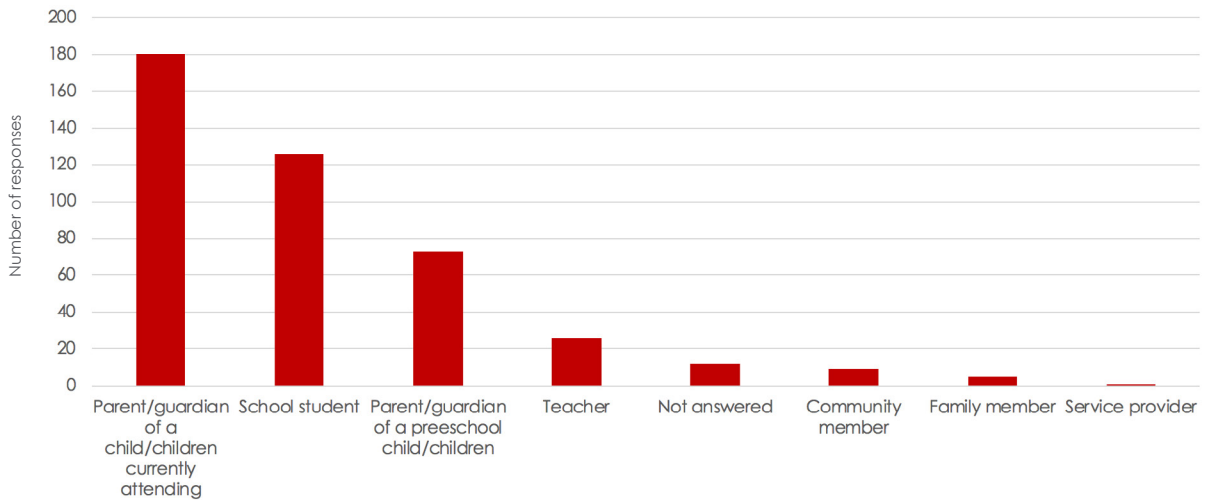
### What would support you/your child and family to obtain a quality education?



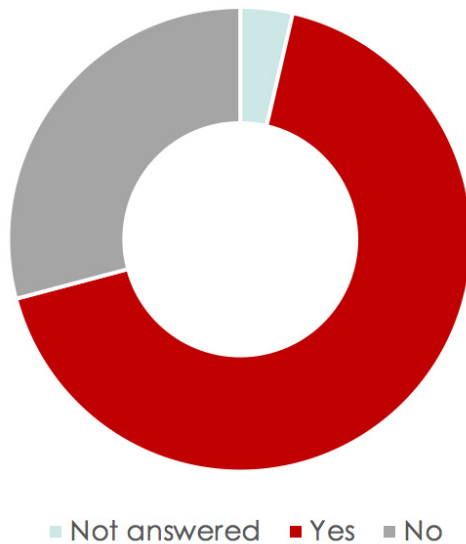
## ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

The online survey and workshop participants in the consultation reflected the diversity of the Flemington area. There was a mix of parents, teachers and students of different ages and from different schools and parts of the area. Around two thirds of survey participants indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home.

### I am a...

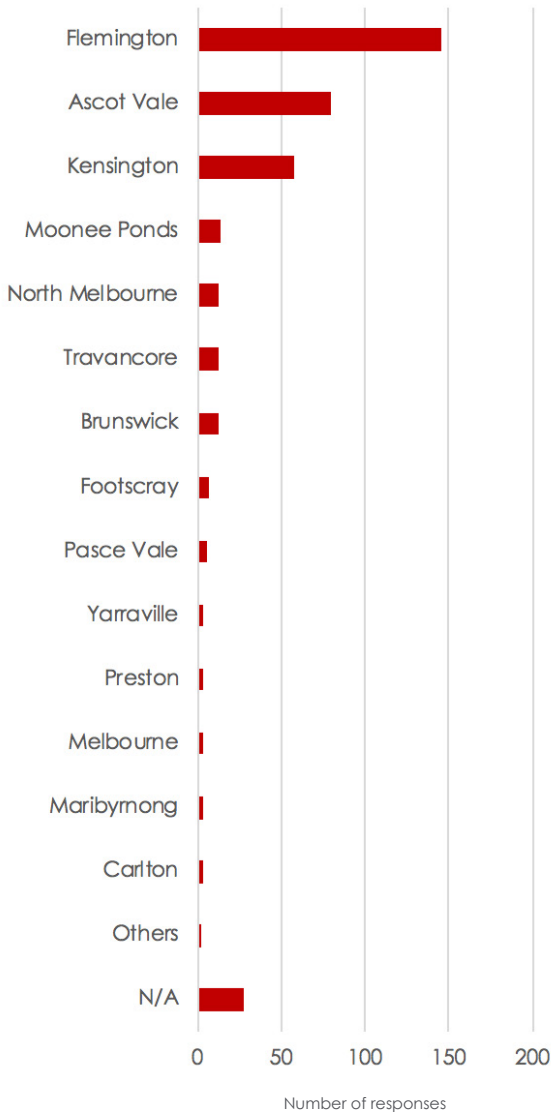


### Do you speak a language other than English at home?

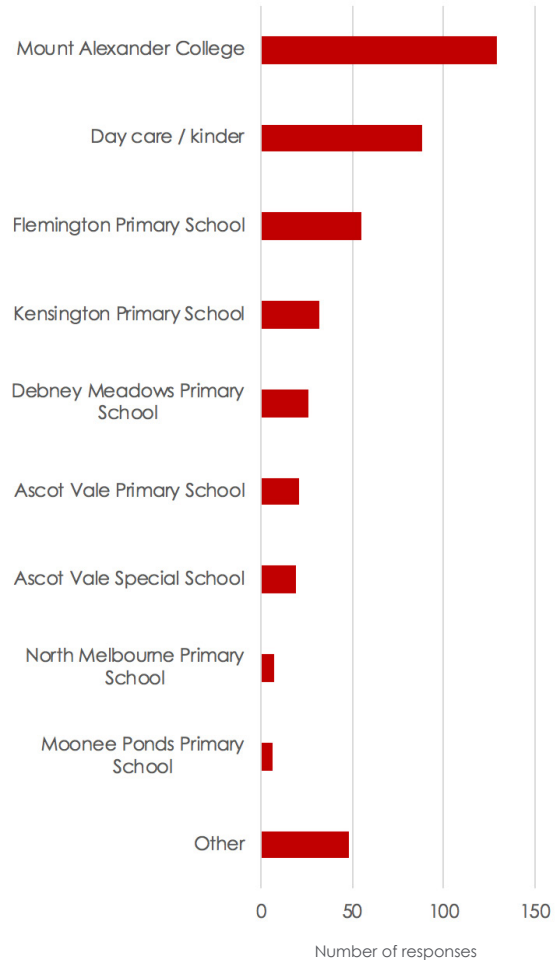




### Where do you live?



### What school do you attend?



## Workshop participants

At each school, workshops were held with staff (the majority being teaching staff), students (often the leadership) and parents. During the pre-engagement phase, school principals were asked the most appropriate ways to engage their school community and each workshop was tailored to the occasion and participant numbers.



## Next steps

Your feedback will help inform the development of the Flemington Education Plan. While this work progresses, the four schools will continue to work together in and beyond 2020, to help ensure the Flemington Education Plan is developed to meet the future education needs of the local community.

To stay up to date with the progress of the Flemington Education Plan, please visit [schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au](http://schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au)

You can contact us:

**Victorian School Building Authority**



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