

Romsey Primary School
No: 366

2007 Annual Report to the
School Community



TOGETHER WE LEARN AND GROW

School Overview

Romsey Primary School is located within the township, which is a growing satellite town 60km north-west of Melbourne. The school has outstanding building and equipment facilities on its 11.5ha site.

The aim of all programs is to provide an excellent grounding in literacy and numeracy, extending and catering for students' special needs and abilities, allowing all to fulfil their potential while developing powerful personal and social skills of independence, leadership, resilience and responsibility.

Romsey Primary School provides a broad curriculum via the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). VELS has three core and interrelated strands; Physical, Personal and Social learning, Discipline-based Learning and Interdisciplinary Learning. Each strand has a number of domains which describe the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours students need to prepare for further education, work and life. Specialist teaching programs are offered in Performing Arts (music, dance & drama), Visual Art and LOTE (Indonesian). There is a Reading Recovery program. The school has a modern information and communication technology capability for students, meeting or exceeding government targets at all year levels. This technology is targeted for continual upgrades and expansion to keep abreast of current developments and has become a powerful tool to enhance classroom programs and student learning. Inter-school sport for senior students is facilitated through the Cobaw District School Sports Association.

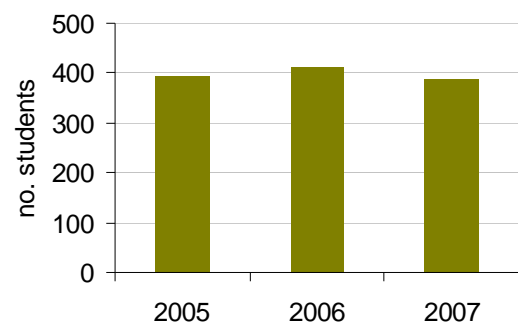
The organization of classes is based on a multi-age structure, which encourages and enhances individual achievement and social development. Class configuration is largely Preps, 1/2, 3/4, and 5/6. Some variance from this can occur to maintain pupil numbers in each class within student number guidelines.

Parent participation in school activities and programs is highly valued and encouraged. Opportunities for parents to make an active contribution to school life occur through Parents' Club, fundraising, special days and celebrations, curriculum and classroom support, working bees, environmental projects and the parent gardening group. Parents and the school community are kept informed through the school newsletter "InForm," a community newspaper facilitated through the school, "The Romsey Rag," information sessions and family nights.

Romsey Primary School is committed to continuous improvement in all aspects of school activity. Students, staff and parent groups are encouraged to identify opportunities for improvement and undertake a rigorous process to embed improvement in the system memory. A significant commitment is made to staff professional development each year in order to achieve maximized educational opportunities and achievements for all students.

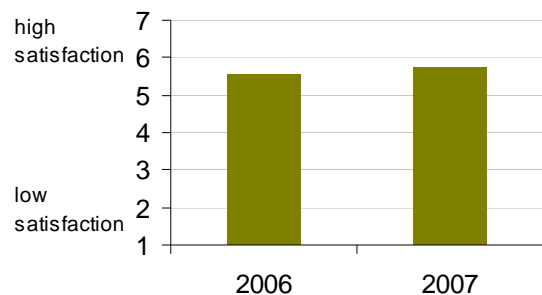
Student enrolments - In 2007 the school had a student population of 387; further steady increases in school size are predicted over the next five to ten years.

Total students enrolled in school



Parent Satisfaction – General satisfaction with the school as measured in the annual parent opinion survey was 5.71 on a 1 to 7 scale. In 2006 it was 5.56, so there has been a slight increase. The variables ranked highest in the 2007 survey were: *stimulating learning environment, behaviour management, reporting, student safety and connectedness to peers.*

Parents' satisfaction with this school
(average score on scale of 1 to 7, where 7 is best possible score)



Commonwealth Requirements

- **Teacher Satisfaction** – The average score for teacher satisfaction (morale) was 69.5 on a scale from 0 to 100 where 100 is the best possible score.
- **Teacher Absence** - The average number of days absent per teacher was 6.0 days.
- **Teacher Retention** - Of the 25 teaching staff at Romsey Primary School at June 2006 (including those on leave without pay), 24 or 96% were still at the school at June 2007. This figure across all Government schools was 86%.
- **Teacher participation in professional learning-** All teaching staff have participated in professional learning throughout the year including The Quality Learning Seminar, THRASS, PoLT, Peer Observation and Feedback and Giving and Receiving Constructive Feedback. Selected staff attended leadership development programs including the AGQTP Leadership Development program for 4 teachers and Preparing for Leadership for 1 teacher. All staff regularly participate in professional learning at staff and unit team meetings.
- **Teacher Qualifications** – All teachers in Victorian Government schools are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. The requirements for registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching can be found at; http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/content.asp?Document_ID=241

Principal's Report

Throughout 2007 Romsey Primary School's key focus has been on meeting targets documented in the school's Annual Implementation Plan.

Key strategies were:

- Implement school-wide Principles of Teaching & Learning Action Plan.
- Implement a greater focus on spelling strategies within the Literacy program to improve student writing.
- Implement a greater focus on enhancing strategies that result in positive parent/teacher relationships.

Staff professional learning has focused on deepening their understanding of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards. Staff meetings were devoted to improving learning and teaching in the core curriculum with follow up at Unit meetings. More accurate tracking of student performance with the setting up of a school wide data base for Reading, Writing and Number has improved teacher's ability to track student performance and group students according to their needs with more explicit teaching groups. Romsey Primary School is a control school for using On-Demand testing to track reading progression points for a selected number of students from year 3-6. Teachers have found this an invaluable tool and it is now fully implemented for all students from Year 3-6 in Reading and Number. With moderation activities teachers have further refined their judgements on student achievements ensuring more consistency across the school.

THRASS has continued to expand at Romsey Primary School with all teachers from Prep to Year 4 completing the professional development program. We have been using strategies associated with the program to supplement spelling teaching across the school and data indicates improvements in writing and an anticipated improvement in spelling in 2008.

The upgrade to the relocatable classroom atrium was completed in April with the re-roofing and carpeting of the atrium. This project was funded by a Commonwealth Government Investing in Schools grant with \$61,821 being spent on the upgrade. This provides an additional warm and welcoming learning environment adjoining these classrooms. A further grant of \$85,411 for a Communication & Information Technology upgrade enhancing the capability of the school server, network and the provision of interactive whiteboards was also received from the Investing in Schools fund. The server upgrade was completed and

nine Interactive Whiteboards were delivered to the school at the end of 2007 for installation in 2008. This

provides Romsey Primary School with first class equipment to expand the e-learning capabilities and practices of both students and teachers.

A vibrant and interesting program for students includes many special programs and celebrations. Some of these highlights in 2007 included the Senior School Tournament of the Minds, Solar Boat Challenge, Family Maths Night, Unit Concerts, Art Show, cultural performances, special dress up days organised by Student Council, and sports events. The school production 'The Knight Life' for all Year 5 and 6 students was a highlight. It was held over four evenings and one of the very positive aspects of the script being the large number of characters and speaking parts and very accessible music and songs. The support of staff and parent helpers was again magnificent with the sets and costumes setting a very high standard.

Our great school grounds and environmental programs were recognised in the School Gardens Awards with Romsey Primary receiving an "Achievement Award" in 2007. The vegetable garden area has been expanded with the planting of fruit trees and vines. All Year Prep to 2 students had garden beds fully planted with a range of vegetables, herbs and flowers. Science, Maths and Literacy lessons were integrated around this project.

As ever the school continues to enjoy the support of our parents and the wider community. Parent support of school programs, fundraising, support for information nights and learning opportunities such as Parent Helpers and THRASS, gardening group and working bees, canteen and classroom programs is a strong component and demonstration of the partnership that exists between home and school.

Joan Gibbs
Assistant Principal

School Council President's Report

School Council in 2007 was again privileged to oversee both continuance of pre-existing School policy and implementation of some exciting new initiatives.

Romsey Primary School's grounds were again the focus of ongoing development with the establishment of a new garden around the newly erected flagpole. The fruit tree orchard was established, and preliminary plans for a "dinosaur garden" were organised. Construction of the chook shed was also commenced. Romsey Primary School once again featured in the Regional Garden Awards, receiving an Achievement Award.

The Romsey Education Plan was revisited with a School Council working party leading a focus community discussion in early March. It concluded that consideration of a secondary facility at Romsey is not a short term option, but will be revisited in the future.

Nutrition was an ongoing issue at the School with healthy eating initiatives implemented into the canteen towards the end of 2007 and encouraged at classroom level.

Information Technology received a big boost with funding for electronic whiteboards ("Smartboards") received via the Investing in Schools program.

The School ventured into new fundraising arenas with involvement early in 2007 in the Romsey Roundup Rodeo carnival, and the planning of a community country dance to be held in early 2008.

Student Council continued their active school representation with visits to the local kindergarten as part of the transition to school program, fundraising (especially for the School's sponsor child, Frederick) and participation at community events such as ANZAC Day.

School Council was also privy to focus discussions regarding online testing, reading recovery, the new reporting system and inquiry learning.

The year finished with the resignation of Mr. Barney Healy as Principal. Mr. Healy has taken up a position as Principal at Maryborough Education Centre and we both wish him well and thank him for his hard work at Romsey Primary School.

Dr. Jenny Stillman
President
Romsey Primary School Council

Student Progress & Achievements

Student Learning

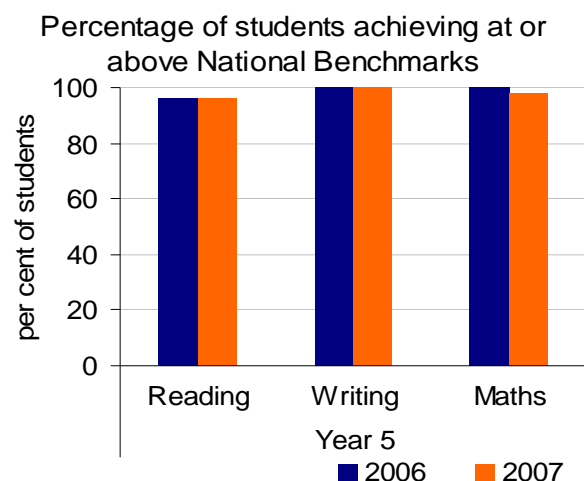
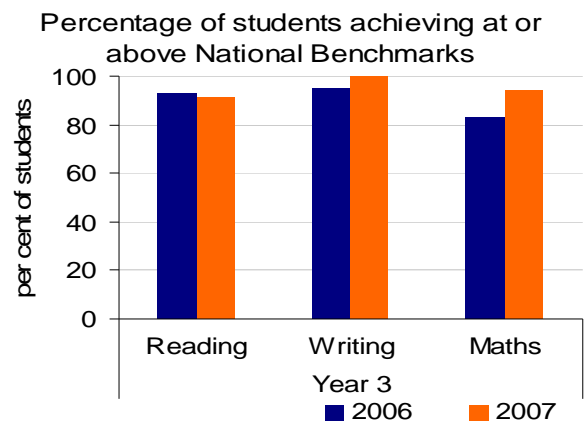
Throughout 2007 Romsey Primary School's key focus has been on meeting targets documented in the school's Annual Implementation Plan, including a greater focus on spelling strategies within the Literacy program to improve student writing. The Essential Learning Standards has been used as the primary curriculum planning auditing tool in all curriculum areas.

School data revealed:

- Prep, Y1 and Y6 achievement is high, exceeding the *State* and *Student Family Occupation* group.
- There has been a large increase in percentage of students achieving A and B in all areas.
- Year 3 achievement is below *State* and *Student Family Occupation* group.
- Overall there has been a significant improvement in achievement at Year 3 in both Reading and Mathematics since 2006 but it still lags behind 2005.
- AIM data reflects a lower level of achievement compared to VELs data, but the 'value adding' from Year 3 to Year 5 has improved from 2003 when it was 0.6 to a more consistent level of 0.9 in 2006 and 1.0 in 2007.
- At Year 5, since 2002 there has been a gradual improvement in performance and the school equalled both *State* and *Student Family Occupation* group. 100 percent of students in Year 5 were at or above National Benchmarks in Writing and Maths and 95 percent in Reading.
- Teacher Assessment against the VELs Year Levels Prep-6 combined shows more than 90% of students at or above expected level (A-C combined) in all domains and general improved achievement since 2006.
- At Year 5, AIM data shows both Reading and Mathematics have improved, particularly Mathematics since 2006.
- At Year 3, using Teacher Judgement on VELs, larger improvements have been made in Mathematics than Reading with more students now achieving 'above expected' level. In Number 19% achieved this result (2% in 2006). In Reading 14% achieved 'above expected' level (5% in 2006).
- Assessment of Reading Prep to Year 2 results were significantly above *State* and the *Student Family Occupation* group with high levels of achievement. There were 93.3% of students at Prep, 95% at Year 1 and 100% at Year 2 achieving the benchmark. Only three students will

require Reading Recovery in 2008. In 2007 it was 4 and 2006 it was 12.

National benchmarks results at Year 3 show improved performance in Writing. Writing was a key charter priority which continued into the Annual Implementation Plans and it is pleasing to see 100% of students at both Year 3 and 5 at or above the National Benchmarks. As indicated in the AIM results Year 5's achievements are higher than Year 3. During 2008 it will be important to examine in detail the reason for lower achievement at Year 3 and to put strategies in place to improve the performance of students at Year 3.



Student Transitions and Pathways

Romsey Primary School maintains a number of comprehensive transition programs with local kindergartens and secondary colleges.

Key elements of the Kindergarten to school transition program are:-

- School Readiness presentations at the local Kindergarten by the Prep teachers.
- Kindergarten students are invited to school events like Prep Concerts.
- Enrolment information packages are annually reviewed and distributed to district kindergartens
- Transition Information sessions during the second semester for the incoming preps.
- Prep / Kindergarten teacher meetings are held regularly throughout the year for the transfer of information and to best meet the learning needs of individuals
- Regular contact with the newly registered kindergarten centre in Romsey.
- Student orientation visits to all Prep classes and finally to their 2008 class.

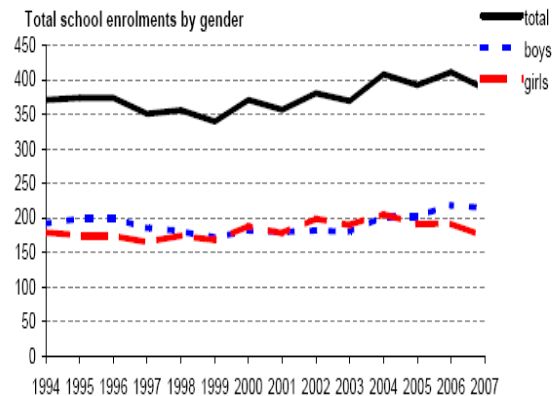
Transition from Year 6 to 7 is a process that begins in Year 5 when students have their first opportunity to visit the secondary colleges. Romsey Primary School has a consistent process to facilitate a smooth transition for all students.

This includes:-

- Students visits to both Kyneton and Gisborne Secondary Colleges.
- Participation of secondary college teachers in year 6 programs.
- Past students making presentations about their experiences as Year 7 students.
- Year 6 teachers meeting with secondary college transition coordinators to share student achievement data and identify social issues that may face graduating students.
- All Year 6 students participating in the state-wide transition day in term 4.
- Special needs students provided with an individual transition program with secondary integration teachers participating in the students PSG in the second semester.

An additional transition program within the school was introduced in 2007 with all students making visits to their next year level for activities in literacy and numeracy. This culminated with a session with their new classroom teacher for 2008.

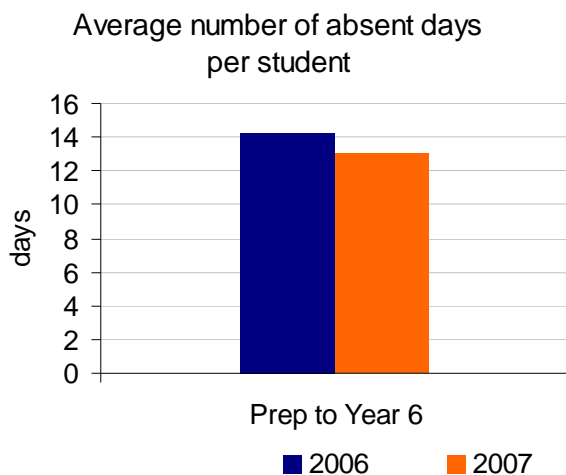
In 2007 there were 387 students enrolled at Romsey Primary School. There was a decline in prep enrolment with only 45 new preps compared to 62 preps in 2006. This was due to the small enrolment of four year olds at the local kindergarten. It is anticipated that there will be a large enrolment in 2008.



Student Engagement and Wellbeing

The school student engagement and wellbeing goal is : *To maximise opportunities for Romsey Primary School to be a learning community that is welcoming of parents, fosters student engagement with learning and promotes staff members and student wellbeing.*

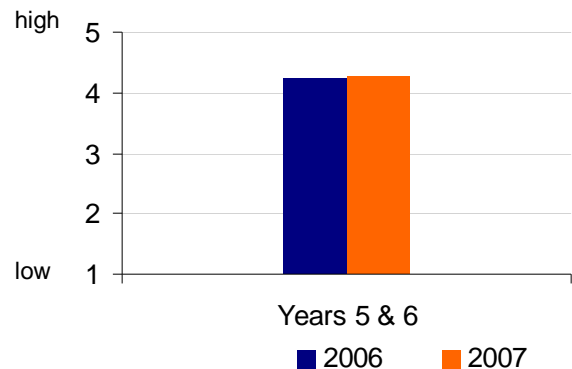
In 2007 the average student absent days per student (Full Time Equivalent) reduced from 14.2 in 2006 to 13.1 in 2007. This is 0.1 below the state mean. There was a higher level of absence for Year Prep at 15.0 and Year 6 at 14.4. All other year levels were well below the state mean. During the year an improvement team studied absences during the year finding a number of families continue to take one to two weeks for interstate holidays and a small number of families have taken extended holidays overseas. This was the case in Year 6. There has been a greater focus on following up on extended period of absences with phone contact and more information in the weekly newsletter about the importance of attendance. In 2008 we plan to document a policy.



Students' school connectedness

In the Attitudes to School Survey student opinion has increased marginally. The school mean plotted against all schools with Year 5/6 students was excellent for all components of Student Relationships, Teacher Effectiveness and Empathy and Student Morale and Student Distress. The school needs improvement in Learning Confidence and Student Motivation. Students showed they found their learning environment stimulating and they also rated student morale high.

Student connectedness to school
(average score on scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is best possible score)



Significant strategies undertaken during 2007 to impact on Student Engagement and Wellbeing were:-

- The Quality Beginning program continued to start the school year with consistency across the school focusing on the school values, positive behaviour management and the 'Bounceback' program. Each class develops mission and vision statements and documents "What makes a good teacher?" and "What makes a good student?" This was followed up with the Continuing Quality at the beginning of term 3.
- Peer mediation training for senior students in conflict resolution and the use of peer mediators in the playground for settling minor disputes
- An additional teacher on yard duty each day.
- Student leadership programs
 - School Captains
 - An active Student Council
- Student Wellbeing team with a proactive approach implementing support for students at risk in the playground.
- Inquiry learning approach with more opportunities for students to select their preferred way of demonstrating their learning.
- Enhanced curriculum particularly in performing Arts, Sport and Physical Education, Visual Arts and LOTE.
- Regular public recognition of student achievement in living and exemplifying our school values of learning, caring, Inclusion, relationships and happiness.

Future Directions

The key improvement strategies for the following year outlined in the school's Annual Implementation plan are:-

- To ensure that all students are extended and supported to improve their achievement in all Key Learning Areas, with particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy.
- To provide students with a comprehensive curriculum that is delivered in ways that acknowledge individual student differences and promote appropriate student involvement in setting and reviewing learning goals
- To maximise opportunities for Romsey Primary School to be a learning community that is welcoming of parents, fosters student engagement with learning and promotes staff members and student wellbeing
- To develop in students the skills knowledge and attitudes necessary for transition through the various stages of schooling.
- Prepare self-evaluation of school performance and identify recommendations for improvement.

This will be achieved through:-

Implementing school-wide Principles of Teaching & Learning Action Plan.

- Maintain PoLT Implementation Team and establish regular meeting agenda with school based PoLT trained coordinators.
- Establish Professional Learning Teams for teacher and student component mapping.
- Implement peer observation of classroom teaching with focus derived from PoLT component mapping.
- Train additional staff members in leading peer observation and feedback.

Implementing a greater focus on spelling strategies within the Literacy program to improve student writing.

- Undertake THRASS professional development for all teachers not yet trained.
- Implementation of Literacy Plan
- Provide greater focus on Writing and Spelling in Literacy Intervention Program.
- Develop Individual Learning Improvement Plans for students at risk in literacy.
- Offer Parent Helpers program for Literacy and Numeracy.
- Maintain dedicated Literacy and Numeracy blocks in class daily time table for all year levels.

Implement Essential Learning Standards as the primary curriculum planning auditing tool in all curriculum areas.

- Implement consistent school-wide curriculum auditing tools and processes for all teaching units.
- Review integrated studies units in light of VELS documentation.
- Provide in-house PD to enhance the adoption of Thinking Curriculum and Inquiry Learning in all teaching Units.

Enhancing e-learning capability and practice among students and teachers.

- Enable school to become Ultranet ready.
- All staff completing the e-potential survey.
- The Ultranet coach working with a selected group of teachers.
- Integrating Interactive Whiteboards as a tool for learning and teaching.

Implementing a greater focus on enhancing strategies that result in positive parent/ teacher relationships.

- Regular newsletters to parents from Units and classrooms.
- Implementing an improved parent/student/teacher process.
- Improved opportunities for parent/teacher communication.

Implementing school-wide focus on student attendance in all year levels.

- Document an attendance policy.
- Follow up on absences.

Increasing parent and student satisfaction with transition across the school by implementing processes that improve communication between all parties involved.

- Implementing the new 'In School Transition' program during term 4.

Undertaking the 'Year in Self-Evaluation, Review and Planning.'

- Prepare self-evaluation of school performance and identify recommendations for improvement.
- Undertake school review.
- Develop school strategic plan in consultation with Southern Ranges cluster schools and school community.

Financial Performance

School Council oversees the development of a school budget each year following the thorough evaluation of school program plans. The Annual Implementation Plan priorities form the basis of the school budget.

During 2007 significant investment in school resources included:

- Literacy and Numeracy- both resources such as class materials and equipment as well as a continuing investment in library resources was maintained.
- Professional Development- all staff members are given the opportunity to participate in significant professional development. A comprehensive professional development plan is developed annually with direct input from teaching and non-teaching staff in developing strategies in meeting their professional goals through the Performance and Development Culture Review process.
- Classroom and specialist program resources were again expanded to meet heightened learning expectations in these areas. The school continues to be very well resourced in Physical Education and Sport equipment, Performing Arts, Visual Arts and Language other than English resources.
- Information and Communication Technology- annual upgrades of ICT equipment have enabled the school to exceed targets in the provision of these resources for our students.
- Buildings and Grounds maintenance is a priority with a program of proactive strategies to help keep the school in its pre-eminent position.

During 2007 the school received additional grants through "Investing in Schools", and "Community Water". Fundraising was successfully managed through the school's active Parent Club. The Romsey Roundup Rodeo Carnival was a financial success as well as a fantastic community event. A number of fundraising events are held throughout the year and support major purchasing programs to enhance the learning environment of our students.

Throughout the year the School Council Finance Committee has met monthly to approve the payment of accounts, review expenditure against budgets and oversee the financial position of the school. In addition to CASES 21 reports, additional manually entered reports are required throughout the year to ensure that the school is on track financially and that a clear picture is maintained of our financial position and that expenditure against programs is both timely and appropriate.

Cash reserves at the end of the year continue to reflect historically high end of year balance, but despite this the school still had funds below the 25th percentile of schools on a dollars held per student basis. Largely current funds continue to be spent on current students.

| Financial Performance for the year ending 31st December, 2007 | |
|---|----------------|
| Revenue | 2007 Actual |
| DE&T Grants | 258,357 |
| Commonwealth Government Grants | 89,133 |
| State Government Grants | 11,466 |
| Other | 624 |
| Locally Raised Funds | 80,141 |
| Total Operating Revenue | 439,721 |
| Expenditure | |
| Salaries and Allowances | 117,114 |
| Bank Charges | 1,252 |
| Consumables | 22,691 |
| Books and Publications | 19,431 |
| Communication Costs | 9447 |
| Furniture and Equipment | 2581 |
| Utilities | 10971 |
| Property Services | 126,146 |
| Travel and Subsistence | - |
| Motor Vehicle Expenses | - |
| Administration | 12,775 |
| Health and Personal Development | - |
| Professional Development | 7098 |
| Trading and Fundraising | 47,087 |
| Support/Service | - |
| Miscellaneous | - |
| Total Operating Expenditure | 376,593 |
| Net Operating Surplus/- Deficit | 63,128 |
| Capital Expenditure (Cases 21 Finance Only) | |
| Please note that the above amounts do not include any credit revenue or expenditure allocated or spent by the school through its Student Resource Package | |

| Financial Position as at 31st December, 2007 | |
|---|-------------------|
| Funds Available | 2007 Actual |
| High Yield Investment Account | 36,015.68 |
| Official Account | 75,198.33 |
| Total Funds Available | 111,213.01 |
| Financial Commitments | |
| Accounts Payable Control | |
| Camps/Excursions | 1680.91 |
| Building/Grounds including SMS | |
| Special Programs inc Student Services | |
| Region /Clusters Funds | |
| Professional Development | |
| Other -SmartBoards | 31,404.40 |
| School Operating Reserve | |
| Total Financial Commitments | 33,085.31 |

School Contact Information

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|---------------------------|--|
| Address: | Station Street, Romsey 3434 |
| Principal: | Mr Barney Healy |
| School Council President: | Dr Jennifer Stillman |
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| Web site: | www.romseyps.vic.edu.au |

This report contains summary data extracted from the School Level Report. If you would like to access the School Level Report, please contact Mrs. Joan Gibbs, Principal on 03-54295099.