



MISSION
AUSTRALIA | together
we stand

Schools as Banks for Social Capital

*Celebrating our impact
& securing our future*



JULY 2014



Key Stakeholders
Project Partners



Key Stakeholders: Beverley Hansen (Principal, Dandenong West Primary School), Sue Brown (Cluster Co-ordinator), Marg Batt (Principal, St. Anthony's Catholic Primary School Noble Park) & Lisa Occhietti (Project Worker for the Schools as Banks for Social Capital project)

Schools as Banks for Social Capital

Brought to life and made possible due to the funding of Mission Australia

MISSION AUSTRALIA | together we stand



Proudly Partnering with



Building brighter futures

Principals Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to discover a little more about Noble Park and Dandenong West. Two communities we are incredibly proud to be a part of. Like many others, these communities are not without their challenges.

However, with adequate support and investment, students, families and schools can thrive.

In communities like ours, schools take on multiple roles. In many cases we're not serving the community, we're building it. Often it is the school who facilitates the development of relationships between children and families, supports engagement with service providers, and becomes the central place for sharing and dissemination of information. Obviously, our specific interest is in developing a culture of learning and providing every child with the opportunity to succeed – however in communities like ours, achieving this is a complex task.

Perhaps one of the most important lessons is that we cannot do this work alone. A grant from Mission Australia represented a turning point for us. While we all accept that it really does take a village to raise a child – finding meaningful ways for the community to engage in learning takes time, talent and resources. The 'Schools as Banks for Social Capital' work has enabled us to take a far more focused and strategic approach to building relationships and partnerships that change lives.

Further to partnering with many community organisations, the partnership formed between our two schools continues to be incredibly important. Our schools exist in different suburbs and in different sectors however we are united by a commitment to setting a high aspiration for every child and a relentless determination to see every child and family be the best they can be.

To continue this important work, we need your help.

Please join us.



Marg Batt
Principal
St Anthony's Noble Park



Beverley Hansen
Principal
Dandenong West Primary School

“St Anthony’s Noble Park and Dandenong West Primary Schools are fantastic examples of schools who understand the important impact that families have on children’s learning.”

Understanding our community

It takes a village to raise a child.

This is certainly true in our community and we see the role of our schools as a facilitator and enabler of this collaborative endeavor.

Our community faces many challenges, however opportunities for building social capital are significant. Our community values the role of the school and the importance of learning. To deliver on the promise of an excellent education for every child, we need to be better at harnessing the strengths of our community, and coming together to meet their needs.

Our schools operate as community hubs, bringing together diverse voices, cultures, perspectives and aspirations. For many, our schools are the first, and often only gateway for families into the local community. We take this responsibility very seriously, and with the support of Mission Australia are doing all we can to connect children and families with each other and with the resources they need to succeed.



The City of Greater Dandenong is the most culturally diverse locality in Victoria, with residents from 156 different birthplaces, over half (56%) of its population born overseas, and 51% from nations where English is not the main spoken language [metro. Melbourne: 24%]. Birthplaces include Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, India, China, Italy, Greece, Bosnia, and Afghanistan.

The municipality of Greater Dandenong has a Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage Index of 894, which ranks it at number 1 in level of disadvantage among the 79 Municipalities of Victoria - placing it among the most disadvantaged

2% of Municipalities in the state. The postcode of 3174, where St Anthony's Noble Park is situated has an Index of 896, which ranks it at number 28 in level of disadvantage among the 644 substantially populated postcode areas of Victoria - placing it among the most disadvantaged 5% of postcode areas in the state.

Dandenong West Primary School is located within an area that is typified by a low social demographic with approximately 74 % of families entitled to receive Educational Maintenance Allowance and a high SFO (Student Family Occupation) Index of 0.76.

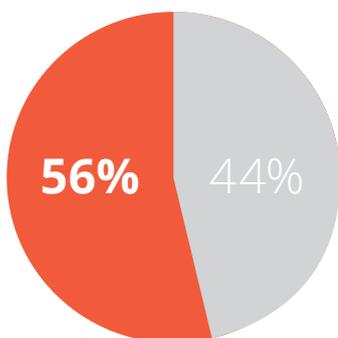
“

The various programs running at these schools very much celebrate the diversity of cultures and are very focused on targeting the community's needs

”

Community Profile

City of Greater Dandenong



Over half (56%) of the City of Greater Dandenong's population was born overseas, and 51% from nations where English is not the main spoken language.

■ Born Internationally
■ Born in Australia





St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

Background Information



438

44



Total Number
of Students

Culturally and
Linguistically
Diverse Backgrounds

27

Students require significant support due to learning difficulties and chronic illness.

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School is a culturally and linguistically diverse community made up of 44 different backgrounds. St Anthony's Catholic Primary School has been identified as a low SES (Socio Economic Status) school - one of only three Catholic Primary Schools in the City of Greater Dandenong as identified by the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The school also participates in the Smarter Schools National Partnership initiative to support low SES schools across Australia.

St Anthony's has an enrolment of 438 students, including 27 students who require significant support due to learning difficulties or chronic illness. Because of the large number of newly arrived students, including many from refugee backgrounds where English is their second language, we also support students in English literacy through language and reading support.



I am extremely proud to be part of a school and community that is always looking for ways of doing something better!

- Mother of a St. Anthony's student





Dandenong West Primary School

Background Information



“I am a stay at home Dad with my three year old and a member of the school’s Dad Group. Before we formed the group I rarely had the opportunity to converse with other parents with whom I could relate. Within the group we have been able to share our various skills and experiences including fixing computers as well as parenting experiences.”

- Father of a Dandenong West student

Dandenong West Primary School has approximately 300 students enrolled – a number which frequently fluctuates. The school population is highly transient with many families moving into and out of the area and school over the course of a school year. Dandenong West Primary School students come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, these include; Eastern European (a growing proportion of our student population speak Dari, Farsi, Pasto, Arabic) Western European, Indian, Sri Lankan and various African nations. Approximately 88% of students have a language background other than English.

The composition of the school resembles the current immigration and refugee trends of Australia including families who are in community detention. Many of the students have been in Australia for less than five years. Almost 30% of our students have entered Australia with Refugee status. Approximately 2.5% of our families are indigenous.

93%
of students have a
language background
other than English

30%
Have entered Australia
with Refugee status



Far Right:
A Dandenong West student
completing a numeracy equation

Bottom Left:
A Dandenong West student
enjoying a healthy breakfast
at the schools Breakfast Club

Top Left:
A St. Anthony's student enjoying
hitting the books



Our Current Activities

What we're doing now...

"I really enjoy coming to school join the activity. Here my son can play with other kids. I also get some benefits like improvement of English, and making more friends. - Father of a St. Anthony's student"



Dandenong West Primary School has designed specific programs to support the needs of refugee students and their families and has introduced a phased 'English as an Additional Language'(EAL) program to support the students and continue the work of the EAL Outpost program provided by Noble Park English Language School. The school has employed an Instructional Coach through the funding from the National Partnerships Program and Low SES schools initiative, with the specific role of building teacher capacity.

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School currently facilitates a number of support programs for both students and parents including a Community Conversation, Learning at

Home (Maths) sessions, 'Lunchbox/what food to bring to school' sessions, as well as appointing a Home School Liaison Officer.

Both St Anthony's and Dandenong West regularly participate on important local planning forums and committees to support a coordinated and integrated approach to service delivery for local families.

St Anthony's Noble Park and Dandenong West Primary Schools are both active participants in a range of local planning and advocacy groups for families and children.



Our community hosts many services, however many still exist in isolation or are accessed infrequently by many children and families in need.

With the support of Mission Australia, we have made significant progress in bringing our communities together in the interest of children and families. This partnership has enabled us to build networks, resources and opportunities that have far exceeded our expectations and those of our community.

Building the capacity of people, networks and communities takes time, skills and resources

Where to from here? *Moving Forward...*

While community partnerships exist to serve the local community, in many cases our schools are *building the capacity of our local community.*

However there is much work still to do.

Building the capacity of people, networks and communities takes time, skills and resources.

Our work has been broadly recognised and celebrated by groups such as the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership. We have a track record of successfully building partnerships to support families and improve learning outcomes.

Please Support Us

Final Words

Continued investment in community building is required. We are proud of what has been achieved so far, however we have more work to do.

We believe the children and families of Noble Park and Dandenong West deserve every opportunity to be the best they can be.

Please consider supporting our efforts to achieve this.

We are looking for philanthropic, corporate and non-profit partners to join us today. We offer a range of partnership models that are financial, non financial, or a combination of both. What we look for is alignment of vision and values and a deep commitment to lifting aspiration and outcomes for children in Noble Park and Dandenong West.

For more information, please contact us at anytime:



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**Schools as Banks for Social Capital.
Thanks for reading.**

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