



2020 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

East Preston Islamic College



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Cover Photograph: *Our Principal Mr. Ekrem Ozyurek OAM being congratulated by students.*

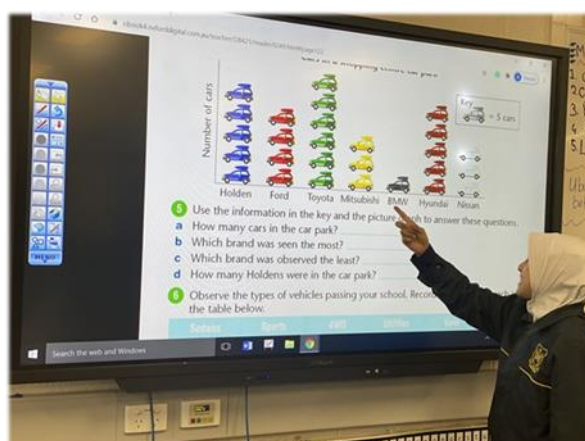
Contact Details

Address	55-57 Tyler Street, East Preston, Victoria, 3072
Postal Address	P.O. Box 8217, Northland Centre, Preston, Victoria, 3072
Principal	Mr. Ekrem Ozyurek OAM
Telephone	(03) 9478 3323
Fax	(03) 9470 1255
Email	admin@epic.vic.edu.au
Website	www.epic.vic.edu.au
ABN	27 116 376 642
Registered School Number	021972

Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Ekrem Ozyurek OAM, attest that East Preston Islamic College is compliant with:

- East Preston Islamic College being a not-for-profit school.
- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic) and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic), except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA.
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2019 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013* (Cth) and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013* (Cth).
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.



Our Philosophy

East Preston Islamic College (EPIC) has a low fee structure so that it is possible for all interested Muslim families to attend. The College's aims for our students is to achieve excellence in academic performance and to embrace Islamic values so that our graduates will exemplify the College motto: **'Success Here and Hereafter'**

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a positive learning environment where staff and students work cooperatively to achieve their best, developing a commitment to continuous learning. The core values of the school are ***learning, achievement, respect, commitment*** and ***fairness***.

Vision

The vision of the College is to ensure excellence, in both academic and Islamic development, with continuous progress towards producing a new generation of Muslims who are committed, compassionate and hardworking citizens, and who are ready to contribute positively and productively to the Australian society.

College Overview

East Preston Islamic College is a non-for-profit, independent, coeducational school following the Victorian Early Years Learning & Development Framework for our Early Learning Centre and the Victorian Curriculum for Foundation to Year 12. EPIC operates in an Islamic cultural and religious tradition, under the direction of the EPIC School Board. Our staff and students are expected to follow the principles and values of the Islamic faith.

In our documents, in all practice by our students and teachers, in working with the EPIC Board and the community, in all teaching and learning programs, the vision of the college will sit at the centre and there is an expectation that all work aligns with the college vision and this is how we enact our philosophy.

East Preston Islamic College was established in 1998 as an independent, Islamic school for students from Foundation to Year 12. The Board of Directors who founded the College, built a school where young Muslims' could be inspired by the teachings of the Qur'an and follow their academic and cultural interests, believe in their potential, and become lifelong learners.

The College motto, 'Success Here and Hereafter' challenges all members of the EPIC community to search for Truth through prayer and a commitment to study and gain a strong sense of what is *Halal* and *Haram*.

Students are encouraged to engage in critical reflection on themselves and on the world as well as developing a love of learning.

Student Body Characteristics

We have 797 students (57 in the E.L.C. 476 in Primary and 264 in Secondary) ranging from Kindergarten to Year 12 with diverse backgrounds who have 24 different languages spoken at home. Many students arrive in our school from overseas without functional English.

Australian Democratic Principles

East Preston Islamic College is committed to the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- elected Government;
- the rule of law;
- equal rights for all before the law;
- freedom of religion;
- freedom of speech and association;
- the values of openness and tolerance.

Declaration of a Faith Based School

Based on our beliefs, values and traditions, faith – based Schools/Colleges declare and affirm the following:

1. We are a proud part of the Australian educational system and committed to teaching according to the guidelines of government curriculum standards and shared Australian values;
2. We teach the children in our schools to be proud- Australians, model citizens and to participate positively in building a prosperous, harmonious and safe society in Australia;
3. We teach the children in our schools to respect the rights of others and to understand the different backgrounds and religions of Australia's multicultural society;
4. We teach our children about the rights of their neighbours and the respect, care and protection of people and property;
5. We are committed to perpetuate the integrity of our traditions in teaching the value of life and the dignity of all people;
6. We are committed to teach the pursuit of peace and promotion of understanding;
7. We stand against those who preach violence and hatred;
8. We are committed to participate fully in our democratic system;
9. We believe in mutual respect, co-operation, tolerance and dialogue;
10. We respect diversity and promote multiculturalism;
11. We welcome cooperation with the wider community;

Principal's Report



Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu
In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful, the Mercy-giving. Praise is to Allah whom we ask for help, protection and forgiveness. We seek the protection of Allah from the sins of ourselves and our deeds. No one can misguide whom He guides and whom He does not guide will never find a guide.

Mr. Ekrem Ozyurek OAM
Principal

2020 will be known as the year of COVID-19. It has been an extremely difficult year with two state-wide lockdowns in Terms 2 and 3 with most students working by remote online learning. However, we suffered a third lockdown for two weeks in October/November and had sixteen staff members and sixty families placed into hotel quarantine, this showed an extraordinary combination of adaptability and resilience by our staff members and families. The school leaders worked tirelessly and closely with the Department of Health and Human Services, in organising a testing site on the college premises and continued the communication with our families and community. This third lockdown did have a detrimental effect on our V.C.E. students who missed out on two weeks of face-to-face teaching prior to their examinations.

The School Board of Directors has increased from four members to eleven members representing a member each from the eleven Islamic societies who are members of the Islamic Coordinating Council of Victoria (I.C.C.V.):

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|---|
| ▪ Mr. Amad Kazi | Chairman | United Muslim Migrants Association of Victoria. |
| ▪ Mr. Ebrahim Hoosen | Vice Chairman | Islamic Society of Melbourne Eastern Regions. |
| ▪ Mr. Zafer Ismail | Secretary | Cyprus Turkish Islamic Community of Victoria |
| ▪ Mr. Mat Allday | Treasurer | Bediuzzaman Said Nursi Cultural Foundation. |
| ▪ Mr. Sidki Guzel | Director | Australian Light Foundation. |
| ▪ Mr. Tarek Khodr | Director | Islamic Society of Victoria. |
| ▪ Mr. Edin Dzelalagic | Director | Bosnia & Hercegovina Islamic Society. |
| ▪ Mr. Durmus Oruc | Director | Thomastown Turkish Education & Islamic Society. |
| ▪ Mr. Faisal Shehata | Director | El Sedeaq Islamic Society. |
| ▪ Mr. Senad Voloder | Director | Merhamet Muslim Welfare Association. |
| ▪ Mr. Nadir Yildiz | Director | Keysborough Turkish Islamic & Cultural Centre. |

It is with a heavy heart, but also a sense of excitement and enthusiasm, that I announce that after 14 years, this year will be my last as Principal of East Preston Islamic College. I do not see this as a farewell, but rather a passing of the baton to the next generation to carry on the work that we have accomplished during this time. Over the last 14 years, the entire EPIC family - the dedicated staff, the executive and you the students and parents - have transformed the school into what we see today.

In terms of our school grounds and buildings, we have:

- built a 'state of the art' covered outdoor learning area with synthetic grass which consists of tennis courts, basketball courts, futsal courts, a full soccer pitch and running tracks - one of the largest in the region
- completed the construction of the single-story primary building, gymnasium, administration buildings, double story primary buildings, a seated canteen area, early learning centre, shaded areas around the school and playgrounds, separate playground areas for our prep and primary students
- changed the car park by moving the parking in front of the school and opening the area for students so to allow for more space for them to play. This also made it easier for parents to drive in and drive out safely during drop off and pick up.

Also, looking forward, the secondary school building which I had been promising for the college community will go ahead and all the plans have been done. The completion of the secondary building will mean that the old secondary building can be demolished, and sporting fields can take its place. Another building program that I have been talking about is the swimming pool this plan has also been approved by the Darebin Council and I hope it will be constructed in due course.

From an administration and academic perspective, we have:

- first and foremost, built a strong and fully qualified teaching group
- introduced VET and VCAL programs for senior students along with the VCE program, demonstrating that the school now understands and has addressed the needs of our community and the skills required not only for entry into University but also recognising the importance of having a skilled workforce for the State
- introduced early years program for our primary students
- using best practise principles, introduced 8 x 40-minute periods for primary students
- introduced the option for year 10 students to commence VCE studies
- changed the uniforms for the students to be more affordable and presentable
- created positions of responsibility for teachers to assist and support our students, especially those with specialised needs and our disadvantaged students. To have specialised teachers that address the unique needs and skills of these students has always been paramount in my educational philosophy and I thank all teachers for supporting me in my vision.
- worked closely with the union and Independent Schools Victoria to reach an enterprise agreement for all our staff with terms commensurate with all Victorian state schools. This

not only recognises the important work that our staff do but also enables us to attract highly skilled and committed staff to work at the school going forward.

- made strategic changes in the structure of the school to better serve the students and the school community by employing a full-time speech therapist, a part time psychologist and a full-time student welfare officer
- introduced different lines of responsibility including a Head of Primary, a Head of Secondary, a Head of ELC, a Head of Curriculum, year level coordinators and faculty heads
- entered partnerships with other schools including the Northern College of Arts and Technology and a bridging program with different faith schools
- partnered with an Indonesian school to run a 'home stay' program for the past eight years
- held inaugural iftar programmes with Victoria police and worked closely with the Darebin council and Victoria police with various programmes for our students
- been acknowledged by the governing body ACARA for our NAPLAN results.

In saying all of this, however, what we have built here at EPIC during my tenure is so much more than just pillars of concrete, buildings and sporting fields, academic programs or improvements in our curriculum and staffing. We have built a new culture, a new connection with our community, and a renewed sense of purpose and service to our most important stakeholders – our students, the next generation that will carry forward our work and ambitions. This was demonstrated with our response to the recent COVID 19 outbreak at our school – recognised by the Victorian Government which included personal letters from the Minister for Health expressing gratitude for the way in which the school handled the matter. That period was a testing time for all of us, but we, as a leadership group and as a school community of EPIC exceeded all expectations on how it was handled. At the end of it, we emerged a stronger and a more united EPIC community than ever before. With the blessings of Allah (swt), we as an EPIC community showed a united front and worked together to overcome this hurdle. The unity, care, and compassion we displayed during this time was highly commended and recognised.

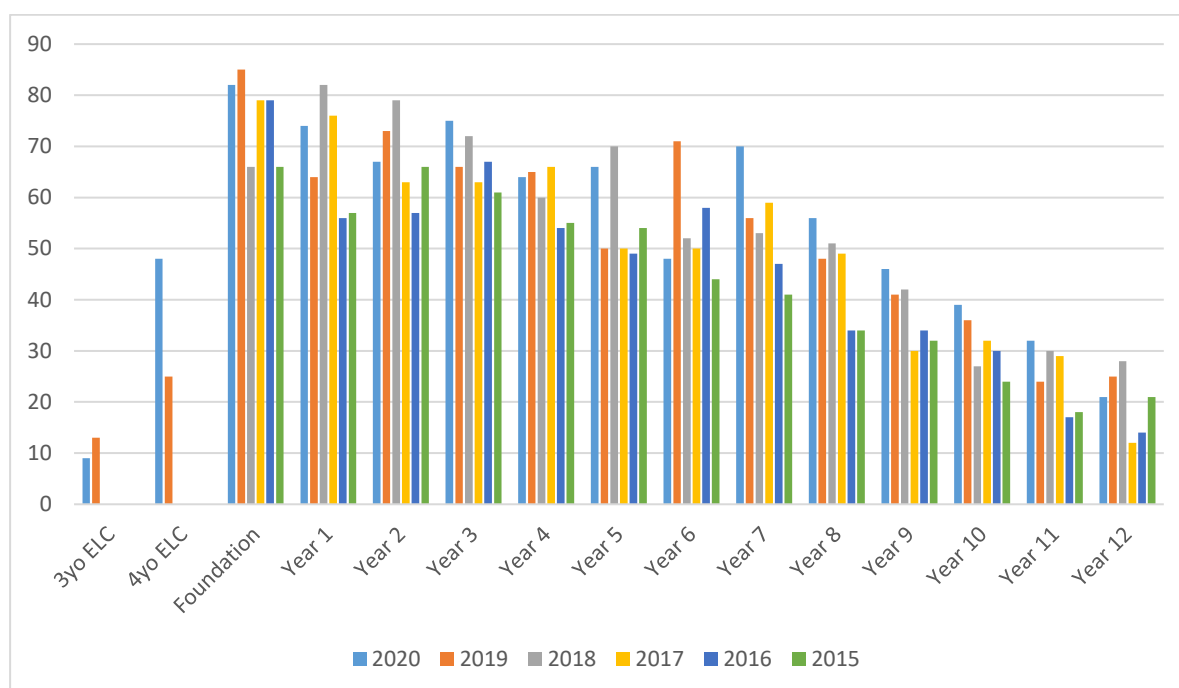
I am so profoundly proud of all of you – the EPIC family, and you will always remain in my heart.

We ask Allah (swt) to guide us to provide a rich, useful, and stimulating educational and Islamic experience for our students, and one that provides for the development of their skills and aptitudes while preparing them to have “SUCCESS HERE” in whatever their choices might be according to their own abilities, and the “SUCCESS HEREAFTER”.

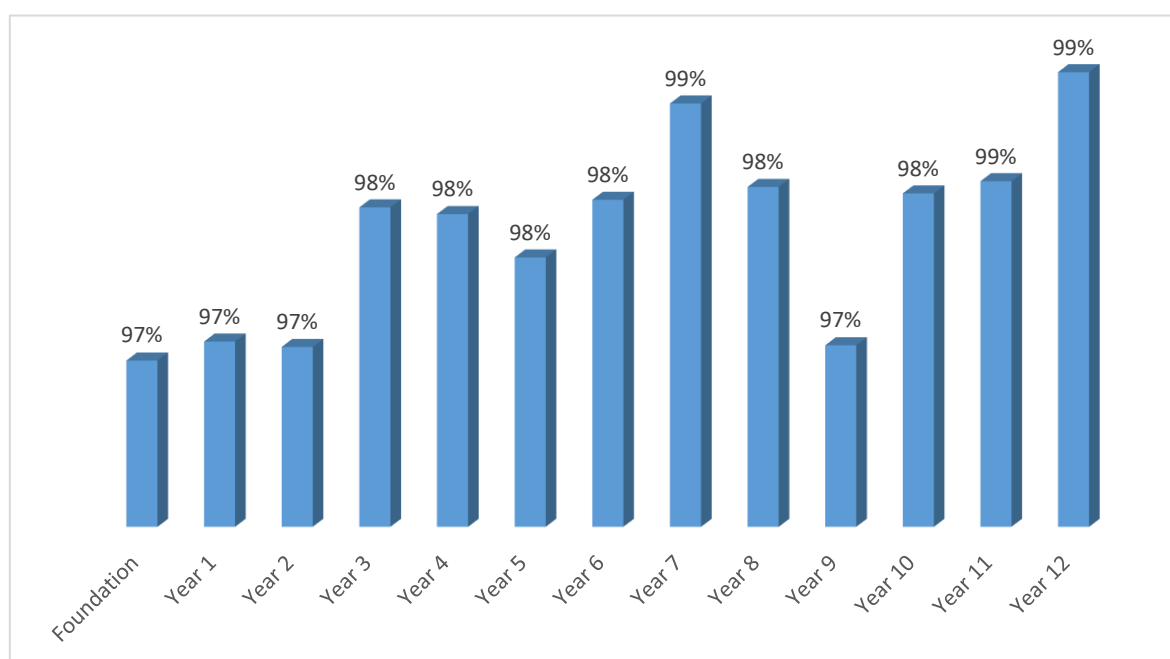
Year 12 Graduation



Student Enrolment



Student Attendance

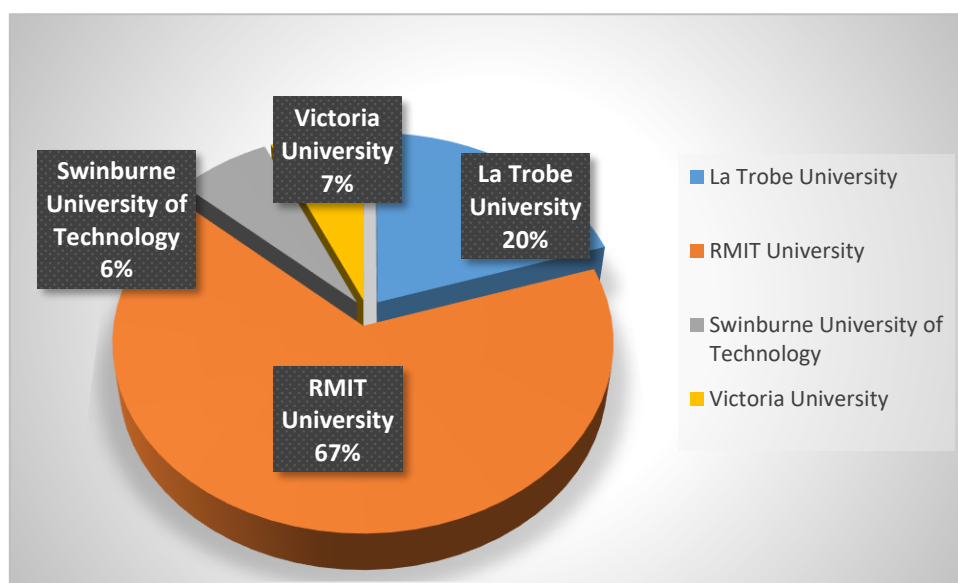


Student attendance is collected at the beginning of each period throughout the school day both in Primary and Secondary Classes. The attendance is recorded electronically with the use of either: computer, iPad, or Mobile Phone. When a child is marked absent during morning or afternoon homeroom an SMS is generated and sent to the parents to obtain the reason of the students' absence, if a reply is not received from the parent, the homeroom teachers will contact the parents.

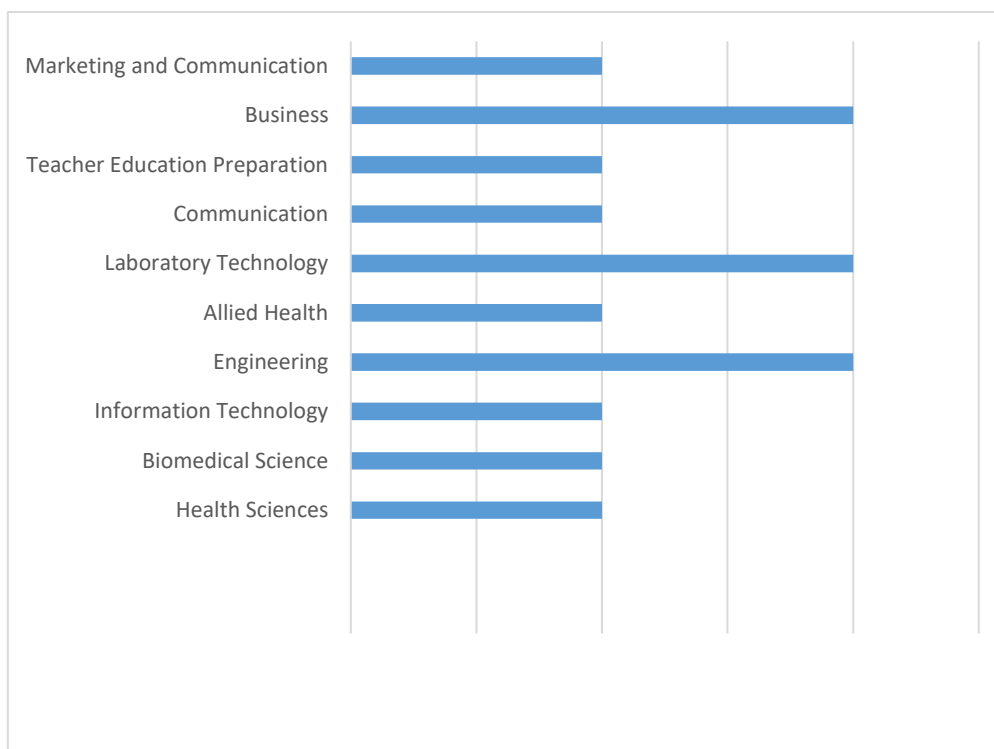
Senior Students Outcomes

100% of students successfully completed VCE - 100% of students successfully completed VCAL. The following is list of 2020 graduate's percentage of enrolments and area of study at universities.

Tertiary Enrolments



Courses



Staff

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate **96%**

Teaching Staff Retention Rate **93.5%**

Five teaching staff members departed EPIC during the 2020 calendar year.

Teacher Qualifications

All teachers at East Preston Islamic College are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (V.I.T.) and all non-teachers are registered with a Working with Children Check (WWCC). The College conducts a monthly audit of V.I.T. registrations.

Workforce Composition

The workforce composition consists of employees from diverse backgrounds to cater for the needs of our students from many different ethnic backgrounds.

Male Teaching Staff:	16
Female Teaching Staff:	61
Male Non-Teaching Staff:	10
Female Non-Teaching Staff:	22
Total Staff:	109

Professional Development

Professional Development at East Preston Islamic College is in accordance with V.I.T. registration requirements and is a priority for all teaching staff in terms of maintaining and improving their teaching and learning.

Whole School Community Satisfaction

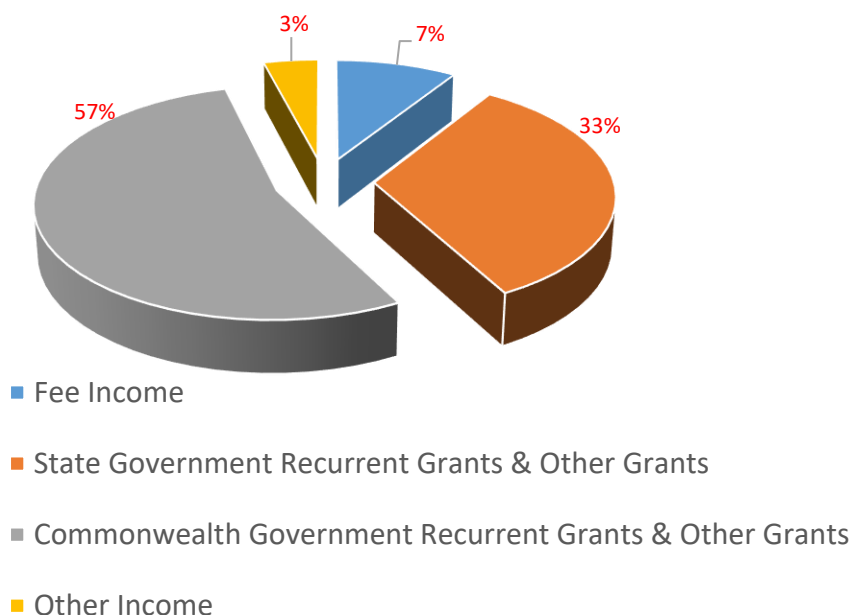
East Preston Islamic College conducts survey's using the Compass Insights module on:

- Parent Satisfaction Survey;
- Student Satisfaction Survey
- Staff Satisfaction Survey.

Income & Expenditure Statement

Year to date: 1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020

Recurrent Income



Recurrent Expenditure

