



# St Mary's School

## Swan Hill

### 2022

### Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 1084

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## Contact Details

ADDRESS	2 Murlong Street Swan Hill VIC 3585
PRINCIPAL	Kate Quin
TELEPHONE	03 5033 2541
EMAIL	principal@smswanhill.catholic.edu.au
WEBSITE	www.smswanhill.catholic.edu.au
E NUMBER	E2040

## Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Kate Quin, attest that St Mary's School is compliant with:

- 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 2022 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards as prescribed in both Ministerial Orders in effect in 2022:
  - Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools, in Semester 1, 2022;
  - Ministerial Order No.1359 - Implementing the Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises, in Semester 2, 2022.

27/03/2023

**NOTE:** The School's financial performance information has been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)

## Governing Authority Report

The Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) is now in its second year of governance of schools. In 2022 two additional schools - Damascus College and St Francis Xavier transferred their governance to DOBCEL, a total 58 schools in the Diocese are governed by DOBCEL.

Across our diocese, schools governed by DOBCEL provide distinctive Catholic education from the Murray to the Sea. This support is operationalised by Catholic Education Ballarat and is responsible for the implementation of DOBCEL strategies, policies and procedures, and overseeing the day to day running of our schools.

The role of DOBCEL is to lead, provide service to, and partner with schools to enable every student to flourish and every student, staff member and family to experience the presence of the risen Christ in our schools.

We recognise the extraordinary servant leadership of all our school staff, leaders and Principals during 2022 as they supported their school communities through a myriad of challenges that included staff shortages, covid disruption, implications of widespread flooding and Enterprise Bargaining negotiations. We recognise the commitment and focus all school staff give to the students and families in their care in the spirit of the Gospels. Their commitment has been unwavering.

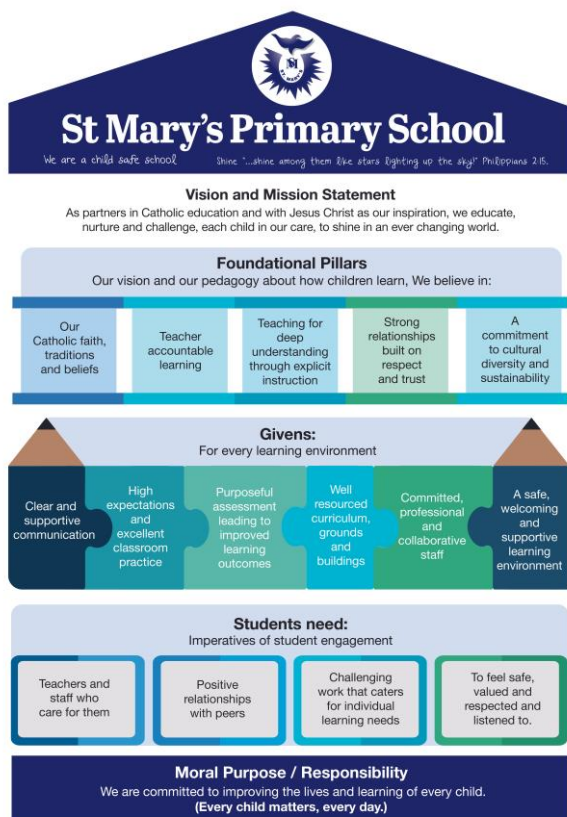
We thank families for their commitment to partnership with our schools in Catholic Education again in 2022 to support all our students to flourish.

Tom Sexton

Executive Director

Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited

## Vision and Mission



## School Overview

St Mary's Primary School is part of St. Mary's Parish, Swan Hill. The school opened in 1919 and, in 1923, the arrival of three Sisters of St. Joseph, began a long and close association of the Josephites (1923-1996) with Catholic Education in Swan Hill. The school retains the values of the order with the Josephite characteristics of hard work, dedication, community, and family unity, still strong features of our school.

St Mary's Primary School currently has a student population of 608 students under the care of a close, effective professional team of Teachers, Learning Support Officers, School Service Officers, and Office Administration. St Mary's currently comprises twelve permanent and sixteen portable classrooms, a multi-purpose room, canteen, gymnasium, and an administration building, which houses a library, staff planning room, staff room, and offices. Our beautiful landscaped gardens and quality playing spaces are excellent features of our school, along with well-presented classrooms that promote learning in a positive and secure environment.

St Mary's enjoys a position of esteem in the local community. Staff share a belief in the dignity of individuals and the promotion of self-esteem and community responsibility amongst the students. There are currently 27 straight classes. Our student population comprises 49% Catholic children with the next significant percentage identifying as Christian. A diverse range of other religions are represented as our student population consists of 17 nationalities providing us with a rich experience of multiculturalism. Our school community is made up of both town and rural families, with the majority of children having to travel by bus to school. Factors such as extreme weather conditions and rural remoteness can impact on our families in many ways with 25% of families receiving CSEF. We also have strong links with our Italian and Koori Communities, which is best demonstrated through our annual Italian and Indigenous Days.

Children at St Mary's are extended an invitation and are supported to discover God's presence in their lives. Within a Gospel-centred environment, students are challenged to explore and understand themselves and the world in which they live through a world-view grounded in Scripture and the traditions of the Catholic Church. At St Mary's, we are committed to the Gospel values, a strong school-family identity, quality curriculum, and 'best practice' learning. Teachers actively engage in developing a guaranteed and viable curriculum. Response to Intervention (RTI) has been the foundation for our teaching practices and we are currently being informed by the characteristics of a Professional Learning Community (PLC). The curriculum is vertically aligned so that there is continuity and progression across all years of school with Essential Learning Statements existing in Mathematics and English. Differentiation of curriculum is evident across year levels with intervention and extension programs in place in the areas of literacy and numeracy to support individual children's learning needs. Our staff is given significant time to allow for collaborative planning which is data-driven through the use of pre- and post-testing. Reflection on the learning is used to feedback, feed-in and feed forward all curriculum planning and subsequent teaching that occurs.

At St Mary's, our belief is that 'every child matters every day' and our staff are committed to providing a learning environment to cater to all individual needs. The Vision and Mission statement is fundamental to all practices as we challenge, educate and nurture each child in our care.

During the 2021 school year, we focused our energy on priorities to drive school improvement with the School Annual Action Plan centered on the areas of:

- Embedding a guaranteed and viable curriculum

- Strengthening staff understanding of Catholic Social Teaching
- Creating authentic leadership opportunities for staff, students and parents



## Principal's Report

2022 began full of hope and optimism after two turbulent years of lockdowns and remote learning. The reality is that 2022 has proved to be another challenging year with Covid dominating the landscape in the first half of the year and then the rain and more recently the flooding, creating anxiety for many members of our school community as our year nears to an end.

Despite the curve balls these events have presented and the challenges of continuing to provide a quality education in the midst of a national teacher shortage and industrial unrest, the staffs' ongoing professionalism and positive approach to provide rich and engaging learning experiences for students has always been foremost.

So too, a very sincere thank you to our School Board Chair, Laura Crow and the School Advisory Council for their commitment to St Mary's School during 2022. The SAC has provided valuable advice and honest feedback in many areas of the school during the year. Your insights, well thought out questions and input has been a great support to our students, parents and staff. I also wish to acknowledge the different ideas posed by our P & F and their ability to continue to provide new and exciting opportunities for students to enjoy time together when at school. In particular the work of Renee Hirst and their team who undertook organising the Junior Welcome Picnic and the very successful Colour Fun Run, the School Disco and our upcoming Grandparents & Friends Night which have been absolute highlights for students this year.

### External School Review

Thorough preparations for our External School Review, conducted in August 2022, held us in good stead to meet with the panel of external reviewers, who spent two days using our reports, plus their visits to the school and interviews with members of the school community, to complete the review process.

The Review panel final report was extremely affirming and validated the school's achievements and challenges in the areas of Catholic School Culture, Learning and Teaching, Student Wellbeing, Leadership and Stewardship and Community Engagement. It also formed the basis for goal setting for future school improvement with the following key priorities set for 2023-2027.

- Embed a contemporary Catholic culture in our school community
- Refine effective practices to promote and enhance the wellbeing of staff, students and St Mary's families
- Build authentic student agency, voice and differentiation into our teaching and learning practices

### Buildings and Infrastructure

In preparation for our building project, tenders were issued earlier in the year and Condely Constructions won the contract. The junior hub will provide 8 contemporary classrooms which offer flexible working areas and which all open into a large internal learning street. Complete with offices and wellbeing spaces, the junior hub will enhance our current school facilities and



allow us to start to reduce the number of portables used as classrooms at the school. We were fortunate to be provided with an additional portable and granted use of the Catholic Education Regional office onsite to support accommodating 4 classes while the build takes place. Work has commenced and although hampered by the unprecedented wet weather, the team remains confident there will not be significant delays, with our completion date now May 2023.

Fundraising from our Parents and Friends was directed to the provision of a sensory garden area. The design incorporated input from students which was gathered through direct consultation and a series of online surveys. The project is set to commence in November and should be completed by the end of the year. In June, courtesy of State funding, a large sail structure was installed on the senior oval, providing shade for outdoor learning and whilst playing gaga ball. It has enhanced our oval area, while the replanting of our entrance garden beds has beautified our front entrance to the school.

We were advised earlier this year that the parish block in Murlong St may not remain a long term option for staff parking, so plans are underway to construct a large car park to accommodate staff vehicles and to fence the length of our southern boundary.

### Staff and Students

Enrolments have remained consistent with 2021 figures. While the impact of Covid has not affected our enrolments, one of the notable differences between this year and other years has been the large number of students who have transferred in and out over the past 12 months. It seems people are on the move with a number of local families moving to St Mary's throughout the year from smaller district schools, while interstate and overseas enrolments were also a regular occurrence. So too, we have had a number of families relocate for work to other locations in Australia.

It was wonderful to get back to our normal Preschool transition program "Flying Start" in Term 3. Once again it proved extremely popular, with approximately 75 children having a try at 'big school'. Prep numbers for 2023 are encouraging and despite a very large Year 6 class exiting (97 students), we anticipate starting our school year with much the same figures as 2022.

Throughout 2022 we welcomed many new staff on board as LSO's or to replace teaching staff who took maternity or medical leave as the year unfolded. Baby news has abounded and with some staff relocating at the end of 2022, it has made for another busy year in the employment area.

### OSHC

@2Murlong, our new OSHC program has gone from strength to strength. The OSHC area in the gym has had constant upgrades and the uptake from families at both St Mary's and Swan Hill North Primary School has been strong. The program started with 3 children in July 2021. It now employs a dozen educators, and has over 50 children attending each night, plus a small crew of regulars most mornings. We have extended our licence to cater for up to 80 children daily and are currently exploring the provision of vacation care in the January period, to assist with the chronic shortage of holiday care available for primary age children.

## Teaching and Learning

Considerable work has been undertaken in enhancing current teaching and learning units to increase opportunities for differentiation for all students with a particular emphasis on extension and enrichment for more able students.

Academically, 2022 was another successful year for St Mary's, with NAPLAN results and PAT testing indicating the majority of students continued to maintain pleasing gains in key curriculum areas despite the past 2 years of interrupted learning. Support through the school tutor funding program also addressed identified gaps in reading for children. For staff, there were also many learning opportunities. In the first half of the year continued PD on HITS, embedding instructional coaching for graduate staff and a focus on promotion of positive school culture assisted to build teacher efficacy and reflective practice. I have encouraged all staff wishing to extend their leadership knowledge through formal study or attendance at intensive leadership PD. This has seen Arren Smith, Codie Brown and Belinda Crowe complete CDLP (Country Diocesan Leadership program) and several of our LSO's undertake studying for their Certificate IV in Education.

The removal of masks and return of incursions, excursions and school camps has been an absolute highlight for both staff and students. It has been wonderful to see students participate in a wide array of experiences that not only enhanced their learning but were good fun and assisted in building team and connection.

Our commitment to the RTI (Response to Intervention) and Professional Learning Communities (PLC) philosophy has maintained our priority in maximising the learning opportunities for every student. This philosophy urges us to invest time and resources in a way that gives all learners the best chance for success. This area of the school has been bolstered with another injection of funding through the School Tutor Program and has been used to differentiate support for students with particular literacy needs, the expansion of our Boost reading team, the consolidation of WIN time, our differentiated approach to teaching writing and the consolidation of weekly timetabled RTI problem solving meetings to allow 2 levels per week to be released. These teams work through best practice in action to differentiate learning experiences and provide an appropriately challenging curriculum for all students in our care. So too the consolidation of the use of digital formats for parent teacher communication, tools such as Seesaw has enabled sharing of work and the return of onsite 3 Way Chats and Student Led Conferences has been welcomed by both staff and parents as they partner together in support of each child's learning.

Student wellbeing has become an increasing priority following our return onsite. In addition to our full time learning diversity leader and 3 student support officers, the employment of Annika Safe, Brooklan Caruso and Chris Prockter has strengthened the team's expertise and assisted in dealing with increasingly complex needs and with supporting students wellbeing and emotional literacy. So too, successfully obtaining funding for a wellbeing dog who will commence working at the school in 2023 has diversified the support provided students at their point of need.

St Mary's continues to enjoy a positive connection to the Parish, Church and the community. Our sacramental program is now a parish based model and Fr James has done a terrific job, to coordinate families and ensure children are able to receive the sacraments at our parish Masses. Opportunities for students have continued to develop their sense of social justice through participation in fundraising for St Vinnies Winter Appeal and monthly fundraising opportunities coordinated by the SRC.

Finally, I wish to thank the amazing people who together form the staff of St Mary's. Our teachers, administration staff and support teams take such pride in the school and value the community, learning environments, facilities and above all the students. Together as a community we have achieved so much over the past 12 months. Thank you also to our students and families for their ongoing support of St Mary's. I feel blessed to work within this community and I thank everyone within our community for their commitment to our school and Catholic Education in the diocese.

Kate Quin

Principal

## Parish Priest's Report

Not Available

## School Advisory Council Report

It is an honour that I present my sixth and final School Advisory Council (SAC) Chairperson report, in what has been another very positive year for our school, it gives me great pleasure in presenting the School Advisory Council Report for 2022. This final report has given me the opportunity to reflect and feel somewhat nostalgic as my time at St Mary's comes to an end for my family and me.

At the end of what was another unusual and semi-interrupted 2021 school year, we were all hoping and confident that 2022 would see a return to a more 'normal' school year. Noting this and recognising that the impact of Covid is still being felt at so many levels, it was hence very pleasing that our community has indeed enjoyed a school year more along the lines of what we were used to before the pandemic. It is a testament to the staff and leadership in the way they have bounced forward, with the student's health and well-being at the forefront.

It is a testament to Kate, Jason and all the staff that even though the past two years have challenged the most experienced of leaders, our standards have remained high and staff and students are happy and healthy and our school is in a very sound position financially. Maree McLean, our School Business Manager also deserves a special mention, as she delicately balances the tough financial times of COVID while managing the pastoral care of our families and continues to deliver a strong financial position for the school.

Our enrolment numbers continue to remain steady and our reputation in the community is very positive. I would like to acknowledge the school board for their focus and commitment throughout the year, with special thanks to Stephen Davies and Kirsten Mitchell for their years of service to St Mary's SAC, as their time on the SAC comes to an end, their presence on the Board will be missed.

From a school improvement perspective, it was once again very pleasing for our School Advisory Council to support some changes and upgrades throughout the school as we continue to strive to provide the best environment and facilities that we can for our students and staff. The OSHC program continues to thrive with numbers soaring and with the hard work of our Parents and Friends committee, the school will also be privy to a sensory garden by the end of the year. Finally and excitingly we were able to finally begin the build of The Junior Hub, which will be completed by Condely Builders. After many years of planning, I look forward to visiting and seeing the completion of the 8 contemporary classrooms and offices in May 2023.

Lastly, and on a personal note, there is a tinge of sadness as I conclude this report as it will be my last as School Advisory Council Chairperson, a role I have thoroughly enjoyed over the last 6 years. I wish to express my sincere thanks to all the previous Board Members, the current

Advisory Council and the school leadership team, all of whom I have had the pleasure of working with over these years, and for their unwavering commitment and care for our students and our school. I hope I have managed to provide a 'steady hand on the wheel' whilst helping to move our school forward and have absolute confidence that our school will continue to flourish and provide the very best learning opportunities & environment for our children.

Our time with the St Marys community began in 2014 when our eldest daughter Ava began school. Immediately we felt content and at ease, knowing that she was beginning her catholic school education in a safe, happy and invigorating learning environment. This year our youngest child Jobe finishes Primary school and I will be forever grateful to the staff at St Mary's for their dedication, care, compassion and impact they have had on our family over the last 8 years.

On behalf of our School Advisory Council, may I wish all of our children, their families, our teachers and staff a very Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Laura Crow

School Advisory Council Chairperson

## Catholic Identity and Mission

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Our priority for 2022 was for staff to understand and strengthen knowledge of Social Justice Principles and Catholic Social Teachings as a key basis along with Shared Christian Praxis to collaboratively and confidently develop new Awakenings units of work.

### Achievements

#### Achievements

- Time allocated into the Professional Learning Schedule each term for staff from the same level to plan units and rich assessment tasks together.
- Time allocated for the RE Leader to meet with different staff on a needs basis each week to discuss planning of Liturgies, school masses, the new curriculum and other aspects of the Religious Education program.
- Staff using the New Awakenings online website to support planning and the collaborative approach in constructing learning activities and rich assessment tasks.
- Teaching staff and the Religious Education Leader have undertaken professional learning with CEOB staff via Zoom and face-to-face to develop robust Religious Education units of work using the Awakenings curriculum.
- Whole staff professional development days focusing on strengthening knowledge around Social Justice and Catholic Social Teachings.
- Staff using and becoming more familiar with the Caritas website and resources when teaching Catholic Social Teaching Principles.
- As part of our commitment to teaching Religious Education across the school all students engage in timetabled Religious Education classes each week as well as dedicated prayer times each day.
- Weekly staff prayer time on a Friday morning that is led by two different staff members each week.
- All new staff attended a diocesan wide professional development day facilitated by the CEOB to deepen their understanding about Awakenings (our Religious Education program) and Shared Christian Praxis St Mary's Swan Hill.
- Our Student Representative Council (SRC) and wider school community have been actively involved in a wide range of social justice events.
- Providing regular communication to parents and friends through our weekly newsletter, including Religious Education news as well as prayers and reflections.
- Parental engagement in the Sacramental program. Parents were invited to attend sessions and completed the program at home with their child allowing some special time with their child to discuss their faith.
- Sacramental Celebrations of Confirmation, Eucharist and Reconciliation were celebrated with Fr James at the Parish.



## VALUE ADDED

- Whole School Masses.
- Assembly Prayer.
- Daily Class Prayer.
- Special celebration of feast days/events e.g. CESH Mass, Mary Mackillop, Year 6 Graduation Mass, Beginning and End of Year Mass.
- Liturgical Celebrations e.g. Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, Advent, Mission Week.
- Ongoing communication with parents and the wider community through our weekly newsletter.
- Staff led prayer time on Friday mornings.
- Continued involvement of Religious Education Leader within the Senior Leadership Team.
- Staff participation in professional learning and development through CPL's.
- Making connections between Religious Education and other curriculum areas.
- Collaboration among staff in planning and delivering the New Awakenings curriculum.
- Celebration of Catholic Education Week - partnership between St Mary's, St Mary Mackillop College and St Mary's Sea Lake.
- Organisation & Participation of different fundraising events as a part of our social justice actions to help communities in need - Project Compassion, St Vincent de Paul, Catholic Mission as well as local organisations.

## Learning and Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Engaging students in rich and authentic learning experiences

- Embedding a culture of shared leadership and continuous learning for all.

### Achievements

At St Mary's the school's whole pedagogical approach consistently drove the teaching and learning in 2022. With the current reality of continually inducting graduates and new teaching staff every year, 2022 saw the ongoing collaboration of staff knowledge on "Explicit Teaching". The power of this model is in the providing of scaffolding structure for all our students. Helping them engage with and master the core skills of literacy and numeracy through rich and authentic learning experiences. With such a young and inexperienced staff, evidence-based programs such as Origo Maths- Stepping Stones, STARs and CAR's online, New Waves Mental Maths and Spelling Mastery continued to support the delivery of a viable and guaranteed curriculum across all year levels and classrooms.

The importance and value of our instructional coaching team and mentoring of level leaders continued to support our new staff as well as our more experienced teachers. As a whole school the coaching cycle provided an opportunity for all staff to further refine and deepen their teaching practice. For more experienced staff, coaching cycles were closely aligned to goals created by staff and aligned to the ongoing work on High Impact Teaching Strategies that was started in 2021.

Building on from 2021, we continued core professional development based around High Impact Teaching Strategies with a strong emphasis on differentiation led by Geogina Pazzi. Georgina led staff through this process, deepening staff knowledge in the area of students zone of proximal development as well as data driven differentiation. Further, whole school PD throughout the year was led by Casey Storzer (CEO) focusing on Data Literacy, especially data collation of NAPLAN and PAT. As a school, intensive work began on what the data was telling us, what adjustments we needed to make in our data collection and additional changes required in connection to our planning. While keeping at the forefront of our minds that 'data doesn't give us the answers, it helps us ask the right questions'.

Value was seen in building termly Curriculum Team meetings into our staff meeting schedules. Formal and informal dialogue occurred between colleagues, sharing reflection conversations and new insights into how our planning going forward would reflect the evidence based data trends that had been highlighted in our work with Casey. Focus was also given to how some planning had been being modified during Covid especially in the area of Inquiry and moving forward how technology would continue to support new learning and learning styles. Additional time was given to the staff planning Numeracy where it was strongly identified that we had a large percentage of our students across the school achieving highly. Time was spent examining

a variety of materials and experiences to develop higher order thinking skills of these students in our planning.

As a staff we also worked with Steve Russell who put us in good stead for preparation with our Annual Review. Steve acknowledged that St Mary's is "an outstanding school and a very mature school", he proceeded that as a staff and community, this needs to be celebrated. During our review the panel commended the school on being a data rich school and the clear pedagogical framework used to provide a shared focus for teaching and learning. We were affirmed that our data literacy highlights that we are effectively using evidence-based practices to respond to student data and provide rich and varied interventions and differentiated support. We pride ourselves on being a data-mature school and RTI continues to support the significant shift in collecting and using data purposefully to identify what students already know/need to be taught and then planning differentiated teaching and learning experiences to support this. The school's culture is driven by the belief that every child is capable of being a successful learner. This is a constant message and one that is recalibrated each year to ensure all new staff understand the why: 'why we do what we do' at St Mary's and our school mantra 'Every child Matters every day'. Our staff form the belief that all children can learn to high levels given the right time and support. Staff know their students and how they learn, using data to drive decision-making about what they need to learn next and how best to achieve this.

Engaging students in their own learning became a focus with staff actively planning opportunities for student voice and choice embedded in learning experiences. As we started this journey it stirred up staff thinking around 'Student Agency'. Towards the end of 2022 the Senior Leadership team formed a new partnership with James Anderson as a mentor to facilitate enriching our understanding of student agency in 2023.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

2022 saw St Mary's transition to the online NAPLAN platform for our Year 3 & 5 children. The NAPLAN online tests included a range of question formats and interactive features. Students were required to answer questions by clicking, typing and dragging; some questions included audio or interactive tools. Students and staff found the online platform friendly to use and saw the benefits of it being online.

Our results in all NAPLAN areas remained solid with students performing above the state means in all areas tested in Year 3 and 5 in 2021. Particularly pleasing were Reading and Maths results which showed St Mary's performing well above similar schools of the same socio-economic advantage.

Engaging students in their own learning has been a focus with staff actively working on planning units of work with many opportunities for student voice and choice embedded in learning experiences and where children are being engaged in and given opportunities to set

learning goals and share their learning. Students now regularly use their pre and post-data testing results in reading, writing, spelling and maths to identify their current levels of achievement and what they are required to do in order to improve.

There has been a continued focus on teachers moving from 'my' to 'our' data across levels and units, with data discussions featuring at each unit meeting and at our weekly leadership team meetings. The use of consistent questions to inform the conversation has been introduced with staff encouraged to reference discussions around children's data against the 6 PLC and 4 RTI questions.

With the introduction of the NCCD requirements, our systematic approach to providing services and intervention for students with additional learning needs has been further refined. There is a designated Special Needs and Curriculum Leader, 2 Student Support Officers, and an established RTI team to ensure we do all we can to best meet the individual learning needs of each child in our care. Having adopted the RTI framework there are increasing levels of intensity (Tiers 1-3) of support based on progress monitoring and data analysis. A variety of evidence-based intervention programs in numeracy and literacy are provided within a multi-tiered approach in classrooms, small groups and 1 to 1 instruction dependent on individual students' learning needs.

Whole school moderation in writing occurred twice yearly with staff moderating against the school essentials and aligned against the Victorian Curriculum work samples. Moderated pieces of writing have been scanned to create banks of writing samples to use to moderate and to create annotated 'bump it up walls' for students' to use a rubric against which to assess their own writing. The continued implementation of WIN (What I Need) into our writing block of a Thursday & Friday continues to strengthen and allow for differentiation and enrichment.

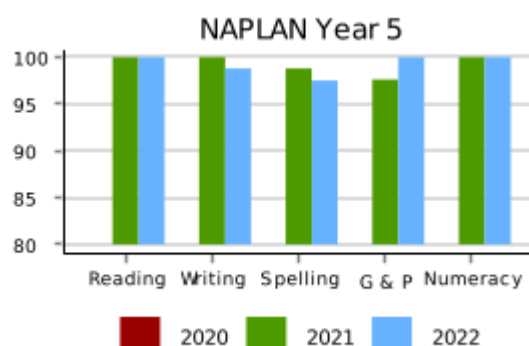
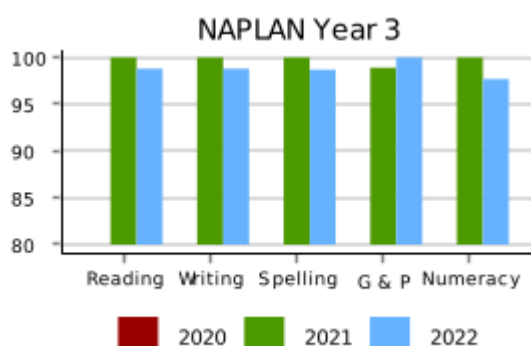
Embedding the use of data collection and storage to a shared platform (Team Drive) has made our data transparent and has really assisted in developing a collective responsibility for improving standards. Our commitment to the RTI framework and adoption of the PLC and RTI questions and culture to reference teaching and learning decisions has provided the reference for all decision-making about targeted intervention to best meet the needs of all children, with RTI sessions timetabled weekly for levels to meet with the Principal, Deputy Principal, and Learning Diversity Leader and Curriculum Leader. We have well-documented and structured intervention, facilitated by the Special Education & Curriculum Leaders and monitored by Unit Leaders. This includes evidence-based intervention within classrooms and across levels to cater for intervention: Read 3, MiniLit, MultiLit, Reading Fundamentals, Boost Reading, Numeracy Fundamentals and Quicksmart. Funding through NCCD and the Schools Tutor Program allowed us to facilitate these vital programs, supporting students at their point of need.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2020	2021	2020 – 2021 Changes	2022	2021 – 2022 Changes
	%			%	
	*		*		
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	-	98.9	-	100.0	1.1
YR 03 Numeracy	-	100.0	-	97.7	-2.3
YR 03 Reading	-	100.0	-	98.8	-1.2
YR 03 Spelling	-	100.0	-	98.7	-1.3
YR 03 Writing	-	100.0	-	98.8	-1.2
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	-	97.6	-	100.0	2.4
YR 05 Numeracy	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Reading	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Spelling	-	98.8	-	97.5	-1.3
YR 05 Writing	-	100.0	-	98.8	-1.2

\* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

\*\* Data cannot be reported for this year as the number of students that sat the test was below 5 and the data has been suppressed for privacy reasons in accordance with the ACARA NAPLAN data reporting provisions.

\*\*\* No students sat the NAPLAN tests in this year level and in one or both of the relevant years.



## Student Wellbeing

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Refine effective practices to promote and enhance the wellbeing of staff, students and St Mary's families.
- Build and expand methods of celebrating achievement and acknowledging and affirming students and staff for their achievements.
- To strengthen students' social and emotional learning and to have a whole-school approach to positive behaviour management.
- Create and incorporate a Social Behaviours Guaranteed and Viable F-6 framework into the school's learning and teaching programs

Student wellbeing aims to promote and enhance the personal, social, physical, emotional, and spiritual nature of students. Key elements of student wellbeing are positive self-regard, respect for others, positive relationships, responsible behaviours, and personal resilience. These attitudes and skills are taught as well as expected of the children

The key strategies and focus are to maintain a consistent approach to Positive Behaviour Support, explicit teaching of Social and Emotional skills, and the use of restorative language. Staff wellbeing is critically imperative in contributing to a positive culture. Further investigation will be around collecting Staff and Student wellbeing data and exploring the Zones of Regulation to use within the school community.

St Mary's continues to strive to maintain a strong reputation in the community for student wellbeing and has significant external community agency support to assist students and families in need.

### Achievements

- St Mary's commitment to Dogs Connect (Wellbeing Dog - Mac) has been a crucial part of promoting student and staff Well-being. The school's Wellbeing staff members have been an integral part in utilizing Mac as part of their Wellbeing sessions. Mac brings a smile to anyone who comes past him, this has been positive for staff and community culture. Mac teaches the children to regulate their emotions and brings a calm and proactive approach to students who may have anxiety or find it difficult coming to school.
- Consistent and collaborative delivery of our SEL curriculum (The Resilience Project).
- Resilience Project Parent information sessions.
- Megan Simpson PD (Self Worth for girls).
- Programs such Brain Gym, Mindfulness and Movement, and Peaceful Kids have supported students to engage fully in their learning.

- Having 4 dedicated Wellbeing Officers who do daily and weekly check ins with students is something we are proud of and how they work with students and family members where necessary.
- Whole school focuses on Sensory Breaks/Brain Breaks.
- Consistent whole-school approach to behaviour management with an emphasis on Restorative practices.
- A strong response to staff wellbeing has continued by using strategies including PULSE surveys and PD with Tom Heirck, which provides strategies to support staff wellbeing.
- Staff PD days were re-examined and some PDs to allow a strong focus on PD around staff and student wellbeing, personal resilience & positive psychology.
- Breakfast Club-daily.
- Restorative practices.
- During the school review, Wellbeing was highlighted as an area in which we are excelling across the school.

#### VALUE ADDED

African Drumming Course

Dogs Connect

Peaceful Kids-trained well-being staff who run sessions for students on a regular basis

Brain Gym

Mindfulness and Movement programs

The resilience Project

PULSE-Staff Well-being surveys

Positive Schools Conference

Tom Hierck- PD trauma Informed Students

Cyber Safety Workshops-Students and Parent delivery online

E-Learning modules

Consolidated whole school positive behaviour blitzes-SWPBS

Refined data analysis process for RTI meetings

Consolidation of the Year 6 student leadership program to provide all with skills in their area of strength

Development of student-devised individual learning goals and reflection on these as a means of growth

Use of Seesaw posts on a regular basis for children to share their learning goals and celebrate their achievements

Using regular PSGs to reflect and refine student goals



Increased the number of LSOs across the school to support children with specific needs

Engagement of paraprofessionals to support individual students and their families with particular social and emotional needs (Occupational Therapist, CAMHS, counsellors)

It's OK to not be OK - Workshop for Year 6 boys

Self Worth workshops - Year 5–6 girls and parents

Ongoing commitment to PAL (Foundation-Year 5/6 buddies) program and bus buddies

Commitment to having a diverse range of activities available for children to utilise during break times (Library, Lego club, gardening club, mediation, yoga, and imaginative play activities)

Tracking student behaviour (SIMON) and aligning it to St Mary's Way -and consistent follow up and communication with the parents

Introduction of new Child Safe standards and Protocols

## STUDENT SATISFACTION

We have shown improvement in relation to student experiences across the school. The whole school blitzes continue to improve the focus on positive behaviour for all students and the introduction of the Alignment of SWPBS on Simon allows us to analyze data patterns in terms of student behaviour and needs.

Taken from 2021 Insight SRC Data show that students felt relatively positive about their ability to learn and about the wellbeing and care provided.

Student wellbeing: 69.1

Contentedness to school: 70

Teacher Empathy: 73

Student safety: 76

Student motivation: 71

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance at school is essential for students to maximize their learning. The school in partnership with parents is responsible for promoting regular attendance of students. The following procedures are followed to monitor and address non-attendance:

- Attendance is checked twice daily and entered electronically on SIMON
- Parents/Carers are required to notify the school of the reason for any absence
- An SMS message is sent by 9:30 am for any unexplained absence and a follow-up phone call is made if the SMS has not been responded to by parents or carers.

Attendance is constantly monitored and frequent non-attendance is followed up by leadership with a phone

- Call and, if necessary, a letter
- During remote learning, rolls were taken remotely by staff working from home at 9:00 am and uploaded to the on-site staff. Onsite student rolls were marked and the two correlated on
- SIMON (software used) to generate an accurate attendance roll
- Unexplained absences were followed up with an SMS that is automatically generated at 9:30 am and /or a phone call by the onsite office staff

#### AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Y01	85.9%
Y02	86.6%
Y03	87.2%
Y04	87.9%
Y05	87.2%
Y06	86.6%
Overall average attendance	86.9%

## Child Safe Standards

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To develop school community awareness of and a commitment to the Ministerial Order No 1359 (Victorian Child Safe Standards).
- To develop school policies that are able to demonstrate the strong commitment of St Mary's Primary School to the care safety and wellbeing of all students in our school.
- To ensure thorough and rigorous practices are applied in the recruitment, screening, and ongoing professional learning of staff.
- To ensure that school personnel has regular and appropriate learning to develop their knowledge of, openness to, and ability to address child safety matters.
- To support students to be empowered to become stronger, have greater control over their lives and to have opportunities to participate in the school and the decisions that affect them.
- To ensure the school takes specific action to protect children from abuse in line with the three new criminal offences introduced under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.) and in line with the PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools.

### Achievements

The school has achieved compliance with the Child Safe Standards in the following ways;

- The development and implementation of a Child Safe Policy which outlines the school's commitment and practices toward ensuring a safe environment.
- The adoption of Ministerial Order 1359 and provision of professional development for all staff to understand the new changes this order encompasses.
- The Child Safety Code of Conduct and commitment to Child Safety are prominently displayed in the foyer, each classroom, and in every office and learning area in the school.
- Appointment of a Child Safe Officer.
- All policies and documentation related to the eleven child safe standards housed in E Sort and Knowledge Banks which is accessible to all relevant personnel.
- Identification of ways that students can identify concerns and a clear procedure for staff to report child abuse.
- Consultation with the School Advisory Council regarding the writing of policies and procedures and the purpose of each standard.
- Opportunities for students to participate in the school and decisions that affect them through student surveys, SRC, student leadership roles and student forums.
- Regular Cyber safety information and workshops for parents and for students to highlight the potential risk of child abuse in online environments.
- Ongoing professional development for staff, volunteers, and visitors relating to expectations for them to comply with school policies and procedures.
- Information provided to the school community through the newsletter and website.

- Ongoing risk assessment of school procedures and events that removes risk to children from adults.

## Leadership

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To refine and articulate a clear leadership model for St Mary's Primary School and build the capacity of all members.
- To strengthen and sustain a culture amongst staff that is characterized by a shared vision, professional inquiry, a strong sense of teamwork, and a focus on continuous learning and improvement for all.

### Achievements

#### Achievements

We had a mixed start to the year. While all our new students and staff have quickly settled into school life we have been hampered by constant absenteeism due to COVID and a virulent gastro. This has made teaching in some levels quite challenging with many children away as key concepts have been covered, and the constant staff absences has impacted on our delivery of specialist and intervention programs. Despite this, it has been fantastic to see our playgrounds full of children playing happily together and equally exciting to get into all the classrooms and see the children really excited about being back together at school.

#### Junior Hub

With builders currently working on site, undoubtedly one of our major achievements has been finally commencing construction of the new junior hub. Having been fortunate to obtain Federal funding to build a large learning hub, containing 8 Classrooms and a learning street initial progress was slow due to unseasonable wet weather and then major flooding in the area. Despite initial setbacks, the project is now well underway and this vibrant and contemporary learning area which will house 2-year levels is currently under construction with an anticipated completion date of April 2023.

#### School Review

Throughout 2022, staff thoroughly prepared for our external school review, with the leadership team working with an external consultant Steve Russell and then facilitating a number of staff meetings and a school closure day to audit our current reality and identify future goals and focus. In August 2022, our review took place with cohorts of junior and senior students, different staff groups, and some parents meeting with the review panel to share their thoughts about aspects of our school.

The panel of external reviewers spent two days at St Mary's and used our reports, plus their visits to the school and interviews with members of the school community, to complete the review process.

The Review panel report was extremely affirming and validated the school's achievements in the areas of Catholic School Culture, Learning and Teaching, Student well-being, Leadership and Stewardship, and Community Engagement. It also assisted with identifying 3 key priorities to focus on over the next 5 years to further improve student outcomes.

## **OSHC**

The expansion of @2 Murlong, the St Mary's OSHC program has been a major achievement. Opening in July 2021 with an intake of 2 students in after-school care, the service has rapidly gained popularity. An application to extend our license to cater for more students was approved and by the end of the 2022 year, the service provided before and after school care for up to 65 students a day from both St Mary's and SHNPS and has resulted in the employment of 12 part-time educators.

## **Staffing & Structures**

The senior Leadership structure expanded to include a second Learning and Diversity Leader Chris Prockter, who was appointed and worked in this role in preparation for our current senior leader in this area transitioning into retirement at the end of 2022.

All other leadership roles were filled, and three staff members undertook The CDLP (Country Diocesan leadership program) to further refine and develop their leadership skills.

The existing leadership structures were consolidated and refined with the continuation of weekly leadership meetings, weekly Senior Leadership team meetings, weekly wellbeing team meetings and regular LSO meetings conducted during school hours. All meetings were minutes and housed in Shared Drive for ease of access by staff. And as part of our commitment to building a collective leadership culture by sharing and distributing leadership responsibilities and nurturing and supporting others to become influential leaders themselves. The wellbeing of staff and students remained a high priority in 2022 with our wellbeing team offering support to many families and children when covid dominated the landscape in Term 1, during the floods staff PD on wellbeing and self-care and the promotion of EAP to all.

The wellbeing team expanded its membership to include a wellbeing support staff member for each level in the school and the arrival of Mac, our well-being puppy in Term 4 was an additional bonus. Made possible by a grant through the SYP, we worked in conjunction with Dogs Connection to purchase Mac and to undertake the accreditation to Be a Dog Connect School. Mac's key role will be to work with students with anxiety and those who are disengaged with school or struggle with school refusal. He has been attending puppy school and has made his visit visits onsite in the latter part of Term 4.

2022 saw unprecedented levels of anxiety and disengagement in some children which was supported on a case-by-case basis. The continuation of our commitment to a partnership with the

The Resilience Project was a positive experience, with its focus on gratitude, empathy, and mindfulness, and looking at what we have, not what we don't have in our quest to be content in our lives.

As a Leadership Team, we were mindful of staff fatigue in the transition back to normal school life, after 2 years of uncertainty. In consultation with staff, Staff meeting schedules were adjusted to allow levels greater autonomy in running regular level meetings based on identified needs and continued to prioritise what was essential to focus on in the curriculum, reducing

commitments for staff ensuring that while we remain strongly focused on providing quality teaching and learning experiences learning in the classrooms, they are balanced with a focus on their well-being and with re-establishing routines and structure.

Our commitment to showcasing all St Mary's has on offer paid off with our largest intake of Foundation students ever in 2022. Again the COVID restrictions for the first half of the 2022 year combined with the impact of the floods in Term 4 meant some creativity was required in promoting and showcasing the school. We tried a mid-week afternoon/evening Open Day for prospective families which were very popular and continued with weekend Open days and Come and Try sessions for families in the first half of the year.

Taking feedback from families and preschools we revamped our Flying Start program preschool to school offered to prospective Foundation students, running this for fewer weeks but across different days and primarily in like preschool groups. We also introduced Fly into Foundation, a more tailored orientation program that ran in Term 4 for students who were enrolled for the 2023 year. These adjustments were well received and resulted in strong enrolment figures again for the 2023 year.

We maintained a strong online presence with greater delivery of key communication to families and regular videos and snippets of daily life shared with families and the wider community using Facebook and Instagram. Our online followers continue to grow and with the help of our Student Media Leaders, we have maintained videoing and uploading the Student of the Week presentation each Friday. Radio advertising and the use of advertising in the local paper to reach prospective families were also utilised.

Throughout the year and we enjoyed liaising with the CEB staff in a combination of on-site visits and the provision of remote services.

The leadership team really focused on being savvy about our data and strategically looking at the data collected, its purpose, and how to interpret it to inform all teaching and learning programs and practices and drive student improvement. Work with Casey Stoner and Breanna Wade from the Catholic Education office to up-skill all staff to administer and interpret PAT data for this purpose.

Staff are strongly committed to really knowing the unique learning needs of each student and developing a sense of collective ownership of achievements and results. Data is looked at to determine priorities for intervention and extension in timetabled RTI meetings, with each level meeting once per month for this purpose. A comprehensive Professional Learning Schedule outlining all staff Professional Learning is circulated by the start of each term. All staff meetings and weekly professional development for staff are aligned to the school's Annual Action Plan and the AITSL standards, to ensure sufficient time was allocated to focused discussion and professional development around key priorities.

A whole school closure day in Term 1 facilitated by Steve Russell, assisted staff in focusing on our current strengths as a school and identifying priorities in readiness for our upcoming school review, while a day Facilitated by Catholic Mission up-skilled and respectfully challenged staff beliefs and understandings around catholic Social teachings on social justice held the staff in good stead over the year while our work with Tom Hierck about trauma-informed students assisted staff in creating a positive school culture and provided some strategies and the mindset to navigate the uncertainties that the school year presented.



Opportunities for staff check-ins or chats have become the norm with a commitment to check in regularly on all staff to listen to their success, challenges, and ideas for improvement becoming an embedded practice during the year. Professional conversation time was consistently built into the weekly level meeting times which includes a whole school weekly professional focus facilitated by the

Curriculum or Unit leader, analysis of data against the RTI questions in order to diagnose and respond to student needs, sharing of teaching strategies and expertise, and work on developing and embedding a guaranteed and viable curriculum in all key curriculum areas.

With a number of graduates, PTT staff, and early career teachers, our commitment to instructional coaching and mentoring remained a key focus. Weekly coaching sessions, opportunities for peer observations, and support to achieve identified PLP goals were well-supported through our coaching staff and the EI for teachers program. Strategic recruitment of LSO's completing their teacher training and a successful partnership with the ACU Teach Together regional hub has assisted with teacher recruitment, although attracting staff to our regional area remains an ongoing challenge.

## EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

### Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2022

Supporting Trauma Informed Students -Tom Hierck

HITS-High Impact Teaching Strategies

MultiLit

MacLit

Staff Wellbeing-Pulse

The Resilience Project

Educator Impact-EI for teachers

Enneagram profiling

Catholic Social teachings-Catholic Mission

RTI

Family Engagement -Tony Dalton

First Aid & Associated training

Educator Impact- Instructional Coaching

Mandatory Reporting

Use of sensory tools and resources

CDLP

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2022	45
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1006

### TEACHER SATISFACTION

Our 2021 survey data reveals that despite COVID teacher satisfaction ratings have been maintained. This has been recognition of some of the hard work done in recent years to improve shared leadership structures at the school and support shown during remote learning.

Some of the data include:

- Teacher Climate Historical 76.4 to 80.0 in 2021
- Curriculum Processes 85
- Parent Partnerships 80
- Quality Teaching 81

### TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	82.7%
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### ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	76.4%
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### TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	7.0%
Graduate	7.0%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	81.4%
Advanced Diploma	9.3%
No Qualifications Listed	4.7%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	58.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	45.2
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	56.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	40.4
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

## Community Engagement

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To strengthen the school's identity as a supportive learning community that connects strongly with families and the broader community.

To continually nurture and grow a school environment that is inclusive and engaging for all.

### Achievements

St Mary's actively seeks community engagement in the life of the school and once restrictions eased it was life as normal. Brekky Club and volunteers working in the canteen provided an avenue for many parents to engage in the life of the school as did parental attendance at incursions, school excursions, and camps. Service clubs visited to read to our younger students while representatives from sporting bodies assisted with the sporting events or special events at the school.

St Mary's holds many activities and events which actively encourage the attendance and participation of our broader school community. Our Foundation Welcome Picnic drew a large crowd while in Term 4, our annual Grandparents and Friends evening was revamped into a daytime event which proved very popular. A very large crowd of parents, carers, and extended family members enjoyed visiting classrooms and watching the staff and student performances while our Carols Evening in December was also a firm favourite. It was also fantastic to see the return of Harmony Day celebrations, The Great Race, the Book Parade, and a multitude of sporting events.

2022 saw the introduction of both Mother's Day morning tea and Donuts for Dad day to celebrate the special male figures in our lives. Both events saw huge numbers of parents, grandparents, and special friends come along to enjoy seeing classrooms in action before enjoying morning tea and the chance to play or spend time with their loved ones.

Prospective families were well catered for with the introduction of a mid-week Open day in Term 1, the traditional Sunday Open Days, and a series of School in Action and Come and Try days. These provided opportunities for prospective families to come along and see what the school has to offer as we went about our daily business.

Throughout the course of the year, staff actively built parent involvement and engagement in the learning process. Each term Curriculum newsletters were sent home outlining the learning to take place in all year levels and specialist subjects and staff regularly kept families informed of special events via class newsletters or Seesaw notifications. Our school newsletter was revamped with the school adopting a more contemporary and professional format and all special events were advertised on the newsletter, via PAM and shared on our social media platforms.

It was wonderful to finally have parents back onsite and with this saw the return of our whole school assemblies and family-friendly Friday lunches. Student of the Week has continued to be videoed and placed on our Facebook page to allow family members from afar to enjoy seeing students' special achievements.

The School Advisory Council continued to be fully represented with all positions filled. They demonstrated a strong commitment to the life of the school and their work and support throughout the year were much appreciated.

Our students participated in the Australia Day ceremonies, the ANZAC Day March and Remembrance Day, and our amazing school captains organised activities which supported local, national and international agencies including the Good Friday Appeal, Cancer for Kids, MS, St Vincent De Paul Winter Appeal and Caritas. Other student highlights included highlights include Footy Colours Day, PJ Day and Crazy Hair Day and the Colour Run.

Parent-Teacher Interviews and Meet the Teacher Chats provided an opportunity for parents and staff to look at the strengths and individual learning needs of each child and set goals for future learning during Term 1, while Parent-teacher Conversations in Term 3 provided another opportunity for parents and teachers to partner around student learning.

Installation of bilingual signage featuring all main languages to be found amongst our student population and incorporating the local indigenous language Wemba Wemba. Consolidation of weekly Wemba Wemba classes to indigenous families if requested with the support of local elders and a trained teacher.

Employment of bilingual aides with a community engagement component to their role. These aides liaise with the community, translate key information and ensure a connection between The Vietnamese, Chinese and Indian communities and the school.

Incorporation of Google Translate in the school newsletter to assist families to receive information in their language of choice.

## PARENT SATISFACTION

In past years, the following activities have strongly suggested there is a high level of satisfaction among staff, parents and students on the operation of the school.

This includes

- The welcoming and hospitable school environment
- Involvement in parish sacramental programs
- Attendance at school liturgies and assemblies
- Regular, productive school advisory council meetings
- Continued support for school-based fundraising ventures- continuous raffle
- Positive feedback regarding mid-year and annual reports
- Consistent attendance rates at student led conferences Term 1 and term 3
- Willingness of parents to openly discuss issues with the principal and staff

### 2021 Insight SRC data

Learning Focus -77

Approachability -78

School improvement -79

Connectedness to School-82

## Student motivation 77

## Future Directions

n/a