



# 2023

## Annual Report to the School Community



### St Mary's School

131 Powells Road, CLARKES HILL 3352

Principal: Clare Scanlon

Web: [www.smclarkeshill.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smclarkeshill.catholic.edu.au)

Registration: 1480, E Number: E2048

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## Principal's Attestation

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I, Clare Scanlon, attest that St Mary's School is compliant with:

- The minimum standards and other requirements for school registration and school boarding premises (if applicable) as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic).
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2023 school year under the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth) and the Australian Education Regulations 2023 (Cth).
- The Child Safe Standards as prescribed in Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises.

Attested on 01 May 2024

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## About this report

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St Mary's School is registered by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). The Annual Report to the School Community (ARSC), provides parents and the wider community with information about the school's activities and achievements throughout the year including information about various aspects of school performance. The Report is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the school community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students. Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can also be obtained from the [My School website](#).

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## Governing Authority Report

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The Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) governs 52 primary schools, one F – 8 school, and five secondary Colleges, educating around 13,500 students and employing more than 2,200 teachers and staff, from Mildura in the north, Portland in the south, and west to Edenhope and Nhill.

Now in its third year of operation, DOBCEL continues to work diligently to ensure all its schools flourish fully in their mission to provide high-quality, affordable, faith-based education opportunities for students and families in safe, supportive, and secure learning environments, that value diversity and promote cooperation, care, and respect for all.

During 2023, I was fortunate to visit all of our schools as the DOBCEL Board held meetings in different venues across the diocese. The spirit of harmony and sense of community, along with cultures of care for students and staff I experienced, was extremely encouraging. These school visits were also a reminder of the calibre of young people we have in our education system.

The role of school Principal continues to grow in complexity, demanding an increasingly diverse skillset and knowledge base. I am proud and deeply grateful for the exceptional dedication and professionalism of our 58 Principals, who, along with leadership colleagues and staff, work tirelessly to deliver education services for the families and communities they serve.

Enterprise Bargaining Agreement negotiations continued this year, involving staff from schools and human resources teams giving many hours and great effort to the process. Working with the inter-Diocesan bargaining group, DOBCEL continued to support efforts to finalise the Agreement with the Independent Education Union (IEU) as expediently as possible. DOBCEL continues to recognise the extraordinary work of staff in our schools and offices, and the substantial changes to the Agreement are intended to have a positive impact on staff and their workload.

As mandated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), the development of clear policy and procedural documents continued apace, with schools required to utilise DOBCEL foundational work, yet contextualise documents to suit the specific needs of each school. I express my gratitude to the team at Catholic Education Ballarat, who are both talented and conscientious in delivering this vital work.

During the year we saw the end of an era with the closure of St Brendan's Primary School, Dunnstown. Over 160 years of schooling was celebrated through speeches, laughter, and the sharing of many memories. Pleasingly, we also saw the refurbishment and opening of several new school buildings across the diocese this year.

I continue to be extremely grateful for the ongoing dedication, professionalism, and support of our personnel at Catholic Education Ballarat. I particularly acknowledge the commitment of our school leadership teams and their staff in nurturing and empowering the students in our care, as together we work to bring to life our vision: As partners in Catholic Education and open to God's presence, we pursue the fullness of life for all.

Tom Sexton

Executive Director DOBCELL

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## Vision and Mission

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### **VISION**

As a community, we are inspired by Christ, to pursue, provide and promote fullness of life for all.

### **MISSION**

To live the Christian message of love by -

- building positive relationships
- ensuring a safe, supportive and inclusive environment that promotes high outcomes and celebrates achievements
- providing relevant and purposeful opportunities for growth
- working in collaborative partnerships to provide high quality, stimulating and evidence informed learning
- empowering all to be responsible citizens of our world through caring for our common home

Our BRICKS for living a Christian Life

Be Respectful, Inclusive, Courageous, Kind

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 13: 34

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## School Overview

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St Mary's Primary School in Clarkes Hill is a small rural school located approximately 16 kilometres North East of Ballarat. Clarkes Hill is a farming area with much of the surrounding land being used to grow crops such as potatoes. The majority of our families are involved in full time crop farming. St. Mary's is steeped in tradition, with many of our children part of families that had their grandparents attend the school. This community involvement continues today and success of the school and Catholic Education depends largely on the partnership between the community and the teaching staff.

St. Mary's is part of the Parish of Bungaree. Rev Dr O'Collins, Bishop of Ballarat, officially opened St Mary's Clarkes Hill on Sunday, 14th April 1946. The local Prendergast family donated the land. Sr Chantal of the Presentation Order was in charge of 23 children. In 1957, the Presentation sisters withdrew from the Clarkes Hill School but, after approaches made to the Sisters of Mercy in Ballarat East by local community members, Sr Agatha Madden was appointed to the Clarkes Hill School. After the religious orders were no longer able to support the school directly, the first lay principal, Miss Patricia Leonard, was appointed to Clarkes Hill in 1974. Since then, there has been a succession of lay principals who have been in charge of the school.

In 1981, the community concentrated their efforts to provide a tennis court adjacent to the school for school and community use. Once again, this land was donated. In 2002, the school was able to secure funding for a major redevelopment of the school building where a new administration area was developed. In 2009 and into 2010, the school had two new classrooms and kitchen facilities installed, as well as a major upgrade to the playground facilities. Since that time, there have been building works completed to refurbish the older part of the school, including the Office/Reception area, Principal's Office, staff toilets and student toilets. The play areas have also been updated, including the tennis courts and artificial grass area. The entrance and covered area was refurbished to create a more connected and welcoming environment.

In 2023, St. Mary's was made of two learning units: the Junior Room comprising Foundation to Year Two and the Senior Room, Years Three to Six. There were 16 children comprising 11 families. Traditionally, our students came from the local district; however, over the past few years, we have had some families travel from the outskirts of Ballarat to attend St. Mary's in order to be part of a small country school experience. We are a small school community that values and strengthens the relationships between the students, teachers and families. Our children are exposed to a broad curriculum in an environment that is inclusive and respectful of all. Child safety at St. Mary's is a priority.

We are committed to passing on the Catholic Tradition to the children in our care and endeavour to uphold Christian values in all aspects of school life.





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## Principal's Report

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2023 has been a fairly settled year following 2 years of COVID disruptions and then in 2022 learning to live with COVID and trying to get to some 'normality' in our everyday lives, both at school and home. This year staff, children and families have appreciated stability and routine as we move forward and begin to plan ahead with certainty and a feeling of positivity.

As always, I write this report under the 5 headings that our 5 year school strategic plan and Annual Action Plan are formed.

### Catholic School Culture

This year we have fully adopted the Vision and Mission which was completed in 2022. This is now displayed in both of our schools as banners in the front office, on our websites, information books and around our schools.

### Vision

As a community, we are inspired by Christ, to pursue, provide and promote fullness of life for all.

### Mission

To live the Christian message of love by -

- building positive relationships
- ensuring a safe, supportive and inclusive environment that promotes high outcomes and celebrates achievements
- providing relevant and purposeful opportunities for growth
- working in collaborative partnerships to provide high quality, stimulating and evidence informed learning
- empowering all to be responsible citizens of our world through caring for our common home.

It will be important moving forward that this is referred to often and becomes a living document that drives all we do.

Louise Haintz has had her second year as the Religious Education Leader across both schools and she forms part of the Leadership Team. Along with Jo-anne Van Der Voort from

DOBCEL, she has continued to oversee the teaching and planning of Religion in our schools by supporting and sharing new knowledge and information with our classroom teachers. Louise also planned our bi-annual retreat which was facilitated by Fr. Justin and based on the Catholic Social Teachings that are a focus for the year and part of our Annual Action Plan.

Louise has introduced Biblodrama as a way of re-enacting biblical stories in small groups and making the Bible relevant to the children's life. The senior children in particular have really enjoyed learning and accessing the stories in this way and it is making RE lessons engaging for them. All teachers were trained in this in term 4.

As was planned in 2022, the sacramental program transitioned from school based to the preferred model of family based, parish coordinated and school supported. We were very fortunate that Dianne Reynolds, a parishioner from St. Brendan's very kindly offered to run the program. There were 4 sessions held on a Monday after school that were attended by children and a parent. Even though the delivery of the program may still need some 'tweaking', the overall feedback was that it went well. Thirteen Year 3 children made their Reconciliation and the Year 4 children and above made their Confirmation and Eucharist on August 13th at 8.45 am at Bungaree. Bishop Paul said this Mass.

Moving forward, the Sacramental Program will continue on a 2 year cycle.

### Learning and Teaching

Our priority is always to produce quality learning and teaching so that all children can reach their full potential in all areas. In 2023, we continued to prioritising teaching the necessary curriculum and assessing what our children need and perhaps can do without. Extra support was put in place for those children that required it and as always, data from assessments informed the particular needs of every child.

The Tutor program was funded again this year with Sarah Matthews coming in 3 days a week in Term 3, to work with a number of children for an hour and a half, to work through individual programs according to needs. It has been a valued initiative that has given an extra boost to support children that may not be quite at the expected standard at this time of the year.

Jo-anne Bond and Shay King from the Catholic Education Office have supported us in working towards the goals of our Agreed Partnership. The focus this year has been on the Catholic Social Teachings, the School Review and learning more about Structured Literacy. Jenny Curran, as Leader of Learning and Teaching, has driven the work on Structured

Literacy and is exploring with a team of teachers if this will fit with our Annual Action Plan and the schools focus in 2024. It has been decided that this partnership will continue next year and the focus will move to implementing Structured Literacy over the next few years .

The Professional Development days and after school sessions for staff in 2023 have included anaphylaxis training that needs to be done every 6 months, Structured Literacy, ReLATE, working on Catholic Social Teachings with Fr. Justin, planning forward for each term, report writing and the retreat. The purpose of teacher professional development is to support staff in their continued growth and improvement, to gain new knowledge and skills, which ultimately benefits students.

The school review was a time to reflect and celebrate the many things we have worked towards and accomplished over the past 5 years. While it took many hours of work it was a worthwhile experience and allowed all members of our school community - parents, children and staff, to have input. I thank Jo-anne Bond from DOBCEL, Ethan Corfee as the Principal representative and Cheryl Pefani, the external reviewer, for the time they spent with our staff, both before and during the process.

Our 3 priorities for the next 5 years are -

Strengthen the links between the Catholic story and tradition with the lived experience and context of the school community.

Improve student outcomes by engaging and empowering a community of learners.

Develop a visionary and strategic approach through shared leadership.

Through our yearly Annual Action Plan, these will be fleshed out and supported by specific strategies and actions over the coming years.

In Term 3, the school signed up for Elastic, which is a program to store and collate our data. The staff have been upskilled in how to use it and the many benefits it has for teachers to improve student outcomes. It is a tool that helps to look at gaps in learning and group children with similar needs together for any given topic that is being taught or revised. Next year, we will be exploring and implementing more vertical groups for teaching and learning, that is children are grouped based on their level of expertise, skill, or knowledge in a particular subject or area. It ensures that students are taught at an appropriate level of difficulty and receive instruction tailored to their abilities. This will be a process that is developed over time, starting with one subject area so that outcomes and progress can be carefully monitored.

Community Engagement

2023 has seen our families and wider communities fully embrace being back in our school after COVID. Some of the special occasions we have had include – Grandparents Day, Mothers and Fathers Day, Fun Run, Bush Dance and a disco. Parents have joined us on excursions and been involved in a variety of ways throughout the year. The 100% of attendance from families to all of these indicated to me how special these events are in building community and relationships between families, staff and students. It feels like pre-COVID days, if not better where there is a real sense of community within our school.

As a principal of two small schools, I continually look for opportunities to link with other school and organisations. Three initiatives begun in 2022 that have allowed staff and students to make new connections with others, have continued and gained momentum in 2023.

Two weekly combined school days have continued and the benefits for everyone are very obvious. These could not take place without the support of parents. Sadly, these will not happen in 2024 with the closing of St. Brendan's so it will be important to continue to seek out opportunities for the children of St. Mary's to combine with other schools. It is hoped that a relationship will develop with St. Alipius where many of the St. Brendan's children will be going and it is also one of our closest Catholic schools in Ballarat.

Secondly, the Year 3- 6 children once again combined with St. Michael's Daylesford and St. Brendan's Dunnstown for camp at Campaspe Downs. This allowed our Senior children to begin to build new relationships with another group of children, some that they may move onto Secondary School with. We also had an opportunity for the Senior children to have a sports Day at St. Michael's where children played in mixed teams of football, soccer, netball and newcomb ball against other schools.

Lastly, the Year 6 children were once again part of the LFBF (Little Feet, Big Footprints) initiative that the principals of Catholic schools from Daylesford, Ballan, Gordon, Creswick, Dunnstown and Clarkes Hill started in 2022. Year 6 children got to develop leadership skills, make connections and build friendships with other children that may be going to the same secondary school. Each school worked on a project to raise awareness of the needs of others and link it to CSTs. Our children worked on the Winter Coat Drive, gathering coats for families that may need them. They presented their project to the children from other schools.

As always, much time and thought goes into building enrolments in our schools. This year we have added an Instagram page to the many other things we currently do. Belinda from Edproconnect was employed to manage the page for us and we currently have 72 followers.

Our aim will be to continue to build this and reach as many people as we can. Social media is the way to go.

1000 'postcards' have also been printed which we will use to letter drop, distribute to kinders, playgroups and day care centers.

Melinda began a playgroup in Term 4 as another way to get families into our school. Every time someone goes over and above to do something to get the name and reputation of our school out there, it makes a difference.

The Parents and Friends have worked extremely hard at not only fundraising, but building our school community. There has been a disco, colour fun run, BBQs, the easter raffle, other smaller things done just for the children. Amelia, Bryden and Melinda as our P and F leaders have organised these events and they have been supported by all families in some way. Well done everyone - what a mammoth effort!!

Slowly but surely, word is starting to spread as our enrolments are moving in a positive direction with enquiries for 2025 starting already.

### Leadership and Stewardship

The Leadership Model begun in 2022 is now in its second year and is working well. Louise is the RE Leader, Jenny the Teaching and Learning Leader and Callum the Learning Diversity and Wellbeing Leader. These are across both schools. As a group we aim to meet at least 3 - 4 times a term. This group also leads school PD sessions and support staff in different areas. While these are nominated roles, we work on a shared leadership model where all staff are consulted and have input in major decisions. With the closing of St. Brendan's and a new Principal, this model will be revised and modified to meet the needs of St. Mary's for the 2024 and beyond.

By the end of the year, our 5 year strategic plan for 2024 - 2028 was developed and this will drive the Annual Action Plan for next year. The 2024 AAP will be shared with families and staff by the end of Term 4. It is based on the 3 priorities mentioned above.

Upon reflection as part of our Partnership Agreement with DOBCEL, the Leadership Team feels that our goals that were set for 2023 have been achieved. They were -

To enhance teacher knowledge and focus on Catholic Social teachings  
Use recontextualised prayer and liturgical experiences to enhance and promote our Catholic Identity in line with the diocesan normative stance

To introduce and develop more Indigenous awareness through everyday practise and curriculum

These will continue to be part of our plan for 2024, particularly the final goal as we still have some work to do in this area.

We continued with combined School Advisory Council meetings this year, with the final one for the year, the AGM held as separate schools. The SAC have been supportive of decisions made, questioned things at times and provided feedback, both of which are welcomed, and worked hard to continue to build the profile of the school. The P and F and SAC have been made up of the same people - Amelia, Bryden and Melinda and have always been a professional and honest group that are a sounding board for me.

The new award for staff is now in place and beginning to be introduced this year with full implementation by the start of next year. While there are many positives for staff, it will impact the way we do a number of things in 2024. We are working through what it means for all of the school community with some changes being introduced this year. Parents will be informed of any changes that impact them, as they occur.

As anyone in the workforce knows, risk and compliance is something we deal with everyday. It has meant a lot of work for Claire and myself as a number of things need to be put in place and checked off. This year, Vicky Hodgson from DOBCEL has been allocated to our school to help get everything in order and make sure that we are ticking all of the boxes to be compliant and meet the VRQA requirements.

## Wellbeing

As always, the wellbeing of students, staff and parents remains an area of great importance for us. Our PBS (Positive Behaviour Supports) model allows staff, students and parents to have a common language and guidelines when dealing with specific behaviours.

In 2023, all staff completed the second day of ReLATE (Reframing Learning and Teaching Environments) with the third day following in 2024. This is a research and evidence informed model that supports schools to create the preconditions for improved teaching. The PD provided staff with an insight into trauma and the effect it can have on everyone in our schools, especially our students. ReLATE focuses on the wellbeing of all in our schools. This year all students have an individual stress management plan.

The new Child Safe Standards introduced in last year are now fully implemented thorough all policies, procedures and practises.

The 11 Standards include specific requirements:

to involve families and communities in organisations' efforts to keep children and young people safe for a greater focus on safety for Aboriginal children and young people  
to manage the risk of child abuse in online environments in relation to governance, systems and processes  
to keep children and young people safe.

Tina has continued supporting children, staff and families one day a fortnight at each school. Her role has been vital in supporting members of our school community through some challenging times over the past few years and adds to the many ways we prioritise well being for all.

Farewells and Welcome:

Sullivan, Tara, Chloe and Pat are moving onto secondary school this year. They have been caring, compassionate, fun loving and easy going Year 6's. They will be sadly missed by everyone. We wish them well as they continue the next stage of their educational journey at their chosen secondary school.

With the Year 6's leaving, so we farewell four long standing families of St. Mary's. The Toose, Carlson Hanrahan and Summer families have all been at St. Mary's for a number of years, some many more than others - from 18 years (Toose family) to 5 years (Summer family). All have been valued members of St. Mary's contributing much to the school over the years. They have always supported the school and attended numerous events during their time at St Mary's. All four families will be fondly remembered and always welcome at St. Mary's. Know that you are a part of our extended family, and we hope to see you at future events and celebrations.

We also farewell Lyndal and Jess. Lyndal was an LSO for 9 years and more recently a teacher in the Junior class each Friday. Jess has taught Italian for 4 years and also been part of the Tutor program. We thank them for what they have contributed to St. Mary's over the years. They will be missed. I wish them both well as they venture onto new and exciting adventures.

At this stage, we are exploring options for another language to be taught in 2024.

As I write this, we have one enrolment for 2024, possibly two as we still wait to hear from a family, but as we know, things are always changing at St. Mary's and this may change as before the start of the school year.

In 2023 we welcomed three new families throughout the year. Jeremiah started in Foundation in Term 3, Vanessa also began in Term 3 and Alexis joined us in Term 4.

We also welcomed their families who have quickly become a valued part of our school community.

I wish to acknowledge the work of our dedicated, caring and hard working staff that always go over and beyond to make sure that our children are happy, learning and cared for. Our students are at the heart of every decision we make and everything we do each day.

To our wonderful, beautiful children that come each day with a smile, ready to learn, look after each other and have fun. They have shown resilience and positivity throughout the whole year. Their care and concern for each other is a joy to see and the relationships they have with each other and the staff is what makes St. Mary's so special.

Lastly, to our families who support our school in so many varied ways. For your honesty, feedback and willingness to work with me and the staff for our children, thank you all. I firmly believe that together as a school community, when we strive towards common goals, we are stronger and can achieve so much more.

It has been a year of both celebrations and some sadness. As the enrolments continue to steadily grow at St. Mary's, sadly, St. Brendan's will close at the end of the 2023 school year. This news has affected both staff and families as the two school communities have become very close and shared so much together, particularly over the past few years.

Making the decision to retire at the end of the year has been a difficult one, but I also believe the right one for both myself and for St. Mary's moving forward. I have given my job my all and now it is time for me to spend time with my family, travelling and doing some of those things time hasn't always allowed me to.

St. Mary's is in a good spot with enrolments slowly increasing and now sitting at 17. It is time for new ideas and a new energy to continue into 2024 and beyond. I know that the staff, children and families will support the new Principal and together the school will continue to thrive.

As I write this, the new principal has not been announced. Whoever it is, I wish them well as they take on the role as your new Principal. For me, it has been quite the journey, starting when COVID first started and as a consequence, keeping things steady and moving along during uncertain times then in my third year, beginning to bring our communities back



together with the focus on learning and teaching, as well as focusing on the task of attracting enrolments.

I have thoroughly enjoyed being Principal of St. Mary's and St. Brendan's. I have learnt a lot, made many new friends and grown personally and professionally. I feel blessed to have been part of St. Mary's. I can honestly say I am proud of what we have achieved together and the future looks bright.

I wish all of the school community every happiness for 2024.

There are exciting times ahead.

As always, take care,

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## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To nurture and foster the lived faith of students, families and staff as part of a flourishing Catholic community in a contemporary context.

### Achievements

During 2023 St Mary's' School community: staff, students and parents worked to encourage a flourishing Catholic community through:

- School representation at community and parish celebrations and events.
- Teachers working collaboratively with Religious Education Office personnel to implement quality teaching and learning programs in Religious Education lessons.
- Continuing to work with new Awakenings document.
- Implementing teaching and learning experiences that are devised by using Awakenings to teach Religion.
- Regular liturgies were planned and celebrated for special events throughout the church year.
- Beginning of year and end of Year Mass, as well as Graduation, was an opportunity for the parish community to come together in prayer.
- Religious Education Leader attended Coordinator Professional Development days throughout the year.
- Collaboratively planning with CEO staff to teach about social justice in an explicit manner. The Student Leadership Team chose a Catholic Mission and a local focus.
- Explicit links between Inquiry units of work, social justice action and the Religious Education Program were prioritized.
- RE News was included in the newsletter explaining and highlighting significant times of the Church Year.
- The students made a significant financial contribution to Catholic Missions and Caritas through the organisation of fundraising events.
- Staff continued to deepen their understanding of the ECSI data and plan religion lessons with a contemporary Catholic approach.
- This year, the emphasis moved from a School Based Sacramental Program to a Parish Led Sacramental Program. Several students received the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.

- 'Unpacking' ECSI (Enhancing Catholic School Identity) data to inform learning and teaching - all teachers.

## Value Added

In 2023, the school undertook the following activities to bring about overall School Improvement:

- School liturgies and Masses were held to highlight liturgical seasons and significant event.
- Teacher professional development to improve teacher knowledge and to assist staff to focus on the development of rich assessment tasks to assess and evaluate student achievement and progress.
- REL modeling how to re-contextualise prayer for staff.
- Collective agreement on prayer practices in the classroom.
- Parents and the wider community were invited to special liturgies and Masses.
- Many liturgies and Masses were held on Combined Schools Days so that more can attend as a bigger community.
- Staff plan RE units each term with DOBCEL staff.
- RE leader attends termly meetings with other RE leaders and Office staff.
- At least twice termly, a PLT (Professional Learning Time) has a RE focus and is led by Office staff or school RE leader.

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## Learning and Teaching

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To challenge and support every student to achieve continuous improvement and success informed by evidence through providing an engaging and purposeful learning environment.

### Achievements

- Students were identified through assessment who would require an individual learning plan.
- Data collected by staff demonstrated improvement in literacy and numeracy skills.
- Regular professional development was undertaken by staff in the areas of Numeracy, Literacy, Religious Education, Positive Behaviour Supports and ReLATE (Reframing Learning and Teaching Environments).
- Staff worked with the CEO Education Officers throughout the year on curriculum areas and learning diversity.
- Wellbeing, Learning Diversity, Religious Education and Learning and Teaching Leaders support colleagues and lead PLTs responding to needs of students and teachers.
- Teachers worked collegially to plan units of inquiry across both schools that would include rich learning and assessment tasks and continue to develop better links between staff and children.
- Development of common understandings, language used, progression of skills taught and a planning pro-forma used by all teachers.
- Staff engaged in professional discussion, collaboration and networking with other schools in relation to Positive Behaviour Supports and Community of Practise.
- The staff continued to implement a comprehensive assessment schedule to record student data in a collaborative space to examine current performance and inform future direction.
- The staff provided regular communication to parents of Learning Intentions and student progress through the online platform of digital portfolios, Seesaw.
- The school was involved in a partnership with CEO. Jo-Anne Bond and Shay King worked closely with staff to produce the school review document and begin the implementation of Structured Literacy.

### Student Learning Outcomes

Teachers use a number of data sets to monitor student-learning outcomes. As well as NAPLAN, the main standardised assessment used is PAT - Progressive Achievement Tests. The following are PAT data results in all areas assessed from Foundation to Year 6.

70% of students at stanine 5 or above in PAT R 2023 (75% in 2022).

60% of students at stanine 5 or above in PAT S 2023 (67% in 2022).

75% of students at stanine 5 or above in PAT M 2023 (50% in 2022).

NAPLAN 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.

<b>NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards</b>			
<b>Domain</b>	<b>Year level</b>	<b>Mean Scale score</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	*	*
Numeracy	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	*	*
Reading	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	*	*
Spelling	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	*	*
Writing	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	*	*

\*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2023 due to participation not meeting these criteria or no students were assessed. Participants include students who were assessed, including non-attempt, or those exempted from the test.

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## Student Wellbeing

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To develop children's capacity to become positive, resilient and independent in all aspects of their learning and behaviour.

### Achievements

- Implement formalised surveying of students regarding Student Wellbeing and Safe Learning Environments.
- The school values to be Respectful, Inclusive, Courageous and Kind are explicitly taught. The BRICK Matrix outlines expected behaviours for students under these four values.
- The Student Voice is included in the school newsletter. Children were able to highlight their learning and other special events.
- Meetings between the Student Leadership group and the Principal took place.
- Regular discussions and class meetings were held with the students and lead by the teachers to aid the children in developing further problem solving skills.
- Teachers and parents had excellent relationships and made regular contact with each other throughout the year.
- Learning Diversity/Wellbeing Personnel from the CEO were used to help identify needs of children with specific learning needs.
- Regular Combined Schools Days were held with our sister school, St Brendan's Dunnstown enabling the children to establish relationships with a wider cross-section of children.
- Students in Year Six took part in Transition days to aid in their move to secondary schooling.
- A Pastoral Care worker worked with children, staff and parents on a part-time basis throughout the year.
- A Pre-Prep program was conducted to initiate children into school life prior to the commencement of school.
- Utilisation of current and emerging technologies to build student engagement and assist students to develop their overall knowledge and skills in using ICT.
- The children have opportunities to engage in personal learning on a daily basis.
- Camp Program for the Year 3,4,5 and 6 students was held with St Brendan's Dunnstown and St Michael's Daylesford.
- Major and Minor breaches of the expected behaviours continue to be referred to and used as needed.
- A behaviour tracking document and Live Diaries are used to collect data and monitor children behaviours and wellbeing over time.

- All children have a Buddy for support and to work with at specific times.

## **Value Added**

Pastoral Care worker maintained contact with vulnerable children and families.

Mindfulness activities were included as part of weekly tasks

Reviewed the Major and Minor behaviour document to make it more user friendly and succinct.

Little Feet Big Footprints, a young leaders initiative for Year 6 students was established with St Brendan's Dunnstown, St Michael's Daylesford, St Augustine's Creswick and St Brigid's Ballan.

## **Student Satisfaction**

Student satisfaction in our school is gauged through participating in school events and by their willingness to engage in activities, which lead them beyond the classroom learning environment. Our students indicate a genuine willingness to involve themselves in community events and to represent our school in a variety of different circumstances. Our students maintain a high interest in our school with a positive attitude to learning. Students have opportunities to develop leadership skills through the buddy program, peer tutoring, leadership and classroom meetings.

Attendance rate for students is high.

The 2022 Insight SRC data shows that Student Wellbeing remains high with an actual score of 83.29 as compared to 2017 which was at 77.8. St. Mary's score for Student Wellbeing is in the top 68% of Australian schools. The Student Behaviour Aggregate Indicator has risen from 78.4 to 83.9.

## **Student Attendance**

If a child comes late to school, they must report to the office and receive a late pass which is given to the class teacher so that the roll can be completed accordingly. If the office is unattended, the children come straight to class and report to their class teacher. Parents of absent students are required to notify the school of the absence and reasons for the absence either by phone, email, via SIMON. If no notification has been received by 9:30am, the parent is contacted via phone call. Staff members are to bring to the attention of the Principal any student/s whose attendance is irregular or whose absences appear unwarranted. The

Principal will, after consulting with the class teacher, contact parents to discuss. If support is needed, strategies will be implemented to assist the family so attendance can resume.

<b>Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level</b>	
Y01	86.7%
Y02	88.4%
Y03	87.6%
Y04	72.6%
Y05	92.2%
Y06	86.1%
Overall average attendance	85.6%



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## Leadership

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To strengthen student outcomes by creating a professional learning community in which all staff members share educational leadership.

### Achievements

- Professional Development was offered and accepted by staff in a variety of areas, including School Wide Positive Behaviour Supports, Numeracy, Literacy, Religious Education and Learning Diversity.
- Teacher and leadership increased capacity particularly to adopt contemporary learning practices.
- Link Professional Development with the Annual Action Plan and agreed staff roles.
- Provide opportunities for staff to share their new learning with fellow members of staff through PLTs.
- School Advisory Council members participated in an Induction process.
- Staff participated in Annual Review Meetings with the principal.
- Leadership Meetings were held regularly between the Principal and Leadership Team.
- We have maintained the Structure of Leadership which was reviewed and changed last year. The Leadership Team consists of a Religious Education Leader, Well-being and Learning Diversity Leader, and a Learning and Teaching Leader.
- Professional Learning Team meetings were prioritised which included the collaboration of teaching staff from both schools.
- Deepened staff understanding of feedback as a powerful tool for learning and continued to embed a culture of feedback across the school.
- Professional Development was attended by the whole staff or all teachers when appropriate.
- All staff are considered leaders and have input into decisions made.

<b>Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning</b>	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
Structured Literacy	
ReLATE days	
Catholic Social Teachings - Full Staff Retreat	
First Aid Training	
Critical Conversations	
Primary Leaders of Learning	
Warden Training and Fire Equipment Training	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	5
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1540.00

### Teacher Satisfaction

Data from insight SRC indicated that the majority of St. Mary's school climate data is in the top 25% of schools across Victoria.

These results, along with good teacher retention rate and attendance, would indicate moderate to high teacher satisfaction at St. Mary's.

The Four Pillars of Culture (SIF Survey: Interpretive Report 2022) are as follows

Empathy 92.2

Clarity 51.4

Engagement 73.2

Learning 48.4

<b>Teacher Qualifications</b>	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	18.2%
Graduate	9.1%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	54.5%
Advanced Diploma	18.2%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

<b>Staff Composition</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	6
Teaching Staff (FTE)	2.5
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	5
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	2.0
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

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## Community Engagement

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To provide further opportunities for parents to be actively engaged in student learning.

To strengthen the partnership between St. Mary's and other schools, the Parish, and the local and wider community to promote authentic student learning.

### Achievements

- The children from St. Mary's and St. Brendan's participated in a five-day swim / gym program together in Term One.
- The Advisory Councils from both St Mary's and St Brendan's combined on three occasions throughout the year.
- Student Voice in School Improvement is encouraged.
- Regular Student Voice components on the school newsletter enable the children to highlight their learning and special events.
- Active support for and participation in the activities of the Parents and Friends.
- Focusing on the newsletter as the main form of communication to the wider school community. All families now receive this via Schoolzine and as a hard copy.
- The full implementation of the Schoolzine App to enable immediate and better communication between home and school.
- Built clarity especially around the intentions and expectations for each of the school improvement areas.
- Improve communication with parents through the ongoing use of PAM.
- The school's Action Plan Goals were included in each report to the Advisory Council.
- Students continued their connections with other schools by combining for sporting events, special events, camps and learning opportunities.
- Principal visited local kindergartens in Terms One and Four to distribute pamphlets and speak to prospective families.
- Brown Hill kindergarten staff and students visited St Mary's to promote the school.
- Our Pastoral Care worker was involved in student lessons to help with strengthening relationships, Year Six transition program, one-on-one discussions and working with children referred by parents.
- Pastoral Care worker consulted and worked with individual parents and families.
- New families were supported by being part of the Buddy Family program and invited to a morning tea.
- Student led assemblies were held at least once termly. All children were given the opportunity to share their learning.

- Open days and tours of the school continued and were advertised in Term 1, then conducted according to individual appointments.
- Continue to develop and update newly formatted website, Facebook and Instagram page as promotional tools.
- Promotional postcards, photos, flyers and videos were used to market our school.
- The initiative - Little Feet Big Footprints was begun in 2022 and continued this year. Year 6 children from St. Michael's Daylesford, St. Patrick's Gordon, St. Brigid's Ballan, St. Augustine's Creswick and St. Brendan's Dunnstown met on 6 occasions to develop leadership skills and make connections with others to assist with the transition to secondary school.
- Discussions were held in relation to a community fair for 2024 to reignite partnerships with local businesses and the community.

## Parent Satisfaction

Regular attendance by parents at special events, liturgies and masses.

100% attendance to Parent Teacher Child conferences.

Enthusiastic support for the Parents and Friends meetings and activities.

A high rate of involvement by Parents and Friends in school focused events.

Consistently high attendance at school assemblies.

High attendance to special events, not only of parents, but also of extended family members and the Clarkes Hill community.

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## Financial Performance

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The school's financial performance information and a report of the financial activities of the school's boarding premises (if applicable) have 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).

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at [www.smclarkeshill.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smclarkeshill.catholic.edu.au)