



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

2023

Annual Report to the School Community



St Joseph's School

40 Milners Road, YARRA JUNCTION 3797

Principal: Nicholas Boyhan

Web: www.sjyarrajunction.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 1579, E Number: E1207

Principal's Attestation

I, Nicholas Boyhan, attest that St Joseph'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 12 May 2024

About this report

St Joseph'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](#).

Governing Authority Report

When Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) launched our inaugural strategic plan MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World just over a year ago, I spoke about the need for our whole organisation to reflect on the biggest challenges that confront us, and to work at speed to find practical, ambitious, student-centred solutions.

As a relatively new governing authority, 2023 set us on the path to achieving our first goals, as we focussed our efforts on building strong foundations for success. The four pillars of MACS2030 – Inspired by Faith; Flourishing Learners; Enabled Leaders; and Enriched Communities - serve to guide our work on how we achieve our strategic intent.

When we surveyed our teachers in late 2022, over 80 per cent told us that they want access to quality teaching and assessment resources. So in January 2023, we secured a system-wide licence for MACS primary and secondary schools to access the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) assessment suite. The inclusion of the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Survey allows schools to monitor the wellbeing of their students and target resourcing to specific areas of need. Together, these tools provide a coherent and systematic approach to student assessment.

In partnership with Ochre Education, we began work on F-6 Mathematics curriculum resources, being developed in a phased approach over three years, and delivered the first tranche for F-2. A key consideration in developing the materials is ensuring teachers retain autonomy to tailor curriculum implementation to meet the individual and local needs of students.

This is an exciting development for our MACS community, clearly demonstrating the commitment we all share to delivering the best possible education opportunities for our 120,000 students and supporting our 10,000 classroom teachers to be the very best that they can be.

Archbishop Peter commissioned a comprehensive review of Religious Education curriculum, the first in over a decade. It offers us some challenges, but fundamentally is a hope-filled report that invites a path of ongoing work to develop a new RE curriculum for all Catholic schools. We continued Working Together in Mission with Parish Priests throughout the Archdiocese, including through regular roundtable discussions.

Across greater Melbourne, one in five students attend a Catholic school and 2023 saw steady growth in enrolments across our system, demonstrating the value families place on a Catholic education and the high quality, holistic education MACS schools provide.

As a system of schools, we can be better together, reducing the administrative load on our schools and freeing our teachers and principals to focus on what they do best.

I would like to pay tribute to our MACS school and office colleagues who have worked so hard to achieve our goals. We look forward to further strengthening those partnerships as we work together to deliver an education that inspires young people to enrich the world.

Yours sincerely

Dr Edward Simons

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

Vision and Mission

St Joseph's School Vision

Inspired by Jesus Christ,
St Joseph's school is a community;
Nurturing personal, spiritual and academic growth
empowering all for a future of hope.

St Joseph's School Mission

Our mission is inspired by the spirit of St Mary of the Cross and the Josephite Sisters.
St Joseph's School Community is one in which members:

- are inspired by Jesus Christ and the gospel values of love, truth, justice and peace.
- have a sense of belonging and are active contributors to the parish, local and wider community.
- will be given many opportunities to develop spiritually, physically, academically, emotionally, socially and culturally.
- value life-long learning and have high expectations of possible achievements.
- find meaning through integrating faith, life and culture.
- aspire to create a just world that promotes the dignity of every human person.
- promote the Gospel message according to Christian values.
- will be aware of the rights of all people and will be responsible for their own actions.
- appreciate and care for the natural environment.
- build relationships that foster a collaborative approach.

School Overview

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is nestled in a picturesque bush setting in Yarra Junction. Established in 1958, the school has a proud history of providing quality Catholic education in the Upper Yarra Valley. As part of the Parish of Sacred Heart Upper Yarra Valley, we nurture an environment supportive of the beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church and the values of care, responsibility, respect, justice, collaboration and learning. These are evident in all aspects of our school life.

Although a relatively small school, we are proud of the comprehensive, exciting and engaging curriculum we provide to cater for the diverse learning needs of all students. As well as providing evidence based literacy, numeracy and inquiry-based programs, the school also offers excellent sporting, visual and performing arts learning experiences.

The school community aspires to excellence and values the development of the whole person. We pride ourselves on being a warm, welcoming and friendly community, inclusive of everyone. Partnerships between home, school and the wider community are greatly valued. We encourage participation and invite families to be actively involved in the school and parish community.

School enrolment numbers have remained fairly constant in recent years, hovering around 100 students.

In 2023 the school consisted of six classes and 18 staff, including both full-time and part-time, in teaching and non-teaching roles. The classes were made up of the following multi-age

combinations:

1 x Foundation

1 x Year One/Two Classes

1 x Year Three/Four Classes

2 x Year Five/Six Classes

Classes range in size from the mid-teens to the low 20s.

In 2023, the Specialist Programs consisted of 50-minute lessons in Performing Arts, Japanese(LOTE), and Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM).

The Upper Yarra Valley Parish School precinct comprises St Thomas a Becket Church, the Presbytery and the five St Joseph's School buildings spread across 17 acres of beautiful bushland. The site remains mostly bush resulting from careful development over the years,

sympathetic to the natural surroundings. The school provides attractive and functional learning spaces for the students.

Principal's Report

The following Annual Report to the School Community is based on data and evidence from the 2023 school year. The Australian Government has requested that schools publicly report on a number of areas to demonstrate school performance. These requirements are outlined in this report. We hope that you find this information valuable and a reflection of the great achievements of St Joseph's School, Yarra Junction.

Following some very challenging years, the 2023 year got off to a great start .

The leadership team consisted of:

Nicholas Boyhan - Principal

Katie Vranken - Deputy Principal

Terry Foley - Religious Education and Sports Leader

Simone Traynor - Literacy Leader

Lisa Bourke - Numeracy Leader

Rebecca Beveridge - Student Wellbeing Leader

The school embarked on a productive year of teaching and learning, with a narrow and sharp focus on implementing consistent and high-quality pedagogical practices that enable meaningful connections between faith and life and enhance student voice and agency.

2023 was our first year since 2020 that was relatively unaffected by major health issues. However, Post-Pandemic staff shortages provided another set of challenges, with difficulties filling all classroom positions. We are very grateful to Meg Urquhart, Erin Mullan, Thelma Asbury and Deb Fahey for filling some of the gaps throughout the year.

Despite these challenges, the school maintained a focus on Professional Learning and School Improvement. Our work on Positive Behaviours for learning (PBL) continued with the staff and students. Leaders also worked collaboratively with colleagues from our Rural Community of Practice (COP). Leaders attended School Improvement Learning Collaborative Professional Learning meetings. They remained actively engaged with their colleagues from other schools and Learning Consultants from Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS). It was refreshing for staff to engage in face-to-face professional learning, staff meetings and Professional Learning Team meetings after many years of online learning.

The vast majority of our students continued to make progress with their learning. The data collected by the National Assessment Platform indicated that scores for students in Year 3 and Year 5 were close to those of similar schools in all areas of literacy and numeracy. This was also reflected in many of the other school based assessments. We implemented intervention strategies in 2023 to support the students whose learning has been negatively affected by shut-downs in previous years in an effort to make up for lost ground for these learners.

Once again, the majority of the planned activities, including camps, incursions and excursions were able to proceed. Staff and students thoroughly enjoyed these extra-curricula opportunities available in 2023. Staff conducted thorough risk assessments for all activities with

a sharp focus on Student Safety. The Year 3/4 students attended camp at CYC City Camp and the Year Five/Sixes attended the Phillip Island Adventure Resort. These were two outstanding experiences for all involved.

We are grateful that our prayers for a better and brighter year in 2023 were answered. It provided us with greater teaching and learning opportunities for students and staff.

We look forward to ongoing engagement with our parents through our many groups, including Parents & Friends, Advisory Board and Grounds & Maintenance. Partnering with parents in the learning and teaching process, the liturgical and sacramental celebrations, and the social life of the school has been wonderful this year.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

That students are more engaged in scripture, traditions, prayer and liturgy across all learning.

Achievements

Throughout 2023 we worked to strengthen teacher capacity to model practice that links scripture, traditions, prayer and liturgy to people, cultures and beliefs.

St Joseph's has continued Faith Dimension Professional Learning with the 'Rural Community of Practice' (COP). As a collective, we continued our work with Dr Peta Goldberg (Australian Catholic University - Brisbane). During our regular staff meeting, Dr Goldberg led two online professional learning sessions per term on the Gospel of St Matthew and introduced staff to the historical beginnings of Catholic Social Teachings.

A two-day staff conference was held at the Catholic Leadership Centre in East Melbourne. On day one, the staff ventured to the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Thornbury. Staff were exposed to Aboriginal faith perspectives and how the Spiritual is deeply embedded in Aboriginal life. On day two, the staff investigated the charism of St Joseph and his presence in the city of Melbourne. This included a visit to the Mary Mackillop Heritage Centre, the Mary Mackillop forecourt at ACU, the St Joseph chaplet in St Patrick's Cathedral and St Francis of Assisi church in Lonsdale St.

Value Added

The Religious Education Leader attended the Eastern Region Network to gain ideas and strengthen personal skills to lead other staff in the development of the Faith Dimension program.

The Principal, Deputy Principal and Religious Education Leader worked closely with counterparts from the Rural COP Schools, supported by Religious Education Consultants from Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools.

Classes attend weekday parish masses at the church and have the opportunity to discuss matters of Church, faith and scripture by making an appointment with Fr Michel Coroveau (Parish Priest).

Students participated in the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation that included attendance at a series of family sacramental preparation nights held at St Mary's, Mt Evelyn.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To build shared understanding and consistency of pedagogical practices for all staff.

Outcomes:

That there is a strategic professional learning plan for ongoing knowledge and development of skills.

That there is an upward trend in student learning outcomes.

Achievements

Guided by our ongoing involvement in the School Improvement Learning Collaborative, we have continued to build on our use of data to inform the next steps in student learning.

In Numeracy, as part of the Strategic Professional Learning Plan, all learning support officers attended professional development in numeracy intervention - gaining individual and school accreditation in GRIN (Getting Ready in Numeracy). Templates and protocols for planning maths interventions were created and used by teachers and learning support officers. Templates and protocols for planning maths lessons were also updated and shared with staff and guidance given by the Numeracy Leader.

In Literacy, continued focus was placed on using data to inform literacy instruction and intervention. Professional learning time was given to modeling pedagogical practices with agreed processes in spelling and writing. Further time was invested in investigating the Science of Learning and the Science of Reading and staff professional development was prepared for 2024.

Student Learning Outcomes

The data collected by the National Assessment Platform indicated that scores for students in Year 3 and Year 5 were close to those of similar schools in all areas of literacy and numeracy. There is no data to compare to the state mean.

According to the English Online Interview modules conducted in early 2024, all 2023 Foundation students, achieved the benchmark of F-F.5 with many scoring higher, and 86% of Year 1 students achieved 1.0-1.5 with many scoring higher.

There will be more work on exploring and adopting evidence-informed teaching practices in Numeracy and Literacy in 2024.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	388	36%
	Year 5	467	42%
Numeracy	Year 3	411	64%
	Year 5	468	42%
Reading	Year 3	407	57%
	Year 5	485	75%
Spelling	Year 3	387	43%
	Year 5	482	75%
Writing	Year 3	372	64%
	Year 5	477	75%

*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.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal: To build students' capacity to be agents of their own interpersonal skills and learning.

Intended Outcome: That student learning disposition and student voice improve.

Achievements

The year 2023 resulted in many significant achievements for our school, community, and students. In 2023, we developed a focus on Student Leadership by introducing various leadership roles, including School Captains, Sports House Leaders, Social Justice and Liturgy Leaders, and many others. We also introduced a Student Representative Council (SRC), giving students a voice and role in improving our school and community. Students were involved in organising and running various events and lunchtime activities.

In 2023, we continued to be supported by Roland Wanns (MACS) and our Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) journey. Teachers planned lessons based on each of the elements of our Behaviour Matrix. They explicitly taught the expected behaviours in various settings, around the school and community. They rewarded positive behaviours with Gotcha Tokens, Student of the Week Awards and Whole School Rewards. A Whole School Behaviour Flowchart was rolled out and is continued to be used to track undesired behaviours and guide teachers in their response. The SWIS (School-wide Information System) program was put into place to collect this data formally, and it will be used to target critical areas of learning for the students.

Students engaged in regular Social-Emotional lessons. In Friendship Groups, students developed their knowledge about being 'Social Thinkers' by becoming aware of how to better understand the social world, foster relationships, develop organisational skills, and build social competencies to meet their authentic social goals.

Students and Staff began using the platform See-Saw to develop digital learning portfolios. Students used See-Saw to talk about their learning, including elements of learning intentions and success criteria and voicing their opinions about their work.

Students engaged with the PAT SEL testing platform to express their feelings and attitudes in their daily lives and during their school days. Staff will use this data to inform their teaching practices and increase the development of student-teacher relationships.

Value Added

Students participated in Positive Behaviours for Learning and Respectful Relationship Lessons throughout 2023.

Electronic Playground data collection assisted with identifying and addressing wellbeing issues.

PBL Behaviour Matrix and Behaviour Flow Chart provided a universal language for staff, students and parents in regard to the behaviour expectations held at St Joseph's.

Tracking and monitoring of students requiring support with their behaviour.

Development and implementation of Student Leadership roles and a Student Representative Council.

Student Satisfaction

As evident in the 2023 Melbourne Archdiocese Schools - School Improvement Survey (MACSSIS) Data, students perceive the social and learning climate of the school to a high standard (School Climate).

Students developed an increase in their access to quality staff support in order to feel connected, safe and respected while at school (Physical and Psychological Safety). Students have responded to the PBL Expectation that they speak up when they are feeling unsafe. This is a testimony to the relationship of trust that exists between staff and students at St Joseph's School.

Students perception on school leadership being evident in our school improved to 100%. There was also a slight increase in students feeling like they have a say in matters that involve them and our school community.

Student Attendance

Class Rolls are marked twice daily by 9:15am and by 2:30pm. Parents/Carers are required to contact the school either by phone or email to report a student absence. When a child is reported absent by their teacher, without explanation from a parent/carer, families are contacted by telephone to confirm the child's whereabouts. This information is then updated on the school electronic roll.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	92.3%
Y02	94.4%
Y03	91.2%
Y04	91.8%
Y05	91.2%
Y06	90.4%
Overall average attendance	91.9%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To develop a learning culture that supports reflection and purposeful implementation of contemporary practice.

Achievements

Professional Learning was implemented to continue to familiarise staff with the 14 Parameters (Lyn Sharrat). Leadership utilised the Agile Tools from the School Improvement Learning Collaborative and continued to participate in School Improvement Learning Collaborative Meetings with Dr Simon Breakspear focusing on using Agile Tools and building a culture of feedback.

Meetings were restructured to maximise the number of staff present for the development of Shared Vision and Understanding (Parameter 1 - Sharrat) and Shared Responsibility and Accountability (Parameter 14 - Sharrat).

Staff implemented actions from The School Improvement Framework Review and continued to form the School Improvement Plan to guide School Improvement throughout the next three years 2023 - 2025.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<p>In support of the ongoing professional learning of the leadership team and staff, Leaders continued to attend Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) Network Meetings and other staff participated in school-based Professional Learning during Staff Meetings, Professional Learning Team Meetings and via video conferencing and webinars. In April, the staff attended a two-day Staff Conference. The focus for day one of the conference was Reconciliation & Indigenous Spirituality and the second day focused on Seeking the Catholic Lore. The Conference was facilitated by Terry Foley, our Religious Education Leader, the staff from The Aboriginal Catholic Ministry and Steven Nash (Faith Dimension Consultant, MACS).</p> <p>Professional Learning for 2023 continued to develop the whole school approach to Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL), other professional learning focused on High Impact Teaching Strategies, working with our Rural Community of Practice on Understanding Scripture with Dr Peta Goldberg RSM, Getting Ready in Numeracy (GRIN) and continuing to work on our Goals from our Annual Action Plan and School Improvement Framework goals.</p>	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	18
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$555.56

Teacher Satisfaction

The overall level of staff satisfaction sits at 75% on the 2023 Melbourne Archdiocese Schools - School Improvement Survey. This is within one point of of the 2022 level and 8% higher than the average for Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools. Staff Satisfaction was above the MACS average on 12 of the 14 measures and highlights were Staff-leadership relationships, Perceptions of the school leadership's effectiveness, Staff Psychological safety.

Ongoing discussions with the staff revealed a desire for better structures to allow teachers to meet in teams within their Release Time. This was achieved in 2023 with the introduction of an extra 90 minutes of Release Time where teams were released together. It is hoped this will result in more effective collaboration in teams in 2024 and an increase in teacher perception of their effectiveness in this area.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	8.3%
Graduate	16.7%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	50.0%
Advanced Diploma	25.0%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	17
Teaching Staff (FTE)	11.7
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	7.9
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To strengthen partnerships, with parents and the community, that address Social-Emotional Learning, confidence and voice to promote learning and growth.

Achievements

The achievement of our intended outcome of 'strengthened partnerships to promote learning and growth' has been evident in parent participation in the following events and initiatives:

- Prep Welcome Barbecue
- Regular and frequent Home/School Communication via Operoo, iNewsletter, Social Media and email
- Parent Helpers Course
- Parent Cyber Safety Parent Evening
- Literacy/Numeracy classroom helpers
- Parent Helpers on Excursions
- Participation in Parents & Friends Committee and attendance at P&F events
- Attendance at Mother's Day and Father's Day Breakfasts
- Supporting their children at Twilight Sports
- Attendance at Liturgies, Christmas Carols, etc

We will work closely as a staff and with our Parents & Friends Committee to plan more activities to engage our parents and families in the life of the school.

Parent Satisfaction

It is difficult to gauge the level of parent satisfaction, using data from the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools—School Improvement Surveys. Due to some administrative issues, they were distributed to families later than they should have been, resulting in a single-figure response rate. We will ensure they are distributed in a more timely manner in 2024.

Anecdotally we have noted an increase in parent participation in the life of the school. School events have been well attended and we have had high levels of parent participation in our Parent Helpers Course, allowing parents to work in classrooms as Literacy/Numeracy helpers and attend excursions with their children.

Parents have suggested that we run a Parent Helpers Course online in the evening in 2024, allowing working parents, who have been unable to attend the daytime sessions, to participate.

We are hopeful that increased opportunities for parent participation will result in higher levels of parent satisfaction in 2024.

Financial Performance

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.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at www.sjyarrajunction.catholic.edu.au