



# 2023

## Annual Report to the School Community



### St Mary's School

Moore Street, ARARAT 3377

Principal: Roxanne Leed

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

Registration: 594, E Number: E2028

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## Principal's Attestation

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I, Roxanne Leed, 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 07 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 DOBCEL

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## Vision and Mission

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### **ST MARY'S PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT**

St Mary's is a Catholic school community inspired by the Gospel, and in the spirit of the Brigidine tradition, we are committed to learning for all, fairness for all and compassion for all.

### **ST MARY'S PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENTS**

#### **Catholic School Culture**

- We are inspired by Christ and our Catholic faith tradition to respond to the challenges of the Gospel in our world today.
- We are called to be the presence of Christ for one another and act for social justice with strength and gentleness.

#### **Community Engagement**

- We welcome all people in the Brigidine tradition of inclusiveness and belonging.
- We engage in meaningful and collaborative relationships with all members of our community to ensure the best outcomes for all.

#### **Leadership and Stewardship**

- We empower all to contribute positively to our world and be stewards of all God's creation.
- We embed a culture of collaboration with purpose and clarity to ensure high levels of learning for all.

#### **Learning and Teaching**

- We cultivate a passion for learning by inspiring and challenging each other.
- We engage and support learners at their point of need to ensure that all learners can reach their full potential.

#### **Wellbeing**

- We create a safe, inclusive environment that celebrates effort and achievement and promotes dignity and fullness of life for all.
- We identify, respect and celebrate the unique gifts of all people to nurture their wellbeing.

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## School Overview

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St Mary's Parish Primary School is a Catholic co-educational school in the rural town of Ararat in the Western District of Victoria. The school is an integral part of the St Mary's Parish community and enjoys a close relationship with Marian College as our local Catholic secondary school, a school to which most students transfer once they have completed their primary education.

The origins of the school date from 1863 and from 1889 when the school was led by the Brigidine Sisters. The current school, on the Moore Street site, was opened in 1963 and major additions took place in the 1990's as a result of the Commonwealth Government Building Education Revolution (BER) grant in 2011. Presently the school has 122 students from 84 families. The majority of the students live in the Ararat town area itself, though approximately a quarter of the student population live in the rural areas surrounding Ararat. 4% of our student population are Indigenous to Australia. A high proportion of the student population was born in Australia and come from homes where the primary language spoken at home is English. 8% of the school population speak a language other than English at home. The school has high proportion of families from the lower socio-economic strata, with the average SES being 89.

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## Principal's Report

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Our focus for 2023 involved attention to the following priorities:

- Exploring, shaping and articulating our evolving identity as a Catholic School Community.
- Actively seeking collaborative and engaging partnerships with parents, carers, parish and the wider community
- Embedding the Professional Learning Community framework to drive learning, engagement and highly effective instructional practice for improved student learning

To achieve these goals, the following strategies were identified and focused on throughout the year.

### **Catholic Identity**

-engaging in professional learning about recontextualising the Gospel message with a focus on prayer and Religious Education lessons

### **Community Engagement**

-Embedding the School Wide Positive Behaviour Framework from F-6 including attention to Social-Emotional Learning programmes

-Promoting collective responsibility for strengthening consistency of practice, trust and shared vision within staff to improve learning and wellbeing

-Ongoing education of parents and staff in the intent of Child Safe practices and procedures

### **Learning & Teaching**

-Continuing to embed Professional Learning Community practices across the school to improve student learning and wellbeing

-Refining consistent school-wide approach to learning and teaching based on evidenced-based practices particularly around Explicit Direct Instructional Model

-Refining the practices of RTI across the school, including consistent Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention strategies and structures for students of all abilities

-increasing authentic collaborative practices through a shared leadership model with opportunity for strengthening professional capability



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## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Exploring, shaping and articulating our evolving identity as a Catholic School Community.

### Achievements

Critical examination and review of the liturgical practices of our school.

Enhancing our Catholic identity through recontextualised practices in prayer and Religious Education lessons.

Professional learning sessions related to the liturgical aspects of prayer within the Catholic tradition and how to unpack the Gospel message with students.

### Value Added

Continued focus on Prayer Life at St Mary's with agreed liturgical practices and commitments from F-6

Weekly Whole School Prayer (student-led)

Regular Masses to celebrate significant events for example beginning of School Year, Ash Wednesday, Catholic Education Week

Learning Community Masses

School Community actively supporting Caritas - Project Compassion

Mission Week (led by Senior students)

Continued formation and professional learning for staff including 4 staff engaged with Australian Catholic University in Religious Education and Pedagogy units

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## Learning and Teaching

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Refine whole school pedagogical practices relating to a structured approach to Literacy

Refine our use of Essential Assessment in order to differentiate instruction for students

### Achievements

Implemented phonics approach with fidelity (No Nonsense Phonics- F-2) or as required

Refined data collection and analysis for students receiving intervention

Built knowledge and strategies regarding the Writing Revolution and incorporated agreed practices during Literacy learning

Development of a school wide literacy assessment schedule that aligns with our structured approach to literacy learning

Improved analysis from data collected in Essential Assessment in order to differentiate instruction

Learning cycles established F-6 to cater for students' individual needs and next point of learning

Professional Learning in the analysis tools within the Essential Assessment platform

Improved use of relevant data sets to track efficacy of evidenced-based interventions

Year 1 phonics check completed F-6

### Student Learning Outcomes

#### **DIBELS - Decoding Accuracy and Comprehension**

Foundation - 45% at or above standard

Year 1 - 33% at or above standard

Year 2 - 73% at or above standard

Year 3 - 74% at or above standard

Year 4 - 79% at or above standard

**PAT-Reading**

70% at or above standard from years F-6. Growth from the previous year is 11.27%

**PAT- Grammar and Punctuation**

73.33% at or above standard from years 3-6

**PAT Spelling**

63.1% at or above standard from years 3-6

**NAPLAN - Year 3**

Reading proficiency level - above national and state average

Writing proficiency level - above national and state average

Spelling proficiency level - above national and state average

Numeracy proficiency level - at national and state average

Grammar and Punctuation proficiency level - at national and state average

**Curriculum Average & Growth Data**

Year 1 - 43% at or above in Numeracy growth of 13%

Year 2 - 82% at or above in Numeracy growth of 28%

Year 3 - 57% at or above in Numeracy growth of 22%

Year 4 - 74% at or above in Numeracy growth of 38%

Year 5 - 50% at or above in Numeracy growth of 23%

To note: over 34% of our students are funded under NCCD. We do not exclude any students, regardless of their ability or disability, from these assessments.

<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	414	53%
	Year 5	466	50%
Numeracy	Year 3	408	73%
	Year 5	452	56%
Reading	Year 3	414	73%
	Year 5	483	75%
Spelling	Year 3	414	60%
	Year 5	427	33%
Writing	Year 3	435	86%
	Year 5	465	59%

\*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 implement positive behaviour support comprised of intervention practises and organisational systems for establishing the social culture, learning and teaching environment, and individual behaviour supports needed to achieve academic and social success for all students

Use the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) to continue to embed core features of School Wide Positive Behaviour Framework

### Achievements

Improved use of data collection and analysis of undesired behaviours using the Tiered Fidelity Framework

Embed Behaviour Matrix and processes

Behaviour Matrix used as a reference for class norms and explicit skill-based teaching for Social-Emotional Learning

### Value Added

Active Involvement in Resilience Project, Ararat

SWPBS Celebration Days - recognising students who demonstrate desired behaviours as stated in our Matrix

### Student Satisfaction

Student Satisfaction data as recorded using INSIGHT SRC shows significant improvement in every area relating to social emotional experiences.

Most significant growth was in Connectedness to School, Teacher Empathy, Purposeful Teaching and Stimulating Learning,

## Student Attendance

Attendance roll marked twice daily (9.10am & 12.00pm) by all classroom teachers using SIMON.

- Rolls collated twice daily onto SAS.
- Summary absence data for the semester sent home with school reports
- Principal followed up with parents in relation to persistence unexplained absences.
- Principal and teachers to create targeted plan in collaboration with parents to support students who have had significant absences

### Year Level Attendance

- Foundation - 84.01%
- Year 1 - 89.93%
- Year 2 - 87.05%
- Year 3 - 88.55%
- Year 4 - 87.70%
- Year 5 - 85.81%
- Year 6 - 89.32%

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	90.4%
Y02	86.7%
Y03	89.7%
Y04	88.5%
Y05	86.9%
Y06	89.9%
Overall average attendance	88.7%

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## Leadership

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Further integrated the child safety focus into the school's vision and broader practice for the wellbeing and care of all students

Refined Learning Community Leader role to ensure whole school pedagogical practices relating to a structured approach to Literacy, are embedded F-6

### Achievements

Established and implemented consistent approach to data analysis and interpretation in use of DIBELS Assessment Suite

Applied systematic, cumulative, explicit & diagnostic instruction using SUNLIT Structured Literacy Framework

Enhanced professional collaboration

Principal involved in Risk and Compliance Network that focuses on Child Safety

Continued Implementation of 'PROTECT, Identifying and Responding to all Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools'

Development of a comprehensive Child Safety Risk Register and a Risk Treatment Plan to ensure all requirements are communicated and implemented so that students are safe

Continuing to implement strategies that promote safety and wellbeing in the physical and online environments of our school

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
Standardised and Norm-referenced Assessments Cognitive Load Theory Structured Literacy Phonology Sound Symbol Relationships Syllables Morphology Syntax Symantics Paired Fluency Writing Revolution No Nonsense Phonics DIBELS Assessment Suite Data Analysis Recontextualising the Gospel Principal, Religious Education Leader, Learning Diversity Leader and Learning Community Leader Networks First Aid Training - Anaphylaxis and CPR SIMON Conference	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	13
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$260.00



## Teacher Satisfaction

Teacher Satisfaction data as recorded using INSIGHT SRC shows significant improvement in every area.

Most significant growth was in Individual Morale, School Morale, Supportive Leadership, Role Clarity, Team Work, Empowerment, Ownership, Appraisal and Recognition, Student Management and Respect for Students

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	0.0%
Graduate	16.7%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	83.3%
Advanced Diploma	0.0%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	14
Teaching Staff (FTE)	11.4
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	11
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	7.0
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

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## Community Engagement

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Increased collaborative partnerships with parents, carers, parish and the wider community to optimise learning and wellbeing.

### Achievements

Increased attendance at weekly Whole School Prayer

Termly Student Support Group meetings with Learning Diversity Leader, teachers and families for students on NCCD list

Increased attendance at Parent/Teacher Interviews, Athletics Carnival, Bush Dance and other school events

Collaboration with the School Advisory Council in the establishment and refinement of building project

### Parent Satisfaction

Parent Satisfaction data as recorded using INSIGHT SRC shows improvement in every area.

Most significant growth was in Behaviour Management, Connectedness to School, Connectedness to Peers and Student Motivation

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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.smararat.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smararat.catholic.edu.au)