

St Michael's School

Heyfield

2020

Annual Report to the School Community



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Minimum Standards Attestation

[MinStandardsAttestation]

[MinStandardsAttestationDate]

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

Governing Authority Report

2020 was a year unlike any other that we have experienced.

In its third year of operation, Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL) was challenged to provide timely advice, service and direction to Catholic primary and secondary schools across the Diocese, in both metropolitan and regional areas, throughout a prolonged period of rapidly changing circumstances.

The events of the year were as momentous in the Diocese of Sale as anywhere in Australia. The region was affected by fierce bushfires and drought, which put significant strain on families and communities. We farewelled Bishop Patrick O'Regan, and eventually welcomed our new Bishop, Greg Bennet. Our schools, offices, and churches faced the additional challenge of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, including extended periods of lock-down.

The resilience shown by our professional and local communities has been extraordinary. Schools successfully adapted to a new, remote style of learning and teaching faster than anyone would have thought possible. Throughout all the disruption and social distancing, we kept faith in each other, and ensured that our colleagues, students, and their families were encouraged and supported.

As an organisation, we maintained our focus on developing and maintaining rigorous reporting and accountability structures, to comply with our regulatory requirements. With pastoral support from our Parish Priests and expert advice from the DOSCEL Secretariat, our highly-committed school leadership teams were able to maintain their focus on creating safe and welcoming learning environments, whether at school or online.

We continue to prioritise the provision of educational opportunities for every student, to nurture them, and enable them to encounter God and to develop a knowledge of the Catholic faith and tradition. We invest in leadership and support for school communities, to promote expert learning and teaching practices. We collaborate with, and involve our school communities in our pursuit of the best spiritual, social, emotional, physical and academic outcomes for students in our Diocese.

We aspire to see our students thrive in the world; to be confident, competent and connected.

I am thankful for the contributions of everyone involved in Catholic education in our Diocese in 2020. It has been an honour to work alongside you as we bring life to our vocation of Inspiring Faith, Inspiring Learning.



Maria Kirkwood

Chief Executive Officer

Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Ltd

Our School Vision

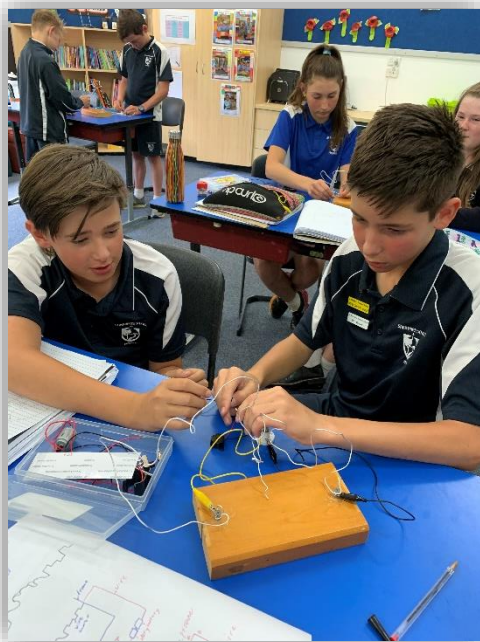
Our School Vision

As a founding school of the Josephite sisters, we are challenged and inspired to live by the example of Mary MacKillop. We see students, teachers and parents as partners in learning, where the worth and dignity of each person is acknowledged, appreciated and celebrated. This is the foundation from which we will nurture and develop self-reliant and confident individuals who will make a difference in the world.

Our Strategic Intent

We are committed to creating an inclusive learning community that engages students so that they are motivated, creative and collaborative learners, who are challenged to aim high and are given opportunities to grow in all areas of their lives.

Through the inspiration of the person of Jesus, Scripture and Mary MacKillop, we want to build a vibrant Catholic identity that connects with, and has meaning for, our students, parents and staff.



School Overview

St Michael's is part of the Parishes in Partnership of Maffra, Heyfield and Cowwarr. The school was founded by the Sisters of St Joseph in 1954 and we proudly carry on their example of faith and Christian Service. Our school is built around key relationships with families, the local parish, the local community and the wider world.

St. Michael's Primary School is located in the township of Heyfield, a small rural community about half an hour's drive from Traralgon and Sale. The school has a current enrolment of 55 and classes for 2020 were Foundation/One, Two/Three, Four/Five and Five/Six.

We recognize the importance of keeping abreast of current technologies and pedagogy and adjust our learning programs accordingly. We know that it is not enough for students to have access to great technology; they also need to develop flexibility of thinking, problem solving skills, communication skills and persistence if they are to be successful learners in a 21st century context. Currently, each student in years 4-6 is allocated a Chromebook, provided by the school. The Junior classes have access to one-to-one iPads. All students have access to our digital technologies room where there are desktops for each student. In all learning spaces, there is a Smart TV. We have a recording studio where students are able to create vodcasts, podcasts, animations and so much more!

All students participate in specialist classes in Italian, Art and Sport. Students also have the option to join our Choir which is open to all year levels and be radio hosts for our school radio station. We participate in extra-curricular programs such as 'Tournament of Minds' at Federation University and RACV Energy Breakthrough at Maryborough. We offer our student leaders opportunities to develop their skills, including attending leadership training. Our Student Representative Committee (SRC) are active within the school and focus mainly on social justice activities.

In 2020 we had 34 families within our school and during the year we had further students enrol. When examining our Enhancing Catholic School Identity (ECSI) data the majority of students, staff and parents identify as being Catholic or from a Christian background. The majority of Grade Six students progress to the local Catholic secondary school in Sale.



Principal's Report

What a year we have had! Firstly, I would like to commend our staff, students and families for the way they embraced the challenges of remote schooling and worked together as a team to ensure that learning was taking place and our students weren't disadvantaged with all the disruptions to their normal routines. The commitment our staff showed towards making sure learning was meaningful and worthwhile was impressive. Whilst remote schooling was not ideal, our students were still able to access differentiated learning at their point of need, particularly in the core areas of English and Mathematics.



'Hats off' also to our parents and caregivers, who made sure that their children were on task and supported in their learning at home. They kept in communication with their child's teachers and ensured that timetables were followed and work was being completed to a good standard. Parents and caregivers were at the forefront of making sure their children developed the resilience to cope with the 'ups and downs' of a pandemic impacted year.

One of our whole school focuses has always been about building community and despite the pandemic, we still managed to work on this throughout the year. I'd like to thank all the families who participated in our 'family' challenges, the Parents & Friends Association for supporting the events and activities that brought us together and the staff for fully engaging in an online space. Communication was one of the key drivers in making sure that we stayed connected as a school community and I think we achieved this online and in person, where and when we could. The feedback we received from families and staff certainly supported this belief.

I feel for our students, especially our new prep students, as the pandemic has restricted their access to many of the activities they would normally do within a school year. We will have to make sure that in the future they get to experience the full range of school programs and experiences.

But the year was not all about the pandemic, even though it seemed to occupy so much of our time and minds. Our staff continued to work tirelessly to support the students at our school reach their potential. They have continued to build on their professional knowledge and understanding and this is reflected in the high quality learning programs that have been provided to our students, whether online or face-to-face. Student wellbeing has also been of paramount importance and staff have been committed to providing a learning environment that nurtures and supports students in a year that has required students to be resilient and optimistic.

Throughout the year, we aimed to provide as many experiences for students as we could. We did have to cancel some events but supplemented this through online 'incursions'. We were very pleased to have been able to offer our year 3-6 students a camp experience and a 'Big Day In' for our junior students. There were times when we had to be innovative and overall, I think we were successful in delivering a diverse school program, if not a complete one.

I am looking forward to working with everyone again in 2021 and building on the strengths that we, as a school community, have exhibited this year.

Catholic Identity and Religious Education

Goal

To deepen student engagement and connection with the Josephite tradition and the Christian narrative.

Intended Outcomes

- That the charism of the Josephite tradition is permeated throughout the school community and connects the Catholic faith and Tradition.
- Students make links between their life and the Catholic world view.

Achievements

During 2020, the School continued our work in maintaining and enhancing the Catholic Identity of our School. Due to the nature of the school year and the inability to celebrate together in liturgies and special feast days, a number of celebrations had to be cancelled.

Staff worked to provide a way for students to engage in the Catholic faith within the classroom and remote learning. This was highlighted through prayer, the celebration of special feast days and the continued teaching and learning of the Religious Education Curriculum *To live in Christ Jesus*.

The school keeps good school/parish interaction and works with Father Siju in keeping and building those relationships. During 2020, classes were limited in their attendance of Parish Masses however we were able to join parishioners, parents and friends in celebrating the Eucharist at our End of Year Mass and Prep Nativity Play.

VALUE ADDED

The school provided opportunities for outreach within the local and wider community by raising money and awareness for: Caritas - Project Compassion and October Missions.

Preparation of the Sacrament of Reconciliation by the Year 3 students; to be completed in 2021.

Prayers and contributions in the school newsletter provided development in faith opportunities for parents.

The introduction of the St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop Award, awarded to a notable student at assembly who has demonstrated the qualities of Mary MacKillop in their actions and attitude.

Learning and Teaching

Goals

To develop expert teacher practice through a culture of collaboration and professional learning.

To improve learning outcomes for all students through implementing an evidence-based approach to teaching.

Intended Outcomes

- To improve student learning through developing the efficacy of the collaborative learning team.
- Teaching is targeted at the point of need for each student and is based on a range of teacher assessment.
- Students' outcomes in Writing P-6 are improved with a focus on grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Students' outcomes in Mathematics are improved with a focus on Counting and Place Value and problem solving.
- Classroom planning is supported by student learning evidence and data.

Achievements

In 2020 we attempted to keep our focus on purposeful learning and explicit teaching, explicit teaching being a high impact strategy that would support us in improving student learning outcomes. This was problematical given the lockdowns and remote schooling.

We continued the shared language around learning and teaching with students so that students can understand what it means to be an effective learner and how they can put this into practice.

Remote learning brought its challenges in 2020, however the staff worked to continue professional growth with professional learning being able to proceed in an online forum. Staff continued to provide student learning and curriculum delivery in a remote format, striving to minimize the impact and challenges that families faced when learning from home. The learning progressions are being used to inform teacher planning.

The Learning and Teaching Network and Collective space throughout the year continued to reinforce teacher development and support the implementation of remote learning. We continued our explicit teaching of spelling through the SMART spelling approach, monitoring the progress of student spelling and writing. Professional development opportunities were undertaken by staff members with Primary English Teachers Association of Australia (PETAA) and the Mathematical Association of Victoria (MAV) with the opportunity to use these as webinars in learning team meetings into the new school year.

Whole school data is collected in key learning areas and this is being analysed from a whole school perspective as well as individual student progression.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

In regards to student achievement in 2020, the school was very proud of its response to remote and flexible learning, whereby it was able to maintain a strong learning focus for students whilst also proactively supporting the wellbeing and mental health of students, staff and parents.

Students in Years 4-6 collaborated with their teachers via Google Classroom, whilst F-3 students utilised the Class Dojo. Feedback to students on their learning was facilitated via Google Classroom and Class Dojo.

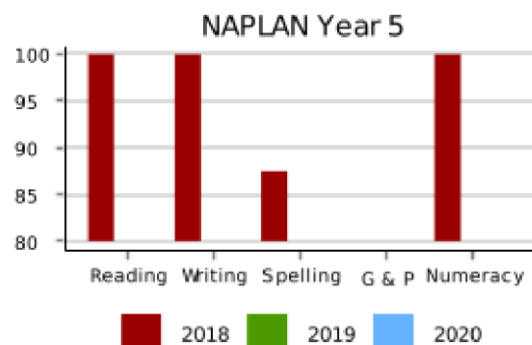
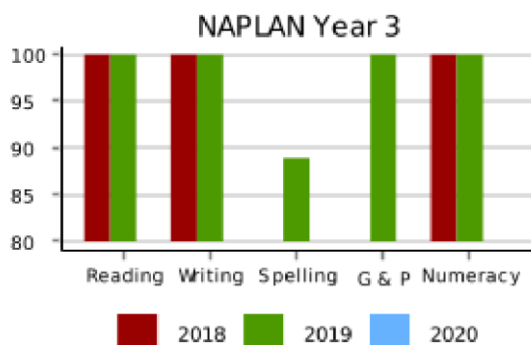
Whole school assessment data indicated that, despite the pandemic and restrictions to schooling, the majority of students continued to progress in the key areas of literacy and numeracy. We are beginning to see success with our SMART spelling approach now that it is embedded in the school programs and student assessment data demonstrates improved word knowledge within the context of writing. Across the school, student progression with reading was positive although access to tutoring in 2021 will support students in the Junior classes. In 2021 we hope to achieve more consistent student growth across all areas of numeracy.



PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019 Changes	2020	2019 – 2020 Changes
	%	%	%	%	%
				*	*
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	80.0	100.0	20.0		
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Spelling	80.0	88.9	20.0		
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	75.0	**	**		
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	**	**		
YR 05 Reading	100.0	**	**		
YR 05 Spelling	87.5	**	**		
YR 05 Writing	100.0	**	**		

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

** Data cannot be reported for this year as the number of students that sat the test was below 5 and the data has been suppressed for privacy reasons in accordance with the ACARA NAPLAN data reporting provisions. *** No students sat the NAPLAN tests in this year level and in one or both of the relevant years.



School Community and Student Wellbeing

Goal

It is always our intention to enhance student learning and wellbeing by actively partnering with parents, carers and families.

Intended Outcomes

- The relationship between school, family and parish is enhanced.
- The school provides a purposeful, effective and contemporary learning environment.
- School infrastructure supports student learning and engagement.

Achievements

We have had to think 'outside the box' in our efforts to support student wellbeing and build our community this year. This has been of particular importance in a year influenced by the pandemic. Many whole school activities during remote schooling were designed to connect students with each other and the school, such as our newsletter family challenges and our 'at home with...' newsletter segments. We engaged the services of a psychologist to run online sessions with students about how to develop optimistic thinking and strengthen resilience. Towards the end of the year, all our staff accessed professional learning in the social and emotional learning program, 'You Can Do It'. This will be implemented in 2021 to support our students in developing the resilience to cope with the 'ups and downs' in life.

We paid particular attention to our communication and made sure that our school community were fully informed of what was happening during and after periods of remote schooling. We felt this was a priority given the uncertainty that everyone felt throughout the year. The feedback we received from families indicated that this was successful and that they felt confident that their children were learning and growing.

VALUE ADDED

Throughout the year we have worked on strengthening the ties between home and school, aiming to build a robust and confident school community. We have done this in the following ways:

Social and Emotional Development:

Whole school focuses for resilience, organization, relationships and persistence
Online class workshop series with Maria Umberto, psychologist
Transition for all students, including specially arranged year 6 transition to CCS
Year 6 Graduation and special activity day
Cyber Safety Program
Student Wellbeing and Connectedness Surveys
Discovery Learning Groups

Enhancing Catholic Identity:

School based sacramental programs
School masses
Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week Awareness Raising

Whole school and classroom events:

Drumming Incursion
Alex the Magician online class sessions
Talk Like a Pirate Day
Swimming Sports carnival
P & F Lunch Order Day
Walk to School Breakfast
Book Week Parade: Curious Creatures and Wild Minds
Camp Taster Day for Years 3-6 at Camp Coolamatong
Junior Big Day In Fun Day
Choir (conducted online)
ALPHA Award

Community Engagement:

Family challenges in the newsletter during remote schooling
Welcome BBQ and Boot ball Challenge

Communication:

Class newsletters
Class Dojo
School newsletter
School app. and webpage
Email communication
Parent/Teacher interviews and Student Led Conferences
Student Support Group meetings

Parent Education:

Fortnightly newsletter articles
Raising Confident, Competent Children Seminar
Cybersafety awareness and education session
School Tours (after hours due to pandemic)
School information displays

Student Leadership

Student Representative Committee
Student led assemblies, including online assemblies
Class meetings
Radio broadcasting
SRC Bullying No Way Day
SRC Reach Out Mental Health Day – Fairy Bread day
Liaison with Wellington Shire Rep – Safe Paths to School project
Mary MacKillop Award morning tea

We would like to continue our work of building community and reaching out to our school families. Part of this is through celebrating our Catholic identity and giving families and the wider community a deeper understanding about what it means to be part of St. Michael's.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

Insight SRC data for 2020 shows student engagement in the areas of learner confidence and motivation had not improved significantly throughout the year; this can partially be attributed to students having to engage in learning from home. Feedback from students was that they found it particularly challenging without their peers and teachers to connect with in person during remote learning. We noticed that student engagement improved when students returned to school. However, this is an area we need to work on strategically so as to improve student learning outcomes and behaviours through enhanced engagement.

Student/teacher relationships were significantly higher in the Insight SRC data and showed that students had confidence in their teachers, including approachability and empathy. This was also reflected in general safety experienced by students in the classroom and within the whole school.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

At St Michael's we recognise the importance of student attendance for student success at school. The newsletter is used to communicate the importance of student attendance at school and students being on time. Teachers mark the attendance roll twice a day as per registration requirements and absences are recorded. As per legislation and Diocesan policy, if a child is absent without notification then parents or carers are contacted in the interests of child safety to explain the absence. This contact is initiated from 9:00 am by administration staff. The number of absences for the semester is recorded on students' reports.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Y01	95.2%
Y02	89.9%
Y03	92.8%
Y04	97.7%
Y05	94.7%
Y06	87.4%
Overall average attendance	93.0%

PARENT SATISFACTION

Insight SRC data for 2020 indicated a high degree of satisfaction from parents with school performance. They believed that teaching staff were committed to improving the learning outcomes for their children and that they had the capacity and expertise to do this effectively. Parents had a positive perception of classroom and school management and indicated that they felt school was a safe place for their children. Feedback that we received from parents during remote learning was extremely positive and they felt that the programs of learning planned for their children were very good and the feedback and support their children received from teachers was excellent. Our challenges continue to be in student and family engagement in the area of RE, as many families are not identifying as being connected with the faith element of our school or seeing it as important.



Child Safe Standards

Goals and Intended Outcomes

In line with Government expectations centred on the Child Safe Standards, St Michael's Primary School has worked extensively on developing policies and procedures around child safety and implementing policies from our governing body, Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL). We have been proactive in introducing and implementing these to ensure compliance with the standards.

Achievements

At St Michael's we have audited our existing policies relating to child safety, including our anti-bullying policy and student management policy. We are committed to embedding these policies and commitments into every day practice. Staff have accessed training to ensure they are familiar with current policies and legislation including participation in the modules relating to the Disability Discrimination Act and Mandatory reporting. Steps for staff to take in responding to all forms of abuse are displayed in the staff room and staff have participated in learning around these procedures.

Students are regularly surveyed to ensure that they feel safe at school and have an opportunity to feed back to leadership, through anonymous surveys or through the Student Representative Committee, any concerns that they may have in relation to safety and wellbeing. Through our Digital Technologies curriculum we have worked with students on cyber safety and how to keep themselves safe online. This has included introducing external providers to support us in getting the message across. Students have also worked on being ethical users in an online space.

Parents are apprised of any changes or updates to policies through the newsletter. Policies are also saved to the website and parents are notified when new policies are added or when there are changes to existing policies. We survey parents annually to ensure that they feel their children are safe at school and that the school enacts its policies and procedures around child safety. Feedback from parents affirms that we are on the right track. We also promote learning opportunities for parents and raise awareness of how they can support their children in an online space. This has included making parents aware of any available information sessions about cybersafety.

In our risk management practices, child safety is a major consideration. All risk assessments include a child safety component and volunteers and contractors are checked to ensure that they are compliant with our Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct.

Leadership

Goal

To establish a culture of learning that empowers students and staff and builds belief in the team.

Intended Outcomes

- Teamwork and empowerment will be strengthened through meaningful collaboration and dialogue.
- That a culture of professional learning is embedded within the school and evident in improved teacher practice.
- Students will develop high levels of responsibility, resiliency and independence through the classroom and whole school positive behavior support approach.

Achievements

There has been some interruption to staff collaboration and professional learning due to the constraints posed by remote learning. There were times when school priorities had to be adjusted so that student learning from home was optimised. Remote schooling also posed significant staff wellbeing issues that needed to be taken into account. As a group, we found that online meetings were less effective than being able to work collaboratively in person. Within this context, we have continued to enhance staff understanding of the whole school priorities within the context of the Diocesan reform agenda and incorporated this into our staff meetings and Professional Learning Team meetings.

Professional learning has been supported through the budget and staff has accessed relevant professional learning to implement the school priorities. Where possible, we have supported Education Support Officers to access the same professional learning as teaching staff so as to build their understanding of how children learn and build on their capacity to support the classroom teacher in implementing the classroom program.

Staff take opportunities to reflect on and share their learning through PLTs and other forums, including a more focused use of literacy and numeracy data to inform teaching and learning; this incorporates the development of whole school data display. This display provides longitudinal data for teachers to measure student growth. This has allowed staff to focus on best practice within their classrooms and recognise the impact of their teaching through more effective progress monitoring and data collection.

Feedback from the Principal Appraisal process indicated that parents and staff were satisfied with school leadership and had confidence that, as a school, we were heading in the right direction.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

You Can Do It Social and Emotional Learning
 Maths Association of Victoria Conference
 CPR and First Aid
 Teaching Assistants Short Course
 Virtual Study Tour – Walker Play Based Learning
 Reading to Write – PETAA

Young Leaders Program
 Smart Spelling online
 LOTE Network
 Anaphylaxis Training
 Office Administration Training

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020

8

Average expenditure per teacher for PL

\$794.00

TEACHER SATISFACTION

As indicated by the Insight SRC data, staff morale is high and our organisational climate continues to reflect high staff satisfaction in all areas, although staff recognition and appraisal would be a focus area for leadership in 2021. Staff indicated that they are well supported by leadership and from each other, and take great pride in what they do. They have a clear sense of purpose and are aligned with the school goals and work collaboratively to achieve these.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate

98.3%

ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate

82.4%

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate

0.0%

Masters

37.5%

Graduate

25.0%

Graduate Certificate

12.5%

Bachelor Degree

75.0%

Advanced Diploma	12.5%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

STAFF COMPOSITION

Principal Class (Headcount)	1.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	8.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	4.4
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	7.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	3.7
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

