



St Michael's School Heyfield

2021 Annual Report to the School Community



Table of Contents

Contact Details2

Minimum Standards Attestation2

Governing Authority Report3

Our School Vision4

School Overview5

Principal’s Report6

Catholic Identity and Religious Education7

Learning and Teaching9

School Community and Student Wellbeing12

Child Safe Standards17

Leadership18

Contact Details

ADDRESS	Davis Street Heyfield VIC 3858
PRINCIPAL	Jennifer Miller
GOVERNING AUTHORITY	Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Ltd
TELEPHONE	03 5148 2514
EMAIL	principal@stmheyfield.catholic.edu.au
WEBSITE	www.stmheyfield.catholic.edu.au
E NUMBER	E4019

Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Jennifer Miller, attest that St Michael's School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in *the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2021 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in Schools.

25/03/2022

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

Governing Authority Report

As we entered with hope into 2021 we were again confronted by the impact of COVID-19. The experience of 2020 went some way to enabling us to positively address the challenges that this presented. Again, the strength of our staff, students and their families is to be commended as we moved into the second year of this pandemic.

Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL), now in its fourth year of operation, continued to work tirelessly to ensure our schools and faith communities thrived through this challenging time.

Our school communities and the DOSCEL Secretariat continued their strong focus on ensuring high quality outcomes for the students and worked to maintain a safe and supportive learning environment. The resilience shown by DOSCEL staff, parish priests, students, parents and guardians over the past year has been extraordinary. Schools have fully embraced the way of working and learning within this remote environment, ensuring colleagues, students and their families were encouraged and supported, giving witness to our Catholic faith.

Investment in school staff and their leadership teams is of the utmost importance. We continue to collaborate with and involve all members of our school communities in the pursuit of the best spiritual, social, emotional, physical and academic outcomes for students in our Diocese.

The focus on expert learning and teaching in support of the full implementation of the Victorian Curriculum and the Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *To Live in Christ Jesus*, allows our teachers and school leaders to provide educational opportunities for every student to grow, to be nurtured, to enable them to encounter God and to develop a knowledge of the Catholic faith and tradition.

Developing and maintaining rigorous reporting and accountability structures that comply with our regulatory requirements is a core focus of our organisation. 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 remotely.

I am thankful for the contributions of everyone involved in Catholic education in our Diocese and commend the commitment of our staff and leadership teams in nurturing and empowering the children in our care to grow into independent adults with faith in their future.

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 the Lions Club Public Speaking competition. 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 2021 we had 44 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

We began the year with quite a lot of optimism that we had overcome the worst of the pandemic and that life could continue within the 'new normal'. How wrong we were! We went into another cycle where the school year was disrupted with lockdowns and remote schooling, new rules and regulations and physically having to exclude our school community. Once again, everyone stepped in and stepped up to face 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 a credit to their professionalism and dedication. 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.

I would also like to congratulate our parents and caregivers, who made sure that their children were on task and supported in their learning. 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 we have found this challenging when parents and the extended school community could not come onsite. We have had to work around this and try to find innovative ways to include our school community and hold school events. 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 continued to support this belief.

I feel for our students, especially our new prep students, as the pandemic has restricted their access to many of the experiences they would normally have within a school year. Fortunately, we still managed to access extracurricular activities for our students, particularly in the second half of the year. In fact, the final term was very full as we worked towards making up for 'lost time'. It is our priority to make sure that students get to experience the full range of school programs and experiences in the future.

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.

I am looking forward to working with everyone again in 2022 and building on the strengths that we, as a school community, have exhibited this year.

Catholic Identity and Religious Education

Goals & Intended Outcomes

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 2021, 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 difficulty in celebrating together in liturgies and special feast days, a number of celebrations had to be cancelled. It also became a challenge to implement our Sacramental program for students but we seized our opportunities and managed to have these throughout the year. Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation were celebrated and included students who missed out in 2020.

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 and the continued teaching and learning of the Religious Education Curriculum To live in Christ Jesus. Teachers aimed to make explicit the links between their life and the Catholic world view through their language, actions and activities. This continues to be a focus area for our whole school.

The school worked with Father Siju and then, midway through the year, with Father Edwin to build parish/school relationships within the parameters of the pandemic. During 2021, attendance at Parish Masses was not allowed and our students had very limited opportunity to engage in the life of our Parish. We anticipate that in 2022 this will change and we will be able to reestablish our connection with parishioners.

VALUE ADDED

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

The Student Representative Committee engaged in fundraising that focused on social justice and shared this at assemblies (online and broadcast).

Sacramental programs were celebrated and included students who missed out in 2020.

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

Continuation 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 & Intended Outcomes

Goals

To develop expert teacher practice through a culture of collaboration and professional learning and a commitment to evidence-based teaching.

Intended Outcomes

- Student learning is optimised through the efficacy of the collaborative learning team in which members embrace collective responsibility, seek to improve their performance and examine their impact on student learning.
- Learning is targeted at the point of need for each student and is based on teacher capacity to use a range of assessments to inform teaching and improve student learning outcomes.
- Staff have a well-developed understanding of how student engagement underpins improvement in student learning outcomes.
- 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.

Achievements

In 2021 we continued to have a focus on the core learning areas of English and Mathematics given that there were interruptions throughout the year and we were still feeling the impact of the extensive lockdowns in the previous year. Teachers concentrated on gathering evidence of student progress at every opportunity that they could and used this data to ensure learning was targeted at the students' individual needs. This proved challenging at times because students needed to be onsite for this to occur.

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. All staff followed the 'You Can Do It' program which supports effective learning habits and mindset. Students have become more competent in navigating learning in an online space, particularly the older students, but engagement was impacted when this continued. Students were highly motivated to return to school and reestablish connections with their peers and teachers.

In many instances staff professional learning proceeded in an online forum but staff professional growth was impacted by this style of delivery and staff fatigue in operating in a fluctuating work environment.

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.

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 on an ongoing basis.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The school continued to maintain a strong focus on learning for students whilst also proactively supporting the wellbeing and mental health of students, staff and parents. This was evidenced through whole school and individual data collection which showed that the majority of students have maintained steady growth in the core learning areas. This was more problematical for students new to the school whose entries were staggered throughout the year. Identifying the learning needs of these students was made more difficult by the fluctuations in onsite and offsite schooling.

Staff utilised a variety of assessment tools to monitor student progress and inform their teaching. This included the introduction of Essential Assessment to track student learning in Mathematics. This provided students with an opportunity to track their own progress and set learning goals based on individual targets. Growth in Place Value knowledge and understanding continues to be a focus area as data indicates that students are not always using the most efficient strategies to demonstrate a sound understanding of the number system despite being successful in other areas of their mathematics learning. We are continuing 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.

Additional support for students was provided in numeracy and literacy through the Tutor Support Program. The focus year levels for this was Year One and Two as these students missed some of the core learning during 2020. Other intervention programs (LLI and Barton) were also implemented to support students with meeting benchmarks and to consolidate learning.

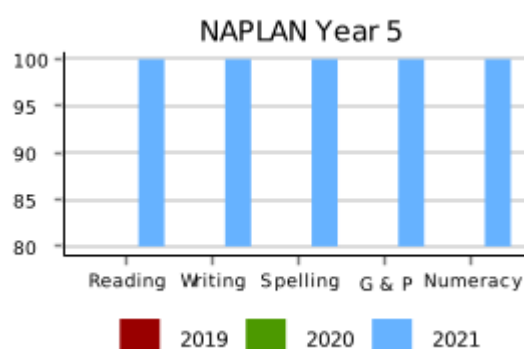
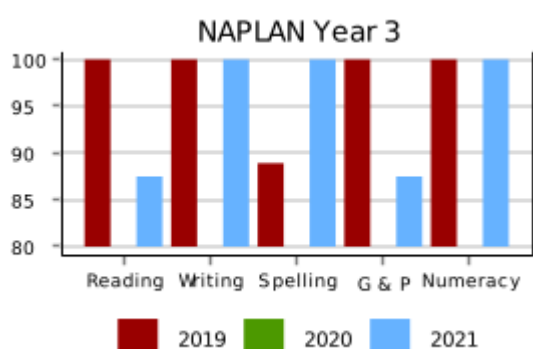
Naplan trend data indicated steady growth in most areas from 2018 to 2021, with student learning being on an upward trajectory. Naplan data for our school is not always an accurate representation of student progress due to our very small cohorts.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2019 %	2020	2019 – 2020 Changes	2021 %	2020 – 2021 Changes
		*	*		*
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	-	-	87.5	-
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Reading	100.0	-	-	87.5	-
YR 03 Spelling	88.9	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Writing	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	**	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Numeracy	**	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Reading	**	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Spelling	**	-	-	100.0	-
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

Goals & Intended Outcomes

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

It has been important to support student wellbeing and build our community again this year as we did in the previous year. This has been of particular relevance given that we have had another year influenced by the pandemic. We have continued utilising the newsletter and the ClassDojo app to maintain a strong connection with families and keep them apprised of what was happening at school and to provide information to parents on how they can support their children emotionally. The social and emotional learning program, 'You Can Do It' has been implemented in 2021 to support our students in developing the resilience to cope with the 'ups and downs' in life and to help them develop self-management skills that will support them throughout their life.

We were able to structure our Prep transition program with some flexibility and worked on ways to welcome new families without them being onsite. This included meeting in the park and utilising the outdoor spaces in the front of the school. Despite the challenges, we had a very successful transition and were able to maintain ongoing contact with families.

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 and with the changing rules in how we deal with Covid-19. We felt this was a priority given the uncertainty that everyone felt in the previous year.

It was important to us to be able to offer students experiences that connected them with school and our broader community. We embraced every opportunity as it arose so that students did not feel so isolated or disconnected.

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

Implementation of the 'You Can Do It' program

Transition for all students

Year 6 Graduation

Cyber Safety Program

Access to student/family counsellor

Enhancing Catholic Identity:

School based sacramental programs

Pancake Day

St Patrick's Day

St Vinnie's Winter Appeal

Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week Awareness Raising

Farewell Father Siju

Whole school and classroom events:

Swimming Sports carnival

Walk Safely to School

Book Week: Old worlds, new worlds, other worlds

Camp Taster Day for Years 3-4 at the Summit

Year 6 Outdoor Education Camp at Coolamatong

Junior Big Day Out in Sale

Choir (conducted online)

ALPHA Award

Bike Education

Athletics Carnival

Gymnastics

Hockey Clinics

Community Engagement:

Welcome BBQ and Boot ball Challenge

Book Fair

Colour Fun Run

Fire Brigade visit

Sale Eisteddfod

Catholic Education Week Open Days

Pump Track Opening

Police visit

Anzac Day & Remembrance Day

Walk Around Australia Challenge

Communication:

Class newsletters

Class Dojo

School newsletter

School app. and webpage

Email communication

Parent/Teacher interviews

Student Support Group meetings

Parent Education:

Fortnightly newsletter articles

School Tours (after hours and virtual 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

Mary MacKillop Award morning tea

Lions Club Public Speaking Competition

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 2021 shows an improvement in all areas of the students' socio-emotional experience. They are experiencing positive relationships with their teachers, feel more engaged in their learning and are more willing to learn. Students feel safe at school and do not have a problem with classroom behaviour. We would like to see students feel more connected to school and to each other.

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	97.0%
Y02	94.0%
Y03	93.1%
Y04	94.2%
Y05	94.0%
Y06	93.4%
Overall average attendance	94.3%

PARENT SATISFACTION

Insight SRC data for 2021 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 and that staff were approachable. Parents perceived that their child's learning opportunities met with their expectations and that teachers

worked in partnership with parents to produce excellent outcomes. 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 & 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 revisited 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 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 students to the eSmart licence through the Alannah and Madeline Foundation. 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

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal

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

Intended Outcomes

- Develop the idea of collective responsibility and peers being an important part of professional growth (everyone an instructional leader).
- To support student engagement and provide opportunities for students to have a voice within their own learning and the school environment.

Achievements

The resumption of onsite learning, in conjunction with periods of remote learning, meant a significant readjustment for staff. Their capacity to engage in the process of collaboration at a learning team level was compromised due to wellbeing concerns. Other demands were also placed on staff as they were required to familiarise themselves with continually changing working conditions and engage in training to support Covid-19 safety management.

Within this context, we have aimed 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 where feasible.

Staff have begun to explore the research theory behind student engagement and this has been linked to the Diocesan agenda. We began a self-reflection process on our practice so that we can better understand how to deepen student engagement. This will continue into 2022.

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 to build their understanding of how children learn and build on their capacity to support the classroom teacher in implementing the classroom program. It is worthwhile noting that professional learning expenditure was not as high as previous years due to a higher proportion of online access.

Feedback from the Insight SRC surveys 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 2021
You Can Do It Social and Emotional Learning
Maths Association of Victoria Conference
CPR and First Aid
Smart Spelling online
LOTE Network

Linking Literacy

Sue Larkey: Autism Awareness

Learning and Teaching Network

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2021	10
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$490

TEACHER SATISFACTION

In previous years, staff morale has been high and our organisational climate reflected high staff satisfaction in all areas. In 2021, staff indicated that they were well-supported by leadership and from each other, and took great pride in what they do. However, their sense of purpose and clarity around their work was significantly lower. Feedback from staff indicated that this was in direct correlation to working conditions they have experienced during the pandemic, in particular feelings of isolation when working online with students and feeling under duress moving between onsite and offsite learning. It will be important to ensure a more consistent work environment in 2022.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	93.7%
--------------------------------	-------

ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	80.0%
----------------------	-------

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	44.4%
Graduate	11.1%
Graduate Certificate	11.1%
Bachelor Degree	66.7%
Advanced Diploma	22.2%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	5.2
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	6.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	3.3
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0