



Diocese of Sale
Catholic Education Ltd

2023

Annual Report to the School Community



St Michael's School

Davis Street, HEYFIELD 3858

Principal: Shane Fyfe

Web: www.stmheyfield.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 1524, E Number: E4019

Principal's Attestation

I, Shane Fyfe, attest that St Michael'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 09 May 2024

About this report

St Michael'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

The 2023 school year marked my first year as Director of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Sale following the retirement of previous Director, Ms Maria Kirkwood who served in the role for ten years.

Throughout the year, I had the pleasure of visiting each of our 38 Catholic primary schools and five Catholic secondary schools. It was inspiring to witness the dedication of staff and the wonderful work taking place to provide a high-quality Catholic education for our students in a faith-filled environment.

Working with the Bishop, the Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL) Board, DOSCEL Secretariat, schools and parishes, the mission to offer every student the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God while achieving their personal best, remained at the forefront of our work.

Investing in school staff and leadership teams to promote expert learning and teaching practices was a top priority. The nation-wide shortage of teachers presented challenges, but we were committed to finding new and innovative ways to attract and retain high quality, committed Catholic educators.

Reflecting on the 2023 year, we have much to be proud of. Ongoing significant investment in new learning facilities and refurbishments through the Capital Grants Program and school community funding continued across our schools to enhance learning spaces and amenities to benefit students and staff.

During 2023, 13 blessing and opening ceremonies were held to celebrate school projects completed over the past three years, while the commencement of three new major projects were recognised with sod-turning ceremonies.

We were particularly excited to begin construction on the new St Josephine Bakhita Catholic Primary School at the newly established Five Farms estate in Clyde North. This will be the 44th school within the network of primary and secondary schools operated by DOSCEL.

The care, safety, and wellbeing of children and young people remain a central focus and fundamental responsibility. During Child Safety Week 2023, schools and parishes were invited by DOSCEL to showcase their innovative projects and activities to keep young people safe. Many of the projects were developed by young people themselves. A video and education resource were created from the submissions to share the work and promote awareness of child safety.

Our Catholic schools continue to be places of learning and enrichment, nurturing students in their spiritual, academic, physical, and emotional development.

I extend my deep appreciation to everyone involved in Catholic education within the Diocese of Sale for their commitment to our vocation of Inspiring Faith, Inspiring Learning.

Paul Velten

Director of Catholic Education - Diocese of Sale

Chief Executive Officer - Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited

Vision and Mission

As a school founded by the Sisters of St Joseph, 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.

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 65 and classes for 2023 were Foundation/Prep, One/Two, Three/Four and Five/Six. We deliberately focused on keeping our class sizes small as we believe this supports individualised learning and creates a better learning environment.

Principal's Report

It is with great pride that I provide this report to the community. The position of Principal is a privileged one and I feel humbled to serve in this role. Since beginning as Principal at St Michael's I have been welcomed into the community by students, families and staff. I would also like to thank Father Edwin for the way he has introduced me to the Parish. Father Edwin continues to help, support and develop the Catholic identity of St Michael's.

St Michael's had a highly successful year in 2023. We welcomed 11 new Foundation students, which made our school enrolments rise to 65.

I would like to acknowledge Mrs Jenny Miller's contribution to the education of young people through her work as Principal at St Michael's Primary School, Heyfield for the past six years.

As a Catholic educator Jenny worked diligently to enhance the Catholic identity of the schools in which she has worked and to establish important links between the School and the Parish. As a principal Jenny focussed her efforts on improving the opportunities and outcomes of all students. Her leadership has had a significant impact on the Heyfield community and Jenny contributed to the establishment of a vibrant and flourishing school culture.

Throughout the year the staff deepened their understanding of the Science of Reading and the evidence-based teacher practices that support student learning. The staff used assessment data to effectively plan and teach students at their point of need and were focused on determining their impact on student learning. The staff at St Michael's have shown a strong desire to develop their teaching and learning in a range of areas. Just like our students, our staff continue to learn in order to grow.

I thank all our families for choosing St Michael's and for entrusting us with the care of their children. We are excited about the 2024 school year and furthering our implementation of the Science of Reading across our curriculum.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal

- To develop a recontextualised, dialogical Catholic Identity through religious education, prayer, liturgy, ritual and Catholic Social Teaching.

Strategy:

- Build leader and teacher capacity to create recontextualised dialogical communities.
- Deepen the expertise of teachers to deliver high quality religious education.

Intended Outcomes:

- Staff and students experience and create contextualised and recontextualised prayer regularly.
- Teachers use student pre and post assessment as part of the learning and teaching cycle in Religious Education.

Achievements

During 2023 the school continued to work on enhancing the Catholic identity of St Michael's. We continue to celebrate liturgies and special days, such as Mary MacKillop Feast Day, with the school community and Parish. The Sacramental program for students was celebrated with Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation taking place throughout the year.

Staff were provided with professional learning to assist them in developing their understanding of how to teach prayer and share prayer with their students. Teachers continued to develop their understanding of the Religious Education curriculum, *To Live in Christ Jesus*, to support high level Religious Education teaching in classrooms. Through an inquiry approach to teaching Religious Education, teachers continue to include student voice in order for students to become part of the learning and teaching process.

The school continued to work with Father Edwin to maintain the Parish, School and Community relationship. School masses were well attended by families. We aim to continue inviting families in order to strengthen the relationship with the parish. Students consistently had opportunities to be a part of our whole school Mass by participating in readings, Prayers of the Faithful and the Offertory. We thank Father Edwin for supporting our students in developing their Catholic identity.

Value Added

- The Student Representative Committee engaged in fundraising that focused on social justice and shared this at assemblies.
- Sacramental programs were celebrated including Confirmation with Bishop Gregory.
- 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

Goal:

- To implement an evidence based approach to learning that will ensure improved student outcomes and the provision of a quality differentiated curriculum that has entitlement for all.

Strategy:

- Develop expert leader and teacher capacity

Intended Outcomes:

- There is a documented professional learning plan that reflects the priorities of the school.
- The Teaching Climate improves and the pillars are more aligned.

Achievements

St Michael's had a significant focus in 2023 on continuing to develop the capacity of teachers to ensure expert teacher practice. A key to this was deepening the staff knowledge of how students learn to read by looking at the 'Science of Reading'. Through regular Professional Learning Team (PLT) meetings, the staff gained greater knowledge in the '5 Big Ideas', Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension. Staff were also trained in the MultiLit (Making Up for Lost Time In Literacy) program, which will be implemented in 2024 to support students with the Literacy development.

In 2023, St Michael's also began trialling a new Literacy assessment tool, DIBELS. DIBELS is an evidence-based Literacy assessment that accurately assesses the skills required for Literacy acquisition. These skills are based on the Science of Reading. Determining the students literacy skill level through this assessment tool, will allow teachers to teach students at their point of need, in order to accelerate growth. This assessment tool will be used in the Year 3-6 classrooms at the beginning of 2024. The P-2 classrooms will use the assessment tools from MultiLit.

Another significant focus was placed on ensuring that students requiring learning adjustments were ably supported. Staff were able to spend time working alongside the DOSCEL's Inclusive Education School Adviser in order to upskill their knowledge of the appropriate learning adjustments that can help support students. Professional Learning Plans (PLP's) were utilised by staff to set goals and target areas of need for these students. Termly,

Peer Support Group (PSG) meetings were held for each student requiring a PLP. These meetings with parents are an opportunity for staff to communicate their child's learning goals and the progress they have made. Adhering to the NCCD guidelines by documenting these learning adjustments ensures appropriate support is acquired and provided to the relevant students.

Student Learning Outcomes

Our 2023 data shows fluctuations in some of the student performance areas. This data has provided staff with the opportunity to understand the need for consistent teacher practice and for the school leaders to ensure staff have the professional learning, resources and support in order for student outcomes and achievement to develop. There were pleasing results in Numeracy and in particular the Year 5 students that received a 'strong' or 'exceeding' rating. Throughout the 2023 school year we have had a considerable focus on professional learning in the area of Literacy. All staff have been included in the MultiLit training and a consistent approach to Literacy will be rolled out in 2024 across the F-2 area. A more consistent approach to teaching Literacy has also been planned for the Grade 3-6 students in 2024.

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

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2023 due to participation not meeting these criteria or no students were

assessed. Participants include students who were assessed, including non-attempt, or those exempted from the test.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To embed a child safe culture at St Michael's.
- That students feel safe and connected and develop positive relationships.

Achievements

In 2023, St Michael's continued its focus on the development of the whole child and were fortunate to be able to provide the students with a range of curricular and extracurricular activities.

Individual student well-being continues to be monitored carefully by staff and, in consultation with parents and carers, additional supports have been put in place. In 2023, St. Michael's was able to employ a Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader for two days a week. This leader completed training through Melbourne University. This leader works alongside staff members in supporting staff in the implementation of strategies that can enhance and develop the wellbeing and mental health of our students. We have always worked in partnership with parents/carers to enhance the well-being of their child/children and believe this collaboration is essential if we want to have happy and mentally healthy students. We look forward to this role continuing in 2024 at St. Michael's. We also continued accessing the services of a professional counsellor.

In 2023, the child safety standards continued to be implemented and included across all appropriate policies to satisfy all mandated requirements. Members of the leadership team worked to ensure all changes to appropriate policies were implemented and achieved. All staff undertook Mandatory Reporting modules online which is an annual Child Safe requirement. As well as the PROTECT document being revisited and located in classrooms and offices around the school, each week in the staff bulletin there is a dedicated piece of information regarding child safety.

During all reference checks for new staff applications, referees were asked Child safety questions. All new staff to the school engage in an induction which included the sharing of Child Safe Standards. Family members who wish to volunteer at school events must present a valid Working With Children Check.

Value Added

- Whole school focuses and multi-age days for You Can Do It term focuses
- Transition for all students, including 'Bump Up' day
- Year 6 Graduation

- Cyber Safety Program
- Big pancake breakfast with the school community
- Easter Liturgy
- School based sacramental programs
- Sports carnivals
- Book Week Parade & Book Fair
- Participation in regional sports events
- Year 5/6 Camp Coolamatong camp
- Year 3/4 Overnight camp at Coonawarra
- Junior Big Day Out excursion
- AFL Clinics and AFLX
- Hoop Time basketball
- Student led assemblies
- Gippsland's Biggest PJ Day (SRC led for supporting children in foster care)
- ANZAC Day March and Ceremony

Student Satisfaction

School Improvement Survey data by Insight SRC indicated that students:

- are experiencing positive relationships with their teachers.
- are connected to their peers.
- are provided with opportunities to collaborate with each other in the classroom.

The areas to continue to work on at St. Michael's are student behaviour and feeling confident when learning.

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	86.1%
Y02	92.1%
Y03	88.4%
Y04	89.6%
Y05	88.6%
Y06	92.0%
Overall average attendance	89.5%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

- To create a safe and stimulating learning environment that supports the learning outcomes of all students in our school community.
- To establish a culture of high expectation of learning that is the responsibility of all.

Strategy:

- Effective leadership structures systems and processes support the development of expert teacher practice and impactful school improvement
- Student outcomes drive the allocation of school resources.

Achievements

The school has continued to develop teachers skills and knowledge in many areas of the curriculum. Expert teacher practice has been at the core of Professional Learning sessions for staff. The Science of Reading professional development is seen by all staff as a key priority in improving students' growth in reading and has enabled teachers to feel confident to track student progress and measure their impact. Where possible we have been able to include teaching and non teaching staff members in our Professional Learning. This has allowed the school to begin to develop consistency across all classrooms.

The school leadership worked closely with our School Leadership Consultant to support and maintain the best outcomes for students, staff and families at St. Michael's. The school was able to complete the ongoing VRQA widget testing.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOSCEL Learning and Teaching Network Meeting • MultiLit online Training • Mandatory Reporting e-Learning Module • First Aid • Five from Five Professional Learning webinars • T2L TV webinars 	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	9
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$770.00

Teacher Satisfaction

School Improvement Survey data by Insight SRC indicated teachers:

- have a high level of respect for students and their learning.
- are supported by school leadership.
- are encouraged to be innovative in order to lead school improvement.

Areas to continue to focus on are student motivation and student management.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	23.5%
Graduate	17.6%
Graduate Certificate	5.9%
Bachelor Degree	47.1%
Advanced Diploma	5.9%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	12
Teaching Staff (FTE)	6.3
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	6
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	2.9
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

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

- The relationship between school, family and parish is enhanced.
- The school provides a purposeful, effective and contemporary learning environment.

Achievements

Throughout the year we have worked on strengthening the ties between home, school and the broader community, aiming to build a confident and connected school community.

Many St Michael's students participated in the ANZAC Day March and Ceremony along with the Remembrance Day ceremony. Representing the school on these days is a significant event for many of our students and their families and aids the school's connection with the wider community.

Listed below are some of the ways we have achieved community engagement:

- Lions Club Public Speaking competition
- School open days and tours
- School newsletter
- Class Dojo
- Email communication
- Parent/Teacher interviews and Student Led Conferences
- Student Support Group meetings
- Activities involving the Heyfield Community Resource Centre

Parent Satisfaction

Although the School Improvement Survey data by completed by parents was down from previous years, parents indicated:

- Community engagement and parent input was high.
- There was stimulation learning taking place within the classroom.

Areas to focus on in the future are behaviour management and social skills.

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.stmheyfield.catholic.edu.au