



Diocese of Sale
Catholic Education Ltd

2025

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 2025 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 14 May 2026

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

In 2025, more than 18,214 students were educated across 44 Catholic primary and secondary schools owned and operated by Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL). These schools were supported by approximately 3,022 staff who are committed to nurturing students in their academic, spiritual, physical and emotional development.

Catholic education within the Diocese of Sale continues to be strengthened through the partnership of the Bishop of Sale, the DOSCEL Board, the DOSCEL Office, school leaders, staff, parish communities and families. Together, we work to ensure that every student is supported to grow in faith, learning and wellbeing within vibrant Catholic school communities.

A significant milestone during the year was the launch of the DOSCEL Strategic Plan 2025–2028, which sets the direction for Catholic education across the Diocese for the coming years. Developed through consultation with our education community, the Strategic Plan articulates a renewed strategic intent that places faith formation, educational excellence and the wellbeing of students at the centre of our work.

Strengthening the capacity of our workforce remained an important priority throughout 2025. Schools continued to engage in professional learning and leadership development opportunities that support evidence-informed teaching and learning practices and enhance student outcomes. Leadership formation programs also continued to support emerging and experienced leaders in sustaining vibrant Catholic learning communities.

In response to the ongoing national teacher shortage, the Diocese continued its partnership with Swinburne University of Technology to deliver the Accelerated Bachelor of Education (Primary) program. This initiative provides a supported pathway for Education Support Officers working in our schools to become qualified teachers while continuing to contribute to their school communities. The first cohort commenced their studies during 2025, representing an important investment in the future workforce of Catholic education within the Diocese.

Investment in school infrastructure and contemporary learning environments also continued during the year. In January 2025, the Diocese celebrated the opening of St Josephine Bakhita Catholic Primary School in Clyde North, providing a new Catholic education option for families in this rapidly growing community.

Planning and development for future schools progressed, including the commencement of construction for St Oscar Romero Catholic Primary School in Drouin and continued planning for St Carlo Acutis Catholic Primary School in Clyde, both expected to open in 2027. These developments reflect the continued growth of Catholic communities across the Diocese and the strong demand for Catholic education.

A significant announcement during the year was the redevelopment of the historic Our Lady of Sion Convent and school precinct in Sale. The project will restore the heritage-listed convent building while creating a contemporary education precinct that will support the learning and wellbeing of future students and families. This includes a new primary school facility to enable the relocation and renaming of St Thomas' Primary School as Our Lady of Sion Catholic Primary School, as well as the establishment of the Ratisbonne Leadership Centre to support teacher professional learning and leadership development across the Diocese. Construction is underway, with completion anticipated in 2027.

Across all schools, the safety and wellbeing of children and young people remain a fundamental priority. Schools continued to strengthen their child safety practices in line with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and to foster respectful and inclusive environments where every child feels safe, valued and supported.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the principals, teachers, education support staff, parish partners, parents and volunteers who contribute so generously to the life of our Catholic schools. Your dedication ensures that Catholic education within the Diocese of Sale continues to flourish as communities of faith, learning and service.

Guided by the priorities outlined in the DOSCEL Strategic Plan 2025–2028, we look forward with confidence to continuing the important work of Catholic education across the Diocese of Sale.

Paul Velten

Executive Director

Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Ltd

Vision and Mission

As a school founded by the Sisters of St Joseph, we are challenged and inspired to live by the example of St 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 60 and classes for 2025 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

The 2025 school year has been one of growth, connection and continued improvement across all areas of school life at St Michael's. We welcomed 10 new Prep students with the school's total enrolment at the February census being 64. The school's enrolment numbers have remained consistent.

Our work throughout the year has been guided by our Annual Implementation Plan. In Religious Education, we continued to build teacher understanding of the progression of learning within the 'To Live in Christ Jesus' curriculum, strengthening planning, teaching and assessment through an inquiry approach.

In Literacy, we maintained a strong focus on evidence-based practice. Teachers refined a systematic and structured approach to phonics in the early years through InitialLit, supporting strong foundations in reading. In Years 3–6, novel studies were implemented to integrate reading, vocabulary, comprehension and writing, providing a consistent and connected approach to literacy learning.

Student wellbeing remained a priority with the continued development of our Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour Support. The development and introduction of a school-wide positive behaviour matrix has supported consistent expectations and a positive learning environment.

Students engaged in a range of enriching experiences beyond the classroom, including swimming, athletics and cross country carnivals. Our annual Art Show was again a highlight, with strong community attendance celebrating student creativity. Camps for Years 3–6 and the Prep–2 “Big Day Out” in Melbourne provided valuable opportunities for connection and growth.

Student leadership continued to develop, with our Year 6 leaders participating in the Wellington Student Leadership Program each term. They returned with valuable skills, implementing initiatives such as a Lego Club at St Michael's.

I acknowledge and thank Fr Edwin Ogbuka for his ongoing support and presence within our school, strengthening the connection between parish and school and engaging meaningfully with our students. His presence in classrooms and active engagement with students has been greatly valued.

I would like to sincerely thank all of our staff for their professionalism, commitment and dedication. Their care for our students, combined with a diverse range of skills and talents, ensures that every child is supported in their wellbeing and learning.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To develop a recontextualised, dialogical Catholic Identity through religious education, prayer, liturgy, ritual and Catholic Social Teaching.
- Deepen the expertise of teachers to deliver high quality Religious Education.

Achievements

Throughout the 2025 school year, the staff at St Michael's continued to focus on deepening their knowledge of Scripture and the Religious Education Curriculum, *To Live in Christ Jesus*. Staff were supported by the Religious Education Leader and DOSCEL Secretariat staff to plan high quality Religious Education inquiry units. These planning sessions provided staff with the opportunity to share their knowledge and skills, whilst providing a consistent approach to the way Religious Education was taught across the school.

A key highlight of the year was our staff Reflection Day led by Fr Elio Capra, which provided an opportunity to deepen our shared understanding of what it means to be a Catholic school in today's context. Staff explored the Emmaus story as a model for faith formation and were introduced to the five pillars of Catholic identity: Jesus Christ, Scripture, Church, Prayer and Sacraments, and Service and Mission. Building on this, staff reflected on the centrality of Jesus Christ in the life of the school and engaged with Scripture, particularly the Gospels, to better understand how the teachings and actions of Jesus inform our values and practices. Practical strategies were explored to further embed Scripture meaningfully across learning areas.

We are grateful for the ongoing support of Fr Edwin Ogbuka, whose presence in our school and engagement with students has strengthened the partnership between parish and school. This connection continues to enrich the faith life of our community and supports us in living out our mission each day.

The Sacramental Program continued throughout 2025. This was led by our Religious Education Leader, Jade Wheeler. St Michael's had a number of students prepare and participate in the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Communion and Confirmation and each were fabulous celebrations.

Value Added

- Whole School Masses.
- Combined Wellington Catholic Schools Peace Mass.
- Regular visits to student classrooms from the Parish Priest.

- Opportunities to actively respond to Christian Life Catholic Social Teaching strands were provided with support given to Project Compassion.
- Stations of the Cross Easter Liturgy.
- Celebrations of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Communion and Confirmation.
- Project Compassion initiatives.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- 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.
- Develop expert leader and teacher capacity.

Achievements

Learning and Teaching remained a key priority throughout the 2025 school year at St Michael's, guided by our Annual Implementation Plan. Our focus has been on strengthening consistency of practice across the school through the development of expert teacher practice.

In the junior years, teachers continued to embed structured literacy practices through InitialLit, with a strong emphasis on explicit instruction and routine. Targeted small group intervention through MultiLit, including MiniLit, was used to support students to strengthen foundational literacy skills and build confidence as learners. These daily sessions complemented classroom instruction and enabled students to consolidate key skills.

In Years 3–6, literacy learning was strengthened through the implementation of novel studies, providing a structured approach to the teaching of reading and writing. Students engaged in rich texts, with explicit teaching of vocabulary, comprehension and written responses supporting deeper understanding and engagement.

Across the school, teachers incorporated Daily Review practices to reinforce previously taught knowledge. This consistent approach supported students to retain, recall and apply their learning across the English curriculum.

In Mathematics, teachers engaged in ongoing professional learning in partnership with DOSCEL. This focused on strengthening both content knowledge and pedagogical practice, particularly in the use of explicit teaching and the systematic sequencing of lessons. The consistent use of these approaches has supported improved clarity and structure within mathematics learning across the school.

Learning adjustment has remained a key focus at St Michael's throughout 2025, ensuring that all students are supported to access and engage in their learning. Professional Learning Plans (PLPs) have been developed and implemented for students requiring additional support. These plans outline targeted goals, developed collaboratively by classroom

teachers, to address individual learning, behavioural and social-emotional needs. Teachers implemented a range of adjustments, including differentiation, scaffolding and targeted supports, to enable students to access and participate in learning on the same basis as their peers. Staff also engaged in professional learning focused on supporting neurodiverse learners. This has strengthened teacher understanding of inclusive practices and supported the implementation of strategies to better meet the diverse needs of students across the school.

Student Learning Outcomes

The 2025 NAPLAN results highlighted strengths across a number of learning areas, particularly in Year 5 Numeracy, Reading and Grammar and Punctuation, where achievement remained consistently strong. Year 5 Numeracy results have remained above 500 over consecutive years, reflecting sustained achievement in Mathematics. Year 3 students also demonstrated continued improvement in Grammar and Punctuation across the three-year period, while Writing and Spelling results across both cohorts remained stable and consistent.

St Michael's achieved a 100% participation rate in NAPLAN testing, demonstrating the school's commitment to ensuring all students were supported to participate in the assessment program.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards					
	2025 (current year)			2-Year Average	
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	437	64%	*	*
	Year 5	*	*	*	*
Numeracy	Year 3	408	82%	*	*
	Year 5	*	*	*	*
Reading	Year 3	*	*	*	*
	Year 5	*	*	*	*
Spelling	Year 3	417	82%	*	*
	Year 5	*	*	*	*
Writing	Year 3	423	82%	*	*
	Year 5	*	*	*	*

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2025 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.
- Continue the development; implementation and sustainability of child safety and vulnerable adult practices in the school.
- Build confidence in students through the development of their individual talents, interests and relationships.

Achievements

Student wellbeing remained a key priority at St Michael's throughout 2025, with a continued focus on building a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment for all students.

In 2025, St Michael's continued participation in the Mental Health in Primary Schools Program, strengthening a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. Led by our Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader, staff further developed their understanding of mental health, including recognising early signs and symptoms, and responding with appropriate support strategies.

A key focus across the school has been the development of calm, structured classroom environments where predictable routines support students to feel safe, settled and ready to learn. This consistent approach has contributed to improved engagement and positive learning behaviours.

Access to additional support was enhanced through fortnightly psychologist sessions, providing targeted intervention for students requiring more specialised support. This has complemented the work of classroom teachers in supporting students' social, emotional and behavioural needs.

The development and implementation of our School-Wide Positive Behaviour Matrix has been a significant focus. Expected behaviours have been explicitly taught across all settings of the school, with consistent language and reinforcement supporting students to understand and demonstrate positive behaviours aligned with our core values.

St Michael's continues to prioritise the development of a strong child safe culture. The ongoing implementation and review of Child Safe Standards ensures that child safety practices are embedded across all aspects of school life. Staff engage in regular training, and clear processes are in place to support student voice, safety and wellbeing.

Staff established and implemented the National Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) procedures, outlining adjustments made for students with additional needs in collaboration with parents and carers.

St. Michael's continued to conduct termly cyber safety and digital wellbeing sessions with students. These sessions were conducted by well known group, 'Inform and Empower'. They partner with schools to create safer and more positive online experiences for students.

Value Added

- ANZAC Day March and Ceremony
- Swimming, Cross Country, Athletics and Winter Sport Competitions
- First Aid in Schools Program
- Combined Catholic Schools Peace Mass
- Book Week
- Denis Huffer Athletics sessions
- Whole School Gymnastic Program
- Wellington Schools Leadership Program
- Lions Club Speech Competition
- Grade 3/4 Coonawarra Camp
- Grade 5/6 Phillip Island Camp
- Whole School Swimming Program
- End of Year Concert
- Grade 6 Graduation Ceremony

Student Satisfaction

Data from the 2025 Insight SRC Survey shows students express their satisfaction with Year 5/6 children saying they feel safe at school. Student behaviour showed an upward trend with student safety increasing to 74% and classroom behaviour up from 54% to 58%.

Engagement in Learning continues to develop with Student Motivation at 76% and Learning Confidence at 71%.

Student Attendance

St Michael's recognises the importance of close monitoring of student attendance. Attendance is reviewed regularly by classroom teachers and the principal and any concerns are raised with the student's family. Teachers mark the attendance roll twice a day as per registration requirements and absences are recorded. All unexplained absences are followed up in the following way:

1. SMS sent to parents and guardians at 9:15am.

2. No response from SMS, contacts (including emergency contacts) phoned until reason for absence is explained.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	91.73
Y02	89.28
Y03	90.19
Y04	88.42
Y05	91.64
Y06	86.37
Overall average attendance	89.61

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To establish a culture of high expectation of learning that is the responsibility of all.
- Instructional leadership drives evidence based leader and teacher practice.

Achievements

St Michael's Primary School shares a strong and productive relationship as a part of the Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited. Our school leaders attended all Learning and Teaching Network days run by the Catholic Identity, Leadership, Learning and teaching Team. We have a strong agenda and our student results are testament to us working towards a common outcome.

In 2025, St Michael's continued to focus on building a team-based culture. Led by the Leadership Team, the staff regularly engaged in professional learning that built on the individual and collective capacity of all staff. Much of this professional learning was focused on evidence-based teacher practice, the use of student assessment data and a focus on accelerating student learning outcomes.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2025	
• DOSCEL Learning and Teaching Network Meeting • Mandatory Reporting e-Learning Module • First Aid and CPR • Whole day sessions for all staff were held on Reading and Mathematics. • Religious Education Professional Learning • Weekly PLT meetings • Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour Support Presentations and Workshops • The Mindful Hub Psychology Presentations • VCPS Psychological Hazards workshop • Managing Challenging Behaviour workshop	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2025	9
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$845.00

Teacher Satisfaction

School Improvement Survey data by Insight SRC indicated teachers:

- Staff data remained strong and consistent in the area of Teaching and Learning and Staff Wellbeing.
- Staff reported that Student Behaviour had increased in the classroom from 54% in 2024 to 74% in 2025. Data also showed that staff had seen an increase across the school with student behaviour from 69% in 2024 to 77% in 2025.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0
Masters	4
Graduate	1
Graduate Certificate	1
Bachelor Degree	8
Advanced Diploma	1
No Qualifications Listed	0

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10
Teaching Staff (FTE)	6.6
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	6
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	3.63
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- St Michael's aims to create a school community where all people feel valued and respected.
- To engage with the school, parish and wider community to build positive partnerships to support student learning.

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. The Lions Club Public Speaking competition also continues to be popular with students from year 3-6.

Our school open days continue to be well attended by prospective and current families. These days continue to foster our connection with the Heyfield and District community.

Sporting carnivals as always were a highlight of the year with many parents, grandparents and friends coming to support and cheer on our students. As always, we had plenty of helpers at all of our sporting events to marshall races and hand out ribbons.

Parent Satisfaction

We are grateful for the ongoing support of our parent community. Although there wasn't any School Improvement Survey data by Insight SRC collected from parents in 2025, anecdotal evidence demonstrates a high level of satisfaction and engagement from our parent community. Families actively support school events such as school assemblies, sporting events and Open Days. The School Advisory Committee and Parents and Friends continue to make a valuable contribution to the school community and assist us with implementing new initiatives.

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