

Annual Report to the School Community



St Mary's School

5-7 Southam Street, RUSHWORTH 3612 Principal: Vincent Ryan Web: www.smrushworth.catholic.edu.au Registration: 1523, E Number: E3035

Principal's Attestation

I, Vincent Ryan, attest that St Mary's School is compliant with:

- The minimum standards and other requirements for school registration and school boarding premises (if applicable) as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic).
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2023 school year under the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth) and the Australian Education Regulations 2023 (Cth).
- The Child Safe Standards as prescribed in Ministerial Order 1359 Implementing the Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises.

Attested on 24 Apr 2024

About this report

St Mary's School is registered by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). The Annual Report to the School Community (ARSC), provides parents and the wider community with information about the school's activities and achievements throughout the year including information about various aspects of school performance. The Report is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the school community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students. Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can also be obtained from the My School website.

Governing Authority Report

The 2023 Catholic Education Week theme "Let the Words You Speak Always Be Full of Grace" reminds us of Pope Francis's call to be a synodal Church in which our understanding of others and respect for diversity is shaped by respectful dialogue borne from deep listening.

Catholic Education Sandhurst continues to be committed to providing contemporary and innovative learning environments that value diversity and promote care, respect and cooperation. In 2023 we launched the CES Ltd Strategic Plan 2023-2027 which sets out directions and priorities that will guide the way in which our Catholic schools pursue excellence in fostering the development of each person in all the dimensions of human existence: intellectual, spiritual, emotional, bodily, relational, environmental and cultural.

Schools have begun the process of developing School Improvement Plans aligning their local strategic planning to the CES Strategic Plan, under the direction of Principal Consultants and in response to schoolbased review findings.

Our governance structure continues to mature, with both CES Ltd and SCECEC Ltd committed to ensuring the highest quality student outcomes in a safe and nurturing environment.

Our learning data has identified pockets of excellence in school communities across the diocese but also highlighted greater scope for improvement in the future. The development of the CES Ltd Catholic Learning and Teaching Framework will promote greater collaboration and focus on student learning growth.

The nation-wide shortage of teachers continues to impact all schools demanding new and innovative ways to attract and retain high quality and committed Catholic educators. Strategic initiatives will prioritize workforce placements that are sustainable and ongoing with particular attention given to our remote and smaller communities.

CES Ltd has a small number of schools with low enrolments and personnel and the Catholic Education Office works closely with leadership in these schools to ensure continued viability. An incentive scheme to attract and retain educators has been initiated and the CES Ltd Board has taken a robust interest in the way small schools are promoted through the CES Ltd Marketing Strategy.

I am extremely grateful for the commitment and professionalism that is clearly identified by the efforts throughout 2023 of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd - our schools and personnel in the Catholic Education Office. They continue to work tirelessly for the students and families in our schools, true bearers of the Mission to which they have been called.

PAUL DESMOND

Executive Director, Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited

IDENTITY STATEMENT:

St Mary's Catholic School is a community who walks in the footsteps of Jesus and works in partnership with families in the Josephite tradition, to develop and educate the whole child in a safe learning environment.

VISION STATEMENTS:

At St Mary's we believe:

In celebrating our Catholic faith in a life-giving community of witnesses who serve God and society.

In fostering open and supportive partnerships with families as the primary educators of their children.

In educating the whole child in a safe, learning environment where teamwork and collaboration are central so that each child endeavours to become a valuable contributor to society.

In providing a curriculum which cultivates life-long learning through commitment to informed, current teaching and clearing practice.

In building sustainable relationships based upon mutual respect, safety, trust, justice, equality, compassion, hope and care for the environment.

School Overview

St Mary's School was established in 1954 as a parish school with the Sisters' of St Joseph being invited to provide a catholic education for children living in the Rushworth area. In 2023 there was an enrolment of 58 students and the socio-economic status was 87.

In 2023 the class structure was: Foundation/One/Two, Three/Four, Five/Six.

St Mary's is inclusive of students from diverse backgrounds and needs and all students are challenged to value their learning, develop positive relationships with their teachers and peers to progressively manage their own learning.

Specialist classes are: Auslan, Visual Arts, Science and Respectful Relationships. Bluearth is also a specialist area.

St Mary's strives to inspire a sense of hope in each student by being a positive and caring place where children are happy, secure and engaged in their learning. Students and families are welcomed into a caring environment and parents are encouraged and supported to become active participants in their child's learning and school life.

ST MARY'S SCHOOL IS COMMITTED TO CHILD SAFETY AND TO THE INCLUSION OF ALL STUDENTS.

Principal's Report

I am pleased to present the Annual Report to my school community for 2023.

This report celebrates our successes and it is also a reflection on our work over the year which gives our stakeholders a means to consider how we can improve our current practice. We are very satisfied with all that we have accomplished during the year. We are extremely proud of the work of our students, staff and all our community workers.

St Mary's School is committed to the engagement of our students' varied capabilities and there is a focus on the development of both staff and student educational knowledge and practice while endeavouring to encourage our young students to become great citizens of the future.

Our NAPLAN data reflects improved standards in the areas of numeracy and literacy. Staff, parents and students were involved in a National School Improvement (NSIT) Review in July which was facilitated by ACER consultant, Rom Bamfield. We received commendations for the work already achieved and recommendations from the panel to continue to ensure that we strengthen our commitment to gather and analyse student data and improve the learning outcomes of all students. In November all staff were part of our Catholic Identity and Religious Education Review conducted by Mrs Colleen Hampson and Ms Louise Levy CES Officers. Mr Paul Bisinella CES Principal Consultant then used our data to work with staff to develop our Strategic Plan for 2024 – 2027.

Fr Andrew Fewings from St Therese's Parish, Kennington is our supervising priest with Fr Minh Tran from Holy Rosary Parish, White Hills, supporting our school liturgies. Sr Nellie Versluys sj returned to live in Hawthorn Melbourne after 12 years residing in Rushworth. We have missed her Josephite presence and her spiritual input and support.

Our building project was completed at the end of Term 3, 2022 and we moved back into our refurbished learning spaces on September 16th 2022, Term 4, 2022. It was a day of celebration when we moved into our refurbished areas which have proved to be very purposeful work spaces. Our new outdoor furniture arrived and Brighter lines repainted our outdoor lines and games as well as adding a few new designs. The Opening and Blessing of the MacKillop Learning Centre took place on Wednesday December 6th with Bishop Shane MacKinlay, Bishop of Sandhurst, Mr Paul Desmond Executive Director CES, and Ms Annabelle Cleeland Member for Euroa. We were also pleased that principals and CES

officers were able to join our parishioners, parents, students and staff for this blessing and opening. We thank Mr Peter Byrne of A3 Architecture and Bourke's Builders for working together to complete the project.

I recognise the commitment of the School Advisory Council to continue to meet each term face to face in the staff room at 6.00pm. Currently we have 4 parent reps on the SAC so there will be drive for more members in 2024. We value our parent support and we will contact parents and ask for their support. I thank our chairperson Sharon Gleeson for her leadership. Sharon is in her final term as Chairperson.

St Mary's P & F are a positive group and they have met regularly to continue their wonderful fundraising work. They organised monthly hot lunches for our students with the last treat 'ice-cream sundae' on the last day of the school year. They managed to hold mother's and father's day stalls and supported with the Father's Day Breakfast. The organised a very successful fete on November 17.

In August, 2023, I sent my letter of resignation to Mr Paul Desmond. In due course my principal role was advertised and Mr Vincent Ryan was appointed as Principal commencing on January 29, 2024. I am proud of my 48 years in Catholic Education Sandhurst and especially proud of leading St Mary's School for the past 15 years.

kind regards,

Catherine Fraser

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Mrs Angela Brockett to begin as Leader of Religious Education in her first year of Leadership.

Angela Brockett to attend the summer school at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Colleen Hampson, CES Education Officer; Religious Education to assist Angela and teachers with planning RE and facilitate a PLC on Godly Play.

Kylie Smith CES Education Officer; Spirituality, Faith Formation and Sustainability; to facilitate staff meetings on CES theme "Matthew's Gospel".

Kylie Smith CES Education Officer; Spirituality, Faith Formation and Sustainability to facilitate the Staff Retreat at Caddell on the Murray and also a student retreat day.

Kevin Lawlor CES Adult Education -Theology & Mission to outline staff responsibility to ensure that they are accredited or working towards accreditation.

Maria Ford CES Education Officer; Spiritual Encounter and Music Ministry, to facilitate two PLCs on Planning the Liturgy

To continue to build awareness and participation in Social justice activities through Caritas, Catholic Missions and Mini Vinnies for staff and students.

David Walker CES Education Officer; Religious Education to organise St Mary's Religious Education Review in line with our NSIT review.

Achievements

Fr Minh Tran, Parish Priest, Holy Rosary Parish White Hills, our support priest, celebrated our Beginning of the School Year Mass on February 10.

Shrove Tuesday February 21 –our P&F cooked the pancakes that our students prepared.

Ash Wednesday February 22 – Our students attended the parish Mass.

Fr Andrew Fewings was our supervising priest and Fr Minh Tran from Holy Rosary Parish White Hills supported our Masses during the school term and the End of the School Year and Graduation Mass on December 15.

Angela Brockett attended the three week Summer school at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Maria Ford CES Education Officer; Spiritual Encounter and Music Ministry, facilitated two PLCs on Planning the Liturgy and also organised the grade 6 retreat in Kylie Smith's absence.

Kylie Smith CES Education Officer; Spirituality, Faith Formation and Sustainability facilitated three PLCs on the Gospel of Matthew and also the Staff Retreat at Caddell on the Murray in Moama.

Colleen Hampson CES Education Officer; Religious Education supported our teachers on a needs basis to plan their RE using Source of Life and Colleen facilitated a PLC on Godly Play.

Christian Meditation remained a focus on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

The Sacramental program was supported by Glenys Avard as parish support person and Catherine Fraser. 3 candidates from St Mary's School together with 2 candidates from Murchison and 6 candidates from Cornella celebrated the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist with Bishop Shane MacKinlay on August 6th in St Mary's School Hall.

Angela Brockett supported staff with planning Liturgies and Source of Life Units.

Staff led prayer was held on a monthly basis.

Our Religious Education Review was held on Wednesday November 29th with Colleen Hampson and Louise Levy as the reviewers. All Staff and a selection of students were interviewed. Parents were not available on the day. Fr Minh spoke to the panel via phone link up.

Value Added

Leader of Religious Education attended the Religious Education Network meetings each term.

Leader of Religious Education, Angela Brockett attended Summer school at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Colleen Hampson CES Education Officer; Religious Education supported staff with their RE planning and introduced Godly Play to new staff.

Principal facilitated the parish based Sacramental program with 11 candidates preparing and celebrating the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucahrist.

Maria Ford CES Education Officer; Spiritual Encounter and Music Ministry, facilitated 2 X PLC on Planning the Liturgy and also facilitated a Grade 6 Retreat on December 4th..

Kylie Smith CES Education Officer; Spirituality, Faith Formation and Sustainability facilitated PLCs on Matthew's Gospel and also the Staff retreat.

Mini Vinnie's in the senior classes continued to organise the small fundraisers with a view to organising Mini Vinnie members and structured meetings in 2024.

Religious Education Review was held on November 29th with the panel being Colleen Hampson CES Education Officer; Religious Education and Louise Levy CES Education Officer; Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Education

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

PLC continue with a focus on learning and teaching according to our overview.

Continue to embed Big Write and VCOP strategies through targeted PLC meetings and review the Cold Write Analysis

Professional Learning with Catherine Bonham and Andrea O'Connor on Data Analysis.

Cate & Thea to attend Selena Fisk Diocesan Professional Learning day on Data Analysis in Moama.

Introduction of DIBELS assessment, unpacking and understanding the tool.

Review St Mary's Assessment schedule in line with the CES Assessment & Data expectations. Develop strategies for Challenging Mathematical Tasks with support of Bernadette Pearce CES Education Officer.

All staff to complete SMART spelling training and document strategies for SMART spelling, writing and reading.

To continue to become familiar with INQUISITIVE a cross curriculum resource.

Achievements

Learning conversations were held in Term 1 and term 3 and written reports were available to parents in term 2 and 4.

Continued focus on Literacy and Spelling with teachers using Big Write and VCOP and Smart Spelling Resources and strategies.

Intervention teachers supported Early Years Literacy and Numeracy and used Smart Spelling, Big Write VCOP and challenging Maths task strategies in their daily support work.

Catherine Bonham and Andrea O'Connor CES officers worked with staff to better understand the use of Data and how to analyse data to direct explicit teaching and to improve student outcomes.

Students offered weekly Visual Arts, Respectful Relationships, Science & Auslan programs. All staff were engaged in Auslan in the 'Teachers as Co-learners' program during 2023 and attended the Auslan Conference at St Monica's PS Kangaroo Flat on Friday May 12th.

Catholic Education Week April 30 – May 6 and St Mary's Open day on May 19th were successful days.

Bluearth classes were facilitated by Kade O'Dwyer.

Walker Learning was further embedded into our curriculum with the senior students presenting their Educational Research Projects each term which were supported by our parents.

P & F continue to financially support Mathletics, ABC Reading Eggs, Prodigy and EPIC for the remainder of 2023. A decision was made to finish with Mathletics and Reading Eggs at the end of 2023.

Book week "READ, GROW & INSPIRE" August 21 - 25 resulted in a wonderful dress parade and activities.

Transition Prep sessions were well attended by our 4 year old kinder children and our grade 6 students benefited from several transition days at their chosen Secondary College: St Augustine's College, Rushworth P-12 College and Kyabram P-12 College. & Rochester College.

A whole School Excursion was held at Melbourne Aquarium and Melbourne Museum on August 11th.

Our swimming program was held at Aquamoves from September 4th – 8th.

Grade 3/4 enjoyed their camp to Billabong Ranch from October 9th – 11th.

Grade 5/6 enjoyed their Anglesea Camp from October 18th -20th.

Student Learning Outcomes

NAPLAN 2023 was held from March 15 – March 27.

Analysis of school student data from our November 2023 assessment schedule showed that students had continued to maintain their level of attainment especially in our reading levels. Our Foundation students had made satisfactory progress with literacy and numeracy.

Teachers consolidated their knowledge of Challenging Tasks as well as focussing on Smart Spelling. Our students continue to be engaged in discussion with their parents about the focus of their writing and are positively motivated in their Cold Writes.

The 10 minute reading sessions prior to the morning bell are very beneficial for the students. They are not only enjoying the reading time but are also much more settled and focused to begin their learning.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards					
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient		
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	*	*		
	Year 5	458	45%		
Numeracy	Year 3	*	*		
	Year 5	465	64%		
Reading	Year 3	*	*		
	Year 5	472	64%		
Spelling	Year 3	*	*		
	Year 5	420	36%		
Writing	Year 3	*	*		
	Year 5	449	64%		

*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.

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Continue to promote our school on PAM/SIMON Everywhere, face book site and the local newspaper "Waranga News".

Continue to support parents to use SIMON Everywhere as the main mode of communication, and to update medical forms and check permission forms.

Develop positive relationships with Todd Woodfine Principal of Rushworth P-12 College and Mrs Tammy Donovan as Directress of the Rushworth Kindergarten.

Continue to engage staff in Policy Connect, OH&S modules, Child Safe modules including the PROTECT resources in readiness for our VRQA review in 2024.

Ensure that all staff complete the elearning module of Mandatory Reporting.

Work with the CES Pastoral Wellbeing Officer, Mr Steve Hicks and Mr Jamie Edwards to develop best practice for dealing with behaviours of concern and to ensure that all staff understand the Behaviour Management Plan and use common language and strategies.

To develop One Page Safety plans for identified students with behaviours of concern.

Ensure that the Out of Home Care documentation is completed for relevant student.

Achievements

Communication to the school community is via several apps. Parent Access Module (PAM), St Mary's School Face Book page and fortnightly online newsletter in NAAVI format.

Teachers also regularly email parents with class updates.

Our junior students participate in community partnership with the Rushworth Community House which also engages with Waranga Aged Care residents.

Each year one student from each class is award the 'Mary MacKillop Award' for displaying the values of respect, inclusion, resilience, trust, cooperation and empathy. The 2023 winners were Elvie Wright, Taylah Clarke and Bryce Hudson.

Other awards presented were:

Rushworth Community Bank 'Community Spirit Award' for a grade 5 student who has shown involvement in his community: Heath Ogden

St Vincent de Paul (Social Justice): Pippa Lockwood

Friendship Award: Isaiah Patterson, Tannah King

Value Added

Discussion at weekly staff meetings about students at risk and current behaviours of concern and sharing strategies that are uncomplicated and successful .

Steve Hicks and Jamie Edwards supported teachers to develop One page Safety Plans. They also supported teachers who had Out of Home Care students.

Student Satisfaction

Students feel that most teachers care about them and their learning and their teachers show empathy and present learning in a purposeful and interesting style.

Students acknowledge that a high percentage of students are disrespectful to each other and to their teachers at school and would like time to discuss this in class. Students have low perceptions of student physical and psychological safety while at school.

Students appreciate that their teachers reassure them and support them to discover new ways to expand their learning and to solve problems.

Student Attendance

Non-attendance is managed by:

Parents are encouraged through the newsletter and on PAM to record their child's absence on PAM (Parent Access Module) or via phone call to the office.

A phone call is made by office staff to parents by 9.10am, if the school has not been notified about a student absence. The emergency contact will be called if the listed parent / carer is unavailable.

Regular reminders and articles are included in the newsletter about the importance of school attendance.

Attendance posters are displayed.

If absences are ongoing, the Principal phones the parent to negotiate a solution.

Average Student Attendance Rate	by Year Level
Y01	87.4%
Y02	90.2%
Y03	85.9%
Y04	84.9%
Y05	89.5%
Y06	85.9%
Overall average attendance	87.3%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Lead Teacher – regular meetings to develop strategies for school leadership.

School Advisory Council Promotion with new members encouraged to join the SAC.

Parents and Friends to develop a fundraising plan.

Develop the 2023 Annual Action Plan aligned to our 2020--2023 School Improvement plan.

Ensure that regular consultative meetings are held.

Positions of Leadership: Thea Parry- Lead Teacher and Leader of Learning and Teaching; Angela Brockett- Leader of Catholic Identity & Religious Education: Katherine Jamieson-Leader of Learning Diversity have all completed the first year of their 3 year tenure.

Achievements

Parents & Friends gained new members and developed a fundraising plan for 2023, and enjoyed meeting socially face to face.

Lead Teacher Learning and Teaching: Thea Parry led PLCs and curriculum developments. Thea led staff to unpack new assessments, understand data analysis, and kept staff up to date with current teaching and learning trends.

Lead Teacher Catholic Identity and Religious Education: Angela Brockett focussed on Religious Education and organised Professional Learning for staff to access TAP for accreditation.

Lead Teacher Learning Diversity: Katherine Jamieson focussed on NCCD and supported teachers with PLPs and organised PSGs.

Catherine Fraser attended Pastoral Wellbeing and Aboriginal Network meetings as well has her Leadership meetings.

Teachers attended their relevant CES Network meetings during the year.

All teachers holding a POL position, have completed the first year of their 3 year tenure. These positions will be advertised again in Term 4, 2025.

Student Leadership – each senior student is a leader and they rotate through 4 areas of leadership during the school year: Media, Sport, Environment and Catholic Identity. They facilitate the weekly assembly each Friday.

Focus on caring for their buddy throughout the school year and developing a relationship with their transition buddy in Term 4

Grade 6 Retreat led by Maria Ford on December 4th was successful.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023

Primary Senior Leaders network

Learning Diversity Network

Data Analysis Catherine Bonham & Andrea O'Connor

Sandhurst Numeracy Leaders network

TAP Accreditation PL -Kevin Lawlor

Chicago Summer School course -Angela Brockett

Auslan Conference

THRASS online PL

NSIT Review

Catholic Identity and Religious Education Review

Selena Fisk -Diocesan leaders PL

Religious Education Accreditation

Religious Education Leaders network

Pastoral Wellbeing Network

Resilience Project PL-Hugh van Cuylenburg

Performing Arts Network -Festival of the Sacred

Walker Learning PL

Directors Briefings

Aboriginal Network

SIMON conference

Adult Faith Information with Kylie Smith and Maria Ford

Religious Education /Godly Play with Colleen Hampson

First Aid -Stitches

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning			
NCCD briefing			
Camp Self-assessment Risk Assessment			
FBT workshop			
Multi-disciplinary Meeting			
Report writing Days			
Diocesan Budget workshop			
Quality Assurance Audit			
School Fees			
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	16		
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$800.00		

Teacher Satisfaction

Staff morale is high and they feel valued and confident in their role within the school and that they consistently improve the quality of their teaching and learning practices.

The environment is positive and they are trusted and treated fairly in their work place.

Staff satisfaction in matters pertaining to continuous improvement, staff compassion and expectations for success is high.

Matters of Catholic culture, student behaviour, maintaining a safe and orderly environment, staff compassion, social justice and parish involvement is satisfactory.

Staff are aware of student safety and behaviours of concern however all staff are confident that they are able to identify and support students at risk.

Teachers believe that the professional learning undertaken considers their needs, skills and interests and that the staff collegiality and the level of support and help from colleagues is good.

Teacher Qualifications		
Doctorate	0.0%	
Masters	25.0%	
Graduate	0.0%	
Graduate Certificate	25.0%	
Bachelor Degree	37.5%	
Advanced Diploma	12.5%	
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%	

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10
Teaching Staff (FTE)	7.2
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	9
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	4.6
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To encourage stronger participation in school events such as Open Day, School Masses, Beginning and End of the School Year Mass and sausage sizzle and school assembly.

To support parent interest in being part of the class routine.

To encourage parent use of SIMON communication

Achievements

Students continued to develop strong relationships with their classmates.

Parents rejoiced at being able to return to the school environment to support their child/ren and to engage with staff and other parents especially through the morning reading session.

Student run assemblies were held every Friday afternoon in the amphitheatre.

Transition days for our grade 6 students and our 4 year-olds were held in term 4.

Parents and Friends ran a stall at the Rushworth Easter Market, ran a Mother's day and Father's day stall, hot lunches each month on a Friday, organised a major raffle and a successful fete in term 4.

Parent Satisfaction

Parents feel very appreciated by the school. There was a sense of satisfaction that the school respected culture and environment and that sensitive and critical issues are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Parents felt that the communication from the school was valuable and that communication between teachers and staff was adequate.

Parents indicated that their child's performance and progress was communicated to them in an appropriate manner through learning conversations as well as a clear and concise written report.

Parents felt that student safety was a priority for staff and that behaviours of concern were identified quickly and dealt with fittingly and consistently.

The large majority of parents were satisfied with their child's school.

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.smrushworth.catholic.edu.au