



2023

Annual Report to the School Community



St Monica's School

137 Brockley Street, WODONGA WEST 3690

Principal: Jacqueline Partington

Web: www.smwodonga.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 1699, E Number: E3046

Principal's Attestation

I, Jacqueline Partington, attest that St Monica'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 Monica'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 co-operation. 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 school based 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

Vision and Mission

Our Vision:

Every child, every day, will be supported and challenged in a faith filled, welcoming and inclusive environment, underpinned by best practice and high expectations.

Identity Statement:

Jesus is our guide, In Him we live, we move, we are called to be.

Motto:

Learn to Love, Love to Learn.

Graduate Outcomes:

At St Monica's, our students will strive to

Develop empathy, compassion and tolerance

Be an independent and curious learner

Have respect for themselves, the community and the environment

Take risks and develop resilience

School Overview

Catholic Education in Wodonga has a long and distinguished history. St Monica's Primary School is one of the largest Catholic Primary Schools in the Diocese of Sandhurst and continues to provide outstanding contemporary education to students.

Enrolments

Our last Census recorded enrolment of 519 students.

This consisted of:

Foundation- 77 Pupils

Year One- 82 Pupils

Year Two- 68 Pupils

Year Three- 70 Pupils

Year Four- 77 Pupils

Year Five- 61 Pupils

Year Six- 84 Pupils

Principal's Report

St.Monica's Primary school is a diverse community, rich in love and faith. St.Monica's is part of the Wodonga Catholic Parish and lives out its identity statement of "Jesus is our guide, in him, we live, we move, we are called to be." The school vision of "every child, every day, supported and challenged in a faith filled, welcoming and inclusive learning environment underpinned by best practice and high expectations" is evident the moment you walk through the door.

2023 saw an increased focus on teacher development and in turn student growth. We focused heavily on our three school improvement goals which were to develop a school wide professional learning plan that informed all aspects of professional learning, continuing the focus on best practice in which every student learns successfully with high levels of engagement and using data strategically and systematically to effectively inform and monitor the school community. We undertook significant professional development to enhance and develop our signature pedagogy underscored by the Science of Learning. Pastoral wellbeing was also a focus where we further developed our social emotional curriculum.

The Catholic Identity of our school has been enhanced with particular focus on being a dialogical school and building staff capacity to plan and deliver high quality religious education lessons and build confidence in ensuring robust dialogue occurs to ensure meaning is more easily accessible for students. Staff also undertook spiritual formation to guide and transform one's view of themselves and the world.

I am deeply grateful for all staff, student and families who give so generously of their time and talent to ensure St.Monica's is a life giving Community for all to enjoy and thrive in.

Wishing you an abundance of God's blessings.

Jacqui Partington

Principal

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

In 2023 St Monica's Primary School targeted the following goals in Catholic Identity:

Establish pathways and tools for staff to use, towards a post critical belief in students for a more dialogical school.

Staff will self identify position using growth pathway rubric on the use of our Signature Pedagogy and Positive Education practices in unison

- 1) Develop an understanding of the Charism of St Monica's.
- 2) Continue to create an inclusive environment, honouring the dignity, cultures and faith traditions of all.
- 3) Build staff confidence through faith formation and an opportunity to understand our own spirituality.
- 4) Build understanding that the earth and all life on it are part of God's creation. We are called to respect this sacred gift.

Achievements

In 2023 St Monica's Primary School continued to enact actions from the Charism Action Research Project. All grade levels participated in a unit of learning about the 'Mercy' charism. These units were developed by teachers suitable for their grade level. Reflections of the unit occurred within teams for what worked and what could be better. Amendments to the 'Mercy' units will occur in 2024. Through this reflection process, staff worked together to build their understanding of charism and the specific school charism of the school 'Mercy'. All staff participated in the Australian's Together Workshop to build culture competency. This was completed in 1 hour sessions across the year in PLC's. The workshop was enriched by prompting questions and discussions.

Value Added

Staff continue to prioritise prayer to begin planning and meetings.

Leadership and Middle Learning Leaders engaged in termly faith formation sessions with Kylie Smith, developing the need for leaders across the school to engage in what leadership

looks like in a Catholic School and their responsibilities as Catholic Leaders. Professional Development focused on understanding and unpacking scripture of the Gospel of Luke and then at the start of the next liturgical year, Matthew. Staff engaged in teacher pre reading on their focus Gospels of their Source Of Life (SOL) units to better understand context of unit, complete Scripture Navigators and prepare well sequenced lessons.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

In 2023 St Monica's Primary school continued targeting the following goals. 1) Sustainably manage learning and teaching initiatives 2) Focused processes and practices on improving teacher efficacy 3) Systematically use data to plan and develop learning experience and evaluate teaching 4) Targeted strategies to scaffold and extend learning for all students in all areas. 5) Promoting a culture of inspired and well informed teachers. In 2023 we focused on the introduction of an improved professional development model inclusive of individual and collective support mechanisms to increase teacher expertise and knowledge.

Achievements

In 2023 St Monica's primary school continued to establish our implementation of explicit direct instruction across all learning areas. We refined our practice through effective observation and feedback cycles, strategic professional planning sessions and ongoing review and critique of our practice in line with researched evidence best practice.

We consolidated our data collection and use of data around literacy and expanded further into the numeracy assessment space. The extension of this process allowed us to identify 'next steps' for all learners in these key areas. Our intervention program was utilised again to strong effect reducing the amount of students low and at risk in literacy.

An increase in teacher knowledge across key areas of instruction, science of learning and science of reading has taken place. We continued to expand our resourcing for curriculum across all learning areas and reached some levels with complete lesson and unit resources available for the whole year. This curriculum continues to be refined and adjusted. A particular focus was adjusting the Mathematics curriculum to represent the changes made in the Victorian curriculum.

Student Learning Outcomes

NAPLAN data collected in 2023 clearly evidenced maintaining levels in reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy across our year 3 cohort. This cohort exceeded the 5 year trends in all areas and was within the range of state norms in all areas. We continue to see an evidenced improvement within all cohorts. The school has identified a need to continue to improve the data outcomes in reading and has made some adjustments

to the program that will reflect that in 2024 and beyond. This will include the introduction of Core Knowledge units to support knowledge building, instructional playbook and routines to support effective and efficient literacy learning along with additional supplementary Direct Instruction programs like spelling mastery.

The school utilises a suite of data sets around reading that track student growth from phonemic skills, to sound level, to word level, connected text level and reading comprehension skills. This data informs our learning objectives for each level and also is the entry data for students requiring intervention in the above mentioned areas. Students entry data is compared at the end of 10 weeks and students growth is tracked. Students exit once they have reached the achievement standards required. There are also similar data sets for writing that track transcription skills, but writing ideation is assessed by moderating samples across the school and within year levels.

Numeracy data within the middle years showed a significant gain while all other areas have also show strong growth well above the expected 12 months growth in all year levels. Retrieval practice and increased revision being identified as fundamentally important for this development.

Scope and sequence development in integrated studies has successfully supported a more diverse and balanced delivery across the curriculum. Along with the implementation of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) scope and sequence and refined Religious Education scope and sequence have allowed for a more intentional balance of curriculum delivery creating a richer more holistic learning experience for all students. RE learning has increased the use of our signature pedagogy to good effect and we are now establishing data measures for SEL programs and outcomes. With the consolidation of straight classes over the duration of the 2023 year, we have seen the 3-6 curriculum development become more purposeful and impactful for student learning. This has allowed for more targeted teaching and deliberate attendance to mandated Victorian curriculum outcomes.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	395	47%
	Year 5	469	50%
Numeracy	Year 3	414	72%
	Year 5	494	75%
Reading	Year 3	390	63%
	Year 5	487	65%
Spelling	Year 3	407	63%
	Year 5	473	73%
Writing	Year 3	416	82%
	Year 5	456	49%

*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

In 2023, the St Monica's Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Team worked through the goals as identified in the School Improvement and Annual Action Plan. This was supported by the school leadership team and general staff.

As a school, we continually worked to ensure that all members of the St Monica's Community were welcomed, respected, included and feeling safe at all times.

The goals and focus for 2023 included contributing to the overall school goal of implementing a:

- School wide Annual Professional Learning Plan that informs all aspects of professional learning.
- Continue the focus on best practice in which every student learns successfully with high levels of engagement.
- Data to be used strategically and systematically to effectively inform and monitor the school community.

The intended outcome in the Pastoral Wellbeing sphere was to:

- Develop a professional learning sequence that supports and interlinks to the Learning and Teaching intended outcomes
- Seek and share best practices in the field of Pastoral Wellbeing with a focus on Positive Behaviour Management and Social Emotional Learning.
- Collect and strategically use data to inform the direction of Wellbeing supports throughout the school.

Achievements

Through our focus on developing a professional learning sequence and in aligning with learning and teaching and supporting the approach to explicit instruction, staff developed and furthered their understanding of social norms and routines. This supported a focus on ensuring school expectations and routines were understood and enacted. This work was underpinned by our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support approach. The teaching of whole school expectations was further underpinned by developing further understanding of our three shared school expectations: Respect for Self, Others and the Environment. Explicit behaviour statements were developed and taught to support these expectations.

Furthermore a more consistent approach to responding to student behaviour was developed. This provided clarity for staff, students and parents when behaviour incidents occurred.

The Social Emotional Learning curriculum Resilience, Rights & Respectful Relationships (RRRR) continued to be used throughout the school. This curriculum was also paired with Vanessa Hamilton's Talking the Talk Sexual Health curriculum. Our Respectful Relationships initiative (as a lead school) was once again maintained and we continued to engage with other schools in our cluster to ensure that our students are developing an understanding of gender equality.

We were lucky enough through the support of School Focus Youth Services to join the Dogs Connect program and have our new school Wellbeing Dog 'Lottie' commence in supporting and enhancing the wellbeing of students and staff. The training and work that went into setting up the program was a credit to the core team members. We also paired with Gateway Health who provided training to a group of Year 5 students in the PLAY Program. These students provided sports sessions at lunch time for F-2 Students. Finally the introduction of our wellbeing lunch time clubs were very popular and provided a series of different activities for students to join in during the lunch break.

With the large number of Defence children in our school we have a responsibility to support these families and the social and emotional support that they require. This was facilitated through our classroom teachers, leadership and our wellbeing team. Our defence transition aide provided invaluable support for our defence students.

Our Learning Diversity Leader continued to support all of our NCCD students and families in her role. They continued to work with all of our staff to ensure personalised student goals that promoted growth and achievement were both set and actioned throughout the school year. Our School Psychologist continued to support students and families through her role. They provided support to students through small group and individual student sessions.

Value Added

- A focus on whole school expectations and routines was implemented to develop consistency across the school.
- Social Emotional Intervention groups were used to support students.
- Daily Lunch Time Clubs were offered to all students.
- In partnership with the Dogs Connect program 'Lottie' was introduced and started working as the school Wellbeing Dog attending school two days a week in the second half of the year.

- Student PLAY Leaders were trained and coordinated junior school recess sporting sessions.
- The Talking the Talk Sexual Health Curriculum was used from Foundation to Year 6.
- School camps provided opportunities for students to build connections and develop resilience.

Student Satisfaction

In the annual Sandhurst Archdiocese Catholic Schools - School Improvement Surveys, students indicated that the overall social and learning culture of the school was a positive one. Results showed that students have a strong sense of belonging to school and feel like they are valued members of our community. We have had a 10% increase of students who indicated that the energy at school was positive and recognised that adults in the school were very supportive of them. Our strong focus on student leadership was also recognised by students. Continuing to enhance the effectiveness of our leadership structures, and providing increased opportunities for students to have an impact on their school, will be an ongoing focus in 2024.

Student Attendance

Student attendance is marked online twice daily using our learning platform, SIMON. This data is automatically uploaded into Simon and student attendance rates are available in real time. Staff regularly assess student attendance rates and in the event that they are concerned about the lack of attendance, contact to a parent or caregiver will be made by either the classroom teacher, Principal, Deputy Principal or reception. Parents are asked to contact the school if their child will not be attending on any particular day also. Attendance percentages are tracked throughout the school year to monitor individuals and groups for the purpose of maintaining high attendance.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	92.4%
Y02	90.3%
Y03	91.5%
Y04	92.3%
Y05	90.3%
Y06	90.3%
Overall average attendance	91.2%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

At St.Monica's, leaders co-create an inclusive, shared and collaborative culture where student flourishing is the core purpose. Leadership is exercised in all areas of school life at all levels. In 2023 the leadership team developed a whole school annual professional learning plan which supports the school improvement agenda, articulates the school's systematic approach to mentoring, coaching, observation, and feedback to ensure professional growth for all staff and is reflective of the professional growth plans of every staff member. There were several staff sessions held where staff were given the opportunity to contribute to this plan.

The leadership team also began to develop and document a whole school Data Plan for the collection, analysis, discussion, use and sharing of systematically collected data sets. Monitoring of these data sets to measure performance and inform decision making processes was prioritised.

The introduction of a middle leadership layer of six instructional coaches was also carefully planned for in readiness for implementation in 2024. There was significant appetite from staff for these positions of leadership.

The development of student leadership was also enhanced and the leader of Catholic Identity worked heavily with this group, particularly in the area of social justice and Earthcare.

I once again thank and commend the school leadership team who continued to build high performing teams and individuals with shared leadership.

Achievements

To attend to our leadership goals we carefully planned and executed a number of strategies. The leadership team supported the senior team to develop leadership skills in our senior students and provide them with opportunities to use these skills alongside their gifts and talents to enhance our school community. The Principal, Deputy Principal, leader of Catholic

Identity and members of the Catholic Education Office all provided formation experiences for these student leaders including a whole day retreat with Kylie Smith and our leader of CI worked with student leaders in Social Justice and Earth Care capacities.

Parent leadership opportunities continued with continued opportunities for parents to be involved with the school community. The introduction of a community engagement staff leadership position certainly enhanced the quality of parent leadership opportunities and achievements.

Our leader of Learning and Teaching spent term four setting up the new coaching program where every staff member was allocated a coach to work with in 2024. The leadership team created the conditions to ensure significant staff buy-in and a focus of teacher improvement and therefore student growth was prioritised as part of this process.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<p>In 2023 staff engaged in a number of professional learning activities including:</p> <p>Coaching professional development</p> <p>Faith formation</p> <p>Wellbeing toolkit- NESLI</p> <p>Maree Crabbe- It's time we talked</p> <p>Respectful relationships</p> <p>Continued data review of ECSI survey</p> <p>Learning and teaching professional development consisted of: signature pedagogy, daily review practice, higher thinking for students, monitoring student learning & reviewing teaching practice.</p>	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	44
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1200.00

Teacher Satisfaction

All staff completed the ORIMA survey where they were able to provide feedback on job satisfaction, teacher workload and impact on student learning and engagement. Staff reported they felt connected to the school community with high levels of job satisfaction.

The new agreement, whilst unsettling to begin with, has been rolled out and staff are reporting increased role clarity. Staff also ranked positive emotions highly and an appetite for continued improvement was evident. Staff are feeling increased levels of confidence in delivering our new signature pedagogy and were looking forward to increased feedback through our new coaching program. Staff morale and commitment to their work is high.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	9.8%
Graduate	9.8%
Graduate Certificate	2.0%
Bachelor Degree	43.1%
Advanced Diploma	9.8%
No Qualifications Listed	25.5%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	50
Teaching Staff (FTE)	43.7
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	25
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	22.2
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

The year commenced with the goal to establish a leadership position to lead and manage community participation and engagement. A Community Leader was appointed.

A new Defence Force Coordinator was appointed also with the goal of maintaining and continuing the engagement of connection with defence families within the community.

Increasing parental involvement and participation was planned for and achieved through several successful events such as the Mothers and Fathers Day breakfasts, regular coffee and tea mornings before school, invitations to class assemblies and a well attended art show evening.

Finally St Monica's recognised their 50th Year Anniversary where community and past staff were invited to attend a mass and morning tea followed by school tours to commemorate the occasion.

Achievements

- Regular parent morning teas were held each term to promote connections between parents and staff.
- Parents were invited and encouraged to attend school assemblies.
- Parent Teacher interviews were held with a high percentage of parents and families attending.
- The Mothers Day and Fathers Day Breakfasts were held to high attendance rates.
- A very successful and well attended Art Show evening for parents.
- Parent information nights were offered including a session with Vanessa Hamilton who presented on 'Talking the Talk' and Karen Young who presented on Anxiety.
- Parents were invited to attend the Mission Madness as part of the St Monica's feast day celebrations. This event was extremely successful and well attended.
- The school celebrated their 50th anniversary and were joined by a range of past staff and community members. The featured article in the local newspaper was well received.

Parent Satisfaction

Parents this year completed the new CES Orima Survey. This was offered to all parents with high rate of families offering feedback through the survey. The survey provided feedback on the following areas:

- Family engagement
- Barriers to engagement
- School fit
- School Climate
- Student Safety
- Communication
- Catholic Identity

In all domains St Monica's rated inline with the CES average. Areas for improvement in the coming year included Family engagement.

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.smwodonga.catholic.edu.au