



2023

Annual Report to the School Community



St Joseph's School

17 Wedge Street, BENALLA 3672

Principal: Mary Dunstan

Web: www.sjbenalla.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 205, E Number: E3005

Principal's Attestation

I, Mary Dunstan, attest that St Joseph'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 10 May 2024

About this report

St Joseph'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 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

Vision and Mission

IDENTITY STATEMENT

St Joseph's is a welcoming, Catholic, child-safe school community, that nurtures and values each person, knowing God lives in all of us.

VISION STATEMENT

St Joseph's strives to:

Provide a safe, inclusive environment that fosters hope, respect, responsibility and reconciliation.

Promote shared partnerships between home, school, parish, and the wider community.
Educate the whole person – spiritually, socially, emotionally, academically, and physically.
Provide a challenging, innovative, and comprehensive curriculum that encourages life-long learning.

GRADUATE OUTCOMES

At St. Joseph's we strive to educate students to:

Be safe, respectful, and responsible for yourself, others, and the environment

Value the beliefs, rituals, and traditions of the Catholic faith

Grow in their personal relationship with God and others

Be engaged and resilient

Be committed to social justice

Achieve curriculum standards reflective of their individual ability

Be lifelong learners, open to challenges and opportunities

School Overview

St Joseph's School acknowledges the eight tribes of the Yorta Yorta people the original custodians of the land on which the School operates. St Joseph's is a Catholic Primary School located in Benalla, North East Victoria. The current enrolment figure is 378 children with 52 staff members. The parish of St Joseph's consists of St Joseph's Parish, St Joseph's Primary School and FCJ Secondary College. The school works closely with FCJ Secondary College and schools within the diocese of Sandhurst to foster educational partnerships.

Our staff consists of classroom teachers, learning support officers, specialist teachers, an administration/business management team, and leadership team members in the roles of Principal, Deputy Principal/Catholic Identity Leader/Learning and Teaching Leader, Curriculum Leader, Wellbeing and Learning Diversity Leader, Indigenous Leader, Literacy Leader, and Student Pastoral Wellbeing – Mental Health & Wellbeing Leader.

Our school has 17 classes ranging from Foundation through to Grade Six. We work in the following levels: Foundation, Junior School, Middle School, and Senior School. The structure of our school consists of four major buildings including:

- Building One: Administration/Office/Staffroom/Library/Learning and Teaching Room and three Foundation classrooms
- Building Two: St Joseph's Hall/Performing Arts/Meeting Room
- Building Three: Junior School with five Grade One/Two composite classrooms.
- Middle and Senior Learning Centre:
 - Section Four: Middle School-Grade Three/Four composite classes
 - Section Five: Senior School-Grade Five/Six composite classes and Art Room

St Joseph's School enacts gospel values and is deeply committed to maintaining a strong Catholic Identity and pastoral care initiatives. Our staff oversees faith education, academic growth, and the wellbeing of everyone in the school community. Our staff are highly skilled and collaborate closely in Unit Professional Learning Teams as well as in the whole school Professional Learning Team. The school embraces and implements current teaching methods that align with the school's strategic plan and that of CES Ltd. Teachers work in individual classes groupings and in team teaching settings, promoting shared ownership throughout the entire school. Open-plan layouts and flexible furniture designs support the school's co-teaching philosophy when appropriate. St Joseph's is a Catholic faith community that fosters a Christian atmosphere, through experiences of welcome, reconciliation, acceptance and celebration.

Principal's Report

Our teaching philosophy is evident in our approach to education and our dedication to child safety, and community wellbeing. We strive to establish a school environment grounded in the principles of Catholic Education Sandhurst, fostering a culture that values faith, life, community engagement, and environmental stewardship. Embracing a student-centered model, we prioritise meeting the individual learning requirements of each student. We employ ongoing and collaborative formative assessment to determine the next steps in student learning as evident in our Visible Learning implementation and our commitment to Gradual Release of Responsibility Instructional Framework and related pedagogy.

St. Joseph's School commenced the 2023 academic year with enthusiasm, welcoming new families and staff members. Mr. Sam Kerlin joined as Deputy Principal, bringing a positive impact to the Catholic Identity of our school. The school's Catholic Identity was highlighted through uplifting Masses and events, enhancing the spiritual experience for all attendees. Welcoming our community back to a full school year of events was very rewarding for us all with the school able to reintroduce popular events such as Mother's Day Morning Tea, Pancake Tuesday, Father's Day Breakfast, School Fete and various shared Masses such as the Beginning of School Year Mass and the Feast of St Joseph's, with the St Joseph's Parish and the wider community.

St Joseph's Leadership Team works collaboratively with all staff members to ensure a viable and guaranteed curriculum is delivered to all learners. The Victorian Curriculum guides the learning outcomes of the curriculum, however, it is through analysis and evaluation of student learning that classroom curriculum design is driven which provides an engaging curriculum that is differentiated at the point of need of every learner.

In terms of curriculum, St. Joseph's received accolades for its performance in NAPLAN from ACARA for 2022 early in 2023, recognising the dedicated efforts of staff, students, and families. The school has been committed to the Visible Learning system, implementing evidence-based practices to improve student outcomes. Staff participated in professional development (PD) courses to enhance our understanding and experience of various programs in Mathematics and Literacy and also in our experience of Catholic Identity, during Religious Education classes. Our school maintained its commitment to continuous improvement and student wellbeing through various initiatives and programs including, but not limited to, Breakfast Club and Seasons for Growth.

A major event for our community was the opening of our Middle and Senior Learning Centre in 2023. The transition of over half our school into the Learning Centre was met with enthusiasm from both students and staff. The facility's modern, quiet and inviting atmosphere created an optimal learning environment. Our students were thrilled to return to school in Term Three to discover the installation of the Synthetic Grass-Multi Court surface. The

installation included the completion of court lines for netball, 4 squares, and mini basketball keys which were added. This wonderful addition to our school was supported by the generous gift of \$18,500 received from the estate of John O'Loughlin. We thank the O'Loughlin family for this donation.

At the beginning of 2023 the position of Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander Education Leader was initiated for our Leadership Team. The appointment of Heidi Perry to this position assured our commitment to fostering indigenous culture and awareness manifested in several significant initiatives implemented at our school.

Middle and senior classes attended exciting camps to Melbourne CBD on separate occasions this year. Both camps were jam-packed with various experiences and opportunities that the staff and students could enjoy together. A huge thanks to Hayden Reeves who initiated and confirmed the actual funding for the camps and to the Middle and Senior Level staff who planned, booked, and organised the whole experience for the children. Both camps were highly valued experiences for all involved.

On March 21st, 2023 St Joseph's celebrated Harmony Day with a range of extracurricular activities planned and implemented by our Performing Arts teacher Mrs Deborah Pasztor, and our Language teachers Mrs Jeni Dunn and Sasaki Sensai. This celebration exhibited the learning of our students with the theme for Harmony Week which was, "Everyone Belongs", aimed at bringing people together and to foster a sense of community, emphasising the importance of acceptance and inclusivity. Our St Joseph's School Choir practised and performed at many assemblies, Masses and celebrations throughout the year including participation in the Sandhurst Arts on Show program, which culminated in an exciting performance at the Wangaratta Performing Arts and Convention Centre. The entire school also participated in a dynamic performance of dance and song for our end of year performance which was enjoyed by our entire community.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Raise the profile, understanding and implementation of the 'Source of Life' program.

- Catholic Community

CES Ltd STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Catholic school identity is preserved and enhanced by explicitly putting forward the Catholic faith in dialogue with the school's plural context, out of the conviction that faith and culture enrich each other.

- Learning Community

St Joseph's STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Through high-impact pedagogical strategies, students' learning is relevant, contemporary and differentiated to their needs.

St Joseph's Goals

- To reflect on current Religious Education planning, evaluate effectiveness and develop a uniform approach to the implementation of Source of Life.
- To deepen staff understanding of Shared Christian Praxis (life-faith-life) and Catholic Faith traditions(eg liturgy)

Achievements

Catholic Identity and Faith

Our dedication to nurturing Catholic identity remains a priority for our school. Georgia Gordon from CES Ltd worked closely with our Catholic Identity Leader, Sam Kerlin, to lead our staff in a profound professional development sessions aimed at deepening our understanding of Shared Christian Praxis. This initiative encompassed theoretical and pedagogical aspects, aligning with the Source Of Life curriculum documents.

Our Parish Sacramental Program has been an ongoing testament to our faith journey, with Maria Ford from CES facilitating a spiritually enriching Sacramental evening involving parents and children. The Parish Sacramental Program has ensured that our children continue their faith journey with the focus of Eucharist/Confirmation surrounded by the support and guidance of family, parish and school.

As part of our work with Share Christian Praxis (life-faith-life) Mr Sam Kerlin and Father Vijay Bandanadam lead our school in several liturgies to celebrate as a whole community. In addition to our yearly Masses to celebrate the beginning of the school year, St Joseph's Feast Day there was a significant effort put into Ash Wednesday Mass, the Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, Mother's Day Mass. The official Opening and Blessing of our New Middle and Senior Learning Centre on September 11th, led by Bishop Shane Mackinlay, was an inspirational event that united our school community in gratitude and celebration for our new facility. Bishop Shane also officiated at the Sacrament of Eucharist/Confirmation on the following Sunday.

Weekend Masses held by Father Vijay are celebrated in St Joseph's School Hall as the Parish church of St Joseph's underwent construction to address earthquake damage experienced earlier in the year. This temporary arrangement will be implemented until the construction and repair work on the church is complete and reopened.

During the school term, each grade level has attended a weekly Parish Mass with Fr Vijay. This is an important part of continuing to build our parish/school relationship and for students to deepen their spirituality and connection with the church.

Lent kicked off with Shrove Tuesday/Pancake Tuesday. This again, was another chance to witness the community spirit of St Joseph's Primary, where many staff and parents helped flipping pancakes and serving, with the event raising over \$300 for Caritas - Project Compassion.

Ash Wednesday Mass was held in the church with Fr Vijay and our 3-6 students attended while the 1/2 students held their own reflective liturgies and received their ashes in the classroom. For the younger students of our school, this was a chance for teachers to explain the symbolism of ashes and talk about the meaning of Lent.

St Joseph's Feast Day was a joyous occasion to recognise the patron of our school, Saint Joseph. The day began with Mass as a whole school community and finished with a Mini Fete implemented by the students and staff, and attended by many family and friends and the parish community. The day reflected the wonderful community spirit that permeates through St Joseph's Primary and there were many smiling faces. It was pleasing to see so many parents and extended family members attend the day and the school raised just under \$3000 again for The Caritas Project Compassion Lenten Appeal. Project Compassion is a Catholic fundraiser aimed at providing opportunities and much-needed resources for those less fortunate. It highlights the importance of thinking of others before ourselves during Lent and provides an opportunity for our teachers and students to reflect on key social justice concepts in the classroom.

This year's Parish-based Sacramental Program began with a visit from Spiritual Leader and Musician Maria Forde. Maria has twenty years of experience in presenting Sacramental evenings throughout Victoria and nationally. It is an opportunity for children, parents /carers,

and educators to reflect upon the unique way God becomes fully present sacramentally and guides us in our lives. Maria is a Catholic educator and presented an authentic and contemporary understanding of the Sacraments. St Joseph's Parish Sacramental Team were very pleased with the meeting and many parents commented on the positive and reflective atmosphere that they felt throughout the evening

Value Added

St Joseph's Primary has celebrated many faith-filled and spiritual events. We began our school year by gathering as a whole school community for our Beginning of Year Mass. This eucharistic celebration showcased our very talented choir and was an opportunity for our new Foundation students and families to be officially welcomed into our school community through a song and dance with the Year 6 students, "May God Be With You". Our 2023 Student Leaders were also celebrated and received their badges at the Mass.

- Collaboration and ongoing meetings with Fr. Vijay regarding important Liturgical events.
Parish - School Sacramental program supported by our Catholic Identity Leader and the Parish team
- Parish Sacramental Information evenings organised and run by Sam Kerlin (Catholic Identity Leader), Maria Ford (CES Spiritual Enhancement Leader) and Cathy Duncombe from the St Joseph's Parish. The implementation of a Sacramental evening with Maria Ford allowed our families to engage in a special spiritual encounter of dialogue and song which explored the meaning of all Sacraments celebrated in the Catholic Church in a meaningful and uplifting way.
- Bishop Shane Mackinlay attended for Confirmation and First Eucharist Masses as well as the Opening and Blessing/Commissioning of our new building on September 11, 2023
- Whole School Masses for the Beginning of Year and End of Year
- Organisation of school Liturgies (by teaching staff) with the attendance of Fr. Vijay - Ash Wednesday, Feast of St Joseph, Holy Week, Mother's Day, Feast of Mary of the Cross McKillop, Our Lady of the Rosary, Advent liturgies and Graduation Mass.
- Prayer each week at our Monday assembly has a scripture focus and is student-led. Project Compassion Fundraising and Social Justice Awareness initiative through Shrove Tuesday event and Feast of St Joseph Whole School Mini-Fete. At each assembly the Principal presents a discussion of the week's Sunday Gospel and relates the teachings addressed to the weekly focus or curriculum to ensure our community have a chance to consider the message of the Gospels to our daily life.
- Staff school-based Professional Learning with a focus of Shared Christian Praxis - Background, its use in Source of Life Curriculum and how to implement pedagogy in planning .Staff members developed better understanding of Christian Praxis to deepen

personal understanding of the interjection of faith and lived experiences of spirituality and how we can deepen our personal experience of God and that of the children in our care through the implementation of the 'Source of Life' program.

- Benalla Regional Catholic Education Professional Learning Day - Contextualising Scripture, Justice in Scripture & Jesus the Jew with Dr Peta Goldberg
- New crucifixes in the new Middle and Senior building for each classroom including a large Celtic Cross in the Gathering Space
- Accreditation to Teach Religious Education in a Catholic School completed by three staff members
- Staff Prayer at Professional Learning Teams.
- Implementation of Caritas - Project Compassion, raising awareness and funds • St. Vincent De Paul - Christmas Toy Drive.
- In preparation for celebrating the Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, the Foundation children and a range of older students helped our community learn about the work that Mary McKillop did to do God's work and answer the call to serve others in Australia. The reflection was a wonderful opportunity to give thanks for Mary MacKillop and enabled everyone in attendance to consider how we can follow her example in our own lives.
- Appointment of our Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander Education Leader as of the beginning of 2023.
- The FIRE Carrier Afternoon held on August 30th engaged Year 5-6 Fire Carriers Heidi Perry and Sam Kerlin, working with CES Ltd Education Advisors in Indigenous Education Louise Levy and Michael Chisholm to appoint Fire Carriers and organise Year 3-4 classes, teachers, LSO, Lou Levy, and Michael Chisholm who embarked on an enlightening journey to Winton Wetlands, further enhancing our connection to country.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Embed Visible Learning to enable all learners to have ownership and agency of their learning.

- Learning Community

CES Ltd STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Through high-impact pedagogical strategies, students learning is relevant, contemporary and differentiated to their needs

- Well Community

CES Ltd STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Dynamic healthy communities that build trusting and respectful relationships to enhance student learning, wellbeing and safety.

St Joseph's Goals

- To implement Sounds-Write across the school.
- To improve the vocabulary of learning through the use of keywords across all curriculum areas.
- To develop assessment capable learners who can reflect on their learning journey.
- To develop explicit Learning Intentions and Success Criteria through co- construction.
- To develop a culture of feedback through facilitated planning and learning walks.
- To improve processes for decision making for all key stakeholders.

Achievements

Learning and Teaching-Literacy

In Term One of 2023 St Joseph's Primary was announced as one of Australia's highest-performing schools by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) for the growth of improvement in NAPLAN results exhibited by our students in 2022. This was a wonderful achievement for our school and a recognition of the hard work and dedication of our students, staff, and families.

The beginning of the year saw our whole staff trained in Sounds-Write. This included all teaching and education support staff. Sounds-Write is a phonics program that provides classroom professionals with a comprehensive system through which to teach reading, spelling, and writing. As a school we recognised the importance of teaching this program with fidelity, therefore all staff was trained in the program. The literacy-based program supports our school's focus on 'Visible Learning' in day-to-day classroom practices. Our staff continued on this learning journey throughout the year, consolidating knowledge, practising

Sounds-Write lessons, collecting and using resources, and including Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions for students across Foundation to Six.

Junior staff and students have continued the Heggerty Phonological Awareness Program, with daily sessions in rhyming, blending, segmenting and sound manipulation to form a part of our daily literacy block. Our literacy block at St Joseph's continues to be a pivotal start to our day focusing on the six big ideas of teaching reading including, oral language, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. Daily explicit teaching and practise in writing and speaking/listening also form a part of this time each morning.

As a school we are committed to moving forward in 2023 by implementing this program with fidelity, as well as fine tuning our Literacy Block to incorporate our Gradual Release model - whole class instruction text leading into small group instruction. Throughout the year our literacy focus will shift as we become more familiar with Sounds Write and the importance of small group instruction during Guided Reading and Guided Writing in our Literacy Block each morning.

The Learning and Teaching Team, in conjunction with the Senior and Middle teams, implemented this year's NAPLAN testing this term. This year the testing has been completed much earlier than in previous years. The process was implemented seamlessly and the children and teachers enjoyed the experience. The results will be available in August. Although NAPLAN is only a snapshot assessment, it is a very useful tool to help us implement data driven decisions for our school when used in conjunction with other school-based data that we use throughout the year.

St Joseph's staff have been introduced to a new look Staff Handbook for 2023. This handbook is linked to the many policies and procedures that staff are required to read through and be familiar with, as part of meeting VRQA standards and OH&S procedures. The handbook addresses many areas of Teaching and Learning for St Joseph's and is a clear reference for many staff members as they transition.

Learning and Teaching-Numeracy

During Term one all teachers took part in Professional Learning focused on analysing student Summative and Formative Assessment when using Essential Assessment. Teachers spent time analysing their cohort and identifying students who were achieving 'above standard'. Discussion was centred around how to best cater for these students when planning and the need for quality differentiation of lessons.

The evaluation of classroom practices has been an essential element of our commitment to improving our teaching in Mathematics. Rob Vingerhoets conducted observations in our classrooms, assessing the use of consistency, key words, engaging tasks, and differentiation. He provided invaluable insights and support through targeted planning and open-ended task guidance. His commendation of our staff and the collaborative efforts of our teams has been rewarding and purposeful. This marks the conclusion of Rob's involvement with our school at this stage, and we express our deep appreciation for his contributions over

the past four years. Moreover, the participation of our staff in VCAA webinars focusing on the revised Mathematics Curriculum 2.0 reflects our proactive approach to curriculum enhancement. The Numeracy Leader has modelled lessons for staff, and has visited and observed most classrooms during 2023. The use of Key Words on all whiteboards is evident. The change to 1.5hrs per day for Numeracy has meant greater emphasis can now be placed on engaging students with time to explore concepts with effective Warm-up activities. The extra time has also allowed for quality reflection, with students having the time to share their maths learning with the class.

Teachers have sought extra support to develop learning plans for students who are achieving above standard, and students who have not yet grasped the conceptual understanding of Number in middle and senior classrooms. Targeted, daily activities have been organised for these particular students.

Student Learning Outcomes

NAPLAN test results now provide a clearer picture of your child's achievements by using proficiency standards instead of bands.

New Proficiency Levels: Instead of numerical bands, your child's performance is now evaluated against four proficiency levels: Exceeding, Strong, Developing, and Needs additional support.

Enhanced Measurement Scale: NAPLAN has upgraded its measurement scale to better reflect every child's performance, thanks to improved online adaptive testing methods.

Improved Support Identification: The new proficiency levels, especially the "Needs additional support" category, help teachers identify students who may require extra assistance, enabling tailored support strategies.

Here is a breakdown of your child's Year 3 results:

In Year 3, most of our students demonstrated a "Strong" performance level across all subjects, with Reading, Writing, and Numeracy showing the highest number of students performing at this level. While fewer students achieved an "Exceeding" level, Numeracy had the highest proportion of students in this category. Overall, our Year 3 students performed well, with Numeracy slightly edging out as the strongest subject.

Year 3 NAPLAN Results for St Joseph's Benalla Community:

READING:

Average score: 411.64

24% at Developing, 52% at Strong, and 24% at Exceeding levels.

WRITING:

Average score: 414.08

16% at Developing, 60% at Strong, and 24% exceeded expectations.

SPELLING:

Average score: 413.16

28% at Developing, 48% at Strong, and 24% exceeded expectations.

GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION:

Average score: 411.12

24% at Developing, 60% at Strong, and 16% exceeded expectations.

NUMERACY:

Average score: 419.96

22% at Developing, 52% at Strong, and 26% exceeded expectations.

For Year 5 students, overall performance was commendable, especially in Reading and Numeracy. However, there are some students who may require additional support in areas like Writing, Spelling, and Grammar & Punctuation.

Year 5 NAPLAN Results for St Joseph's Benalla Community:

READING:

Average score: 511

21% at Developing, 40% at Strong, and 33% at Exceeding levels.

WRITING:

Average score: 490

27% at Developing, 50% at Strong, and 19% exceeded expectations.

SPELLING:

Average score: 491

21% at Developing, 40% at Strong, and 23% exceeded expectations.

GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION: 490

Average score:

29% at Developing, 52% at Strong, and 10% exceeded expectations.

NUMERACY:494

Average score:

21% at Developing, 66% at Strong, and 11% exceeded expectations.

Overall, our students performed above the national average in all subjects, with most achieving at the Strong and Exceeding levels.

Sounds Write whole staff Professional Development and implementation.

We have continued to build upon the decodable books that we have access to for our students. Throughout the year the Year 1-2 library of decodable books was extended by 2000 books to use as a part of the take-home reading program. These books enriched student learning and helped to consolidate what they were learning during Sounds-Write lessons in class. The junior school has continued to use Decodable Readers Australia, alongside Dandelion Readers and Sounds-Write texts both in class and at home

Writing moderation has been implemented from Foundation to Grade Six. This establishes a developmental continuum, ensuring students progressively build and refine their writing skills over the years. Throughout this time, teachers utilised the Australian Criterion Scale that outlines the curriculum developmentally throughout the years of schooling and provides a scaffolded learning experience for teachers to have professional dialogue around student learning.

Funding has continued for use of a Tutor who has been able to provide additional support for students across years 3-6. This Tier 2 intervention (Corrective Reading) was completed by trained staff working in small groups on a regular basis.

Our library has reopened and it has been a joy to see all the students enjoying their time in the space. The use of scholastic rewards has enabled us to purchase books for the library and to top up books in classrooms.

Mathematics:

In Mathematics all staff have taken part in several Professional Development days, classroom observations, and reflection with the expertise of Educational Consultant Rob Vingerhoets.

Staff have consolidated their knowledge around building student mathematical vocabulary (Keywords), collecting a bank of engaging warm-up activities, using open-ended problems, and explicit teaching catering to all students through differentiation.

Improving teacher practice and student outcomes, particularly with targeting students who are working above level will be of particular focus also in Mathematics throughout 2024. Our NAPLAN data for 2023 indicates that our Grade 3 cohort is achieving in the Above range when compared to the State and our Grade 5 students are achieving within the Expected range. This data has also been compared and analysed by the Teaching and Learning Team, looking for trends and specific areas for improvement and focus in 2024.

In Term 4 schools were advised of the new and Revised Victorian Mathematics Curriculum 2.0. This will be implemented in our school in 2024. However, it is important to know that this is all new for teaching staff across Victoria, so the familiarisation process must also take some time. There have been opportunities in Term 4 for Mathematics Leaders and Leadership teams to inform and build their understanding of the curriculum, which has filtered down throughout our school during staff PLTs.

Additional staff have had the opportunity to participate in the Mathematics Association of Victoria conference over 2 days at the end of November. Here teachers chose workshops of interest to attend and will learn from many experienced and professional Mathematics Leaders with vast expertise. Strategies and ideas will be shared with all staff members in 2024.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	421	60%
	Year 5	490	63%
Numeracy	Year 3	424	71%
	Year 5	494	77%
Reading	Year 3	409	71%
	Year 5	510	73%
Spelling	Year 3	405	58%
	Year 5	491	71%
Writing	Year 3	418	85%
	Year 5	490	69%

*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

- Learning Community

CES Ltd STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Through high-impact pedagogical strategies, students learning is relevant, contemporary and differentiated to their needs

- Well Community

CES Ltd STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Dynamic healthy communities that build trusting and respectful relationships to enhance student learning, wellbeing and safety.

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To continue to develop relationships with the parish and the wider school community.
- Create a welcoming, safe and inclusive school culture that values diversity and fosters positive, respectful relationships where individuals flourish.
- Implement programs to support needs of staff and students.

Achievements

2023 marked the second year of our two-year cycle with The Resilience Project. The Resilience Project presented our school with the opportunity to implement a program that focused on the GEM mindset (Gratefulness, Empathy and Mindfulness). The program is delivered in a multimodal manner comprising of reflection journals, videos and online interactive activities. The program instils important coping strategies for students to ensure that they have the skills to be resilient and look for the positives in every situation that they may face in life.

St Joseph's has continued to implement the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) resource, along with our review of our Framework for Positive Behaviour to demonstrate our commitment and compliance to the Child Safe Standards as part of a wider VRQA review. RRRR learning materials develop students with social, emotional and positive relationship skills. Efforts to promote social and emotional skills and positive gender norms in children and young people have been shown to improve health-related outcomes and student wellbeing.

Pastoral Wellbeing

2023 is a year of great excitement in the Pastoral Wellbeing space as we transition further away from COVID-19 management and shift our focus towards greater community

engagement again. Throughout the year the Pastoral Wellbeing Leader has worked with various agencies including Child First, DHHS Child Protection and Family Services to ensure that Child Safety and Wellbeing are our top priority at St Joseph's Primary School.

Engagement continues with local organisations such as the Tomorrow/Today Foundation and VACCA to ensure that all students of all cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds have equitable access to school supplies and extracurricular activities. These organisations play a valuable role in working in partnership with our school to ensure our families have all the resources they need to set their children up for success at school. We are looking forward to another productive year in 2023.

Learning Diversity

Throughout 2023 the primary aim of Learning Diversity at St Joseph's Primary School is to ensure that all students with a diagnosed or imputed disability receive the adjustments they may require to access the school environment and learning outcomes safely and happily. To achieve this the Learning Diversity Leader has overseen the implementation and termly completion of Personalised Learning Plans, Student Adjustments and Evaluation Plans and liaising with Allied Health Professionals to ensure that the main aim is being met and regularly reviewed for efficacy. These Personalised Learning Plans are completed by all classroom teachers.

Throughout 2023 there were a range of reviews implemented that required extensive planning. The NCCD Quality Assurance was completed in Term Two, at which time, each student plan is reviewed by Catholic Education Sandhurst to ensure that they were all compliant with the NCCD legal requirements. Furthermore, in Term Three, St Joseph's has been chosen for a VRQA school review in which all of our policies and procedures regarding the implementation NCCD model was reviewed. Planning for these events is already underway. 2023 proved to be an exciting year of feedback to help inform an even more productive year in 2024.

Value Added

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School offers a diverse range of initiatives and activities that enrich the educational experience and promote a sense of community among students, staff, and families. These initiatives include:

The Garden Club: Allows students to learn about gardening and sustainability.

Football, Hockey, and Netball Clinics and various interschool sporting activities: Provide opportunities for students to develop their skills in these sports.

Harmony Day Smoking Ceremony and Celebrations: Promote cultural diversity and

inclusivity.

School Fete: A community event that fosters a sense of belonging and raises funds for the school.

Choir and End of Year Performances: Showcase students' talents and achievements in music.

Holy Week Liturgies: Commemorate the religious significance of Holy Week.

Japanese Visitors and Incursions: Enhance students' cultural understanding through interactions with Japanese guests.

Ray White Learning Attitude Awards at Assembly: Recognize and celebrate students' positive attitudes towards learning.

Attendance at ANZAC Day Celebrations: Commemorate and honor the sacrifices of Australian and New Zealand service members.

Various Fundraising Events: Such as 'Crazy Hair Day' and the School Disco, which raise funds for important causes and promote community spirit.

In addition to these initiatives, St. Joseph's is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of its students. The school has implemented a set of 11 Child Safe Standards, ensuring compliance with national guidelines. A full VRQA review in 2023 found St. Joseph's to be fully compliant in all areas of Child Safety.

St. Joseph's also supports families in need through the Tomorrow/Today Foundation, which provides uniform and Kmart vouchers, grant applications, and Christmas hampers. The Staff Wellbeing Fund, supported by staff donations, is used to support students and families with essential items.

The Breakfast Club, which returned in Term 3 of 2023, provides over 200 students with a nutritious breakfast each Thursday morning. Simon Behavioural Tracking allows the school to identify themes in students' behaviors and implement positive strategies to foster social and emotional wellbeing.

In 2023, St. Joseph's recorded its largest count of Personalised Learning Plans (PLP) and Student Adjustment and Evaluation Plans (SAEP) submissions, reflecting its commitment to supporting every student's learning journey.

Student Satisfaction

The ORIMA Surveys responses from St Joseph's students highlight several positive aspects of their educational experience. A significant majority, 62%, feel that their teachers hold them to high expectations regarding their effort, understanding, persistence, and performance.

Additionally, 33% of students are attentive and invested in school, demonstrating a strong engagement with their education. Nearly half, 48%, have positive perceptions of the social and learning climate within the school, indicating a supportive and conducive environment for learning. Furthermore, 54% of students feel a strong social connection with their teachers, both within and beyond the school, enhancing their sense of belonging and support. A majority, 53%, feel valued as members of the school community, contributing to a positive school culture. Moreover, 56% of students have a positive mindset about themselves as learners, which is crucial for academic success and personal development. While 28% have concerns about physical and psychological safety at school, 50% feel that they have access to and quality of staff support, enhancing their feelings of connection, safety, and respect within the school environment. Additionally, 42% believe they have opportunities to have an impact on their school, fostering a sense of agency and empowerment. Overall, these responses reflect a strong and positive student perception of the Catholic identity and values of St Joseph's School.

Student Attendance

Staff members complete roll call at 9:00 am and 2:00 pm daily. Where a student is marked as absent and the system has yet to receive a parent explanation an immediate SMS is sent to that parent or carer for confirmation of the absentee for the day. Attendance is accurately recorded through the SIMON App via Parent Access Module.

SIMON Everywhere/ PAM gives parents access to the following:

- Student Attendance Data
- Student Reports
- Consent to offsite activities
- Consent to Digital User Agreement
- Make a booking for Parent/Teacher Meetings
- Parent Notified Absences
- Student Medical Profile
- School Calendar

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	89.5%
Y02	91.4%
Y03	91.9%
Y04	90.7%
Y05	89.4%
Y06	88.0%
Overall average attendance	90.1%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Build positive partnerships within the school and wider community to improve student outcomes.

- Expert Leaders to work with the Leadership Team to deepen our understanding and implementation of PAT Data to inform teaching.
- Expert Leaders to work with the Leadership team to deepen our understanding of the 'Sounds Write' program to achieve a successful roll-out of the program.
- Expert Leaders to work with the Leadership team to deepen our understanding of Mathematics learning and teaching.

Achievements

Our commitment to refining teaching practices is evident through the engagement of external educators to continue to the professional development of our staff. Jacinda Voughan, a Sounds-Write trainer and school consultant, worked closely with our leadership team. She provided valuable feedback on learning and teaching sequences for the extended code and conducted one-on-one sessions with teachers needing clarification on scope and sequence. Similarly, Andrea O'Connor, the Leader of Pedagogy from CES Ltd, collaborated with our leadership team to implement a successful assessment platform called the PAT adaptive approach to assessment. PAT is an integrated approach to improving learning by ensuring that there is a clear process for assessment:

- Diagnose starting points: Establish what students are capable of, then challenge them at the appropriate level for effective learning
- Monitor student progress: Assess at recommended intervals to measure learning growth over time. Reporting at an individual, group or year level is quick and easy.

Each assessment is administered in under 60 minutes through ACER's secure online platform, or using paper-based tests.

Measuring a student's knowledge, skills and understanding in a subject helps pinpoint where they are in their learning journey – and what they need to progress. Andrea's involvement extended to providing professional development sessions to teaching staff, guiding them in evaluating and analysing student results. This approach encompasses both Numeracy and Literacy, focusing on identifying trends and areas for improvement across cohort groups. Over the course of the year, the learning and teaching team collaborated with Catholic Education Sandhurst to investigate the application of the PAT ACER system for gathering and analysing reading data. This involved providing professional development opportunities for staff to enhance their skills in analysing and utilising data from these assessments to guide learning

and teaching practices. The ability to examine student data and extract insights into mastered or consolidating skills has empowered the implementation of informed, explicit, and targeted teaching strategies during dedicated focus teaching sessions. We recognise that this area needs more work and we intend on continued and extended commitment to embed this practice in the future.

Staff have continued to access the Essential Assessments platform for Formative and Summative data and student goal setting due to staff focus on the analysis of individual student, class and cohort data.

Teachers have been involved in unpacking their understanding of Adaptive Mathematics PAT data through the expertise of CEO Leader of Pedagogy Andrea O'Connor. This will continue to be a focus in 2024 to support teachers to analyse what students 'know' and 'where to next'. This will also allow teachers to reflect on and improve their own practice.

Further professional development was sought when three members of our leadership team participated in CES Critical Incidents Training. 7. Classroom Observations and Curriculum Enhancement

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<p>Sounds Write 4 Days Whole Staff An expertly structured synthetic phonics programme based on the science of reading. This multisensory, code-oriented, comprehensive approach to literacy has been designed by teachers—for teachers. Sounds-Write is one of the high-quality phonics programmes endorsed by the Department of Education (DoE) in Western Australia.</p> <p>First Aid Whole Staff CPR (INCLUDES EPI-PEN UPDATE)</p> <p>Catholic Identity Professional Development Professor Peta Goldberg RSM /Professor of Religious Education Faculty of Theology & Philosophy/Australian Catholic University Session 1: Contextualising Scripture with focus on Infancy Narratives Session 2: Jesus the Jew Session 3: Justice in Scripture</p> <p>Religious Education Accreditation 2 Staff Members</p> <p>Crucial Conversations: Principal</p> <p>Critical Training: 2 Staff Members</p>	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	39
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$851.00

Teacher Satisfaction

St Joseph's teaching staff have expressed overwhelmingly positive perceptions in various areas according to the ORIMA Survey. Staff feel confident in the physical and psychological safety of students while at school, with a high score of 79%. Additionally, there is a strong sense of safety and trust within the school community, as shown by the 64% score for the overall social and learning climate. The quality of relationships between staff and the leadership team is highly regarded at 87%, indicating a supportive and collaborative environment. Although our staff believe that our School leaders are seen as effective in setting conditions for improving teaching and learning, scoring 69% which is 15% higher than the average result for CES Ltd, we do believe that there is room for improvement in this area. Staff also feel valued and supported, with a score of 57% for the amount and quality of feedback received. The school's leadership is perceived as effective, scoring 76%, and staff

feel safe in their work environment, with a score of 70%. There is a strong sense of encouragement for innovation and growth, as evidenced by the 90% score for feeling safe to take risks and make mistakes. Professional learning opportunities are considered of high quality and coherence, with a score of 72%. The school's improvement strategy is perceived as coherent, scoring 84%. Teachers work well together in teams to improve teaching and learning, scoring 70%, and feel that school leadership sets the conditions for effective collaboration, scoring 88%. Moreover, there is a high level of confidence in the staff's ability to improve instruction, with a score of 92%. The principal and deputy principal's faith leadership and the Catholic identity in school life are also highly regarded, scoring 85%. Overall, these positive perceptions reflect a strong sense of community, support, and dedication among St Joseph's teaching staff.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	3.7%
Graduate	22.2%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	59.3%
Advanced Diploma	11.1%
No Qualifications Listed	3.7%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	39
Teaching Staff (FTE)	27.5
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	21
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	24.2
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Build positive partnerships within the school and wider community to improve student outcomes.

- People Focused Community

CES Ltd STRATEGIC DIRECTION Outstanding members of staff who exemplify high professional standards and effective practices, and a commitment to ongoing learning and growth.

- Well Community

CES Ltd STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Dynamic healthy communities that build trusting and respectful relationships to enhance student learning, wellbeing and safety.

- Stewarding Community

CES Ltd STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Receiving God's gifts gratefully, we cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice with others, and return them with increase.

St Joseph's Goals

- To promote partnerships between all key stakeholders through events to increase engagement, and participation through events, to increase engagement and participation within our school community.
- To create opportunities for parents/volunteers to engage in practical student learning, through classroom experiences (eg reading groups, classroom learning walks).
- To develop partnerships between home, school and community.

Achievements

The Parents and Friends Committee commenced the 2023 school year with great enthusiasm. They maintained regular meetings with the Leadership and Administration team to coordinate their efforts effectively. The committee sought to expand its membership, hosting an inviting morning tea to welcome new members. Throughout the year, the P&F organised numerous fundraising activities to support our school. Led by President Jasmine Dean, Vice President Danielle Mee, and Secretary Kara McIntyre, the committee focused on raising funds for the Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA) and expressed a desire to allocate any surplus funds towards enhancing the playground behind the Junior Building. The committee's dedication as volunteers for the benefit of our school is commendable, and our whole community is extremely grateful for the hard work and commitment of all, especially our President, Vice President, and Secretary.

The successful update of all communication platforms including: Newsletter, Parent Access Module (PAM), the SIMON Everywhere App, St Joseph's Facebook Page, and a significant upgrade of the school website.

Update of the Parent Handbook which is available digitally and in hard copy when requested.

St Joseph's implemented an extensive enrolment drive for the 2024 school year. The school extended a significant commitment to raising the profile of the enrolment drive including: Foundation 2024 Enrolment Information Days, Enrolment Enquiry Tours, Enrolment Interviews, Enrolment Application and Package (Digistorm Package) accessed via PAM. The feedback from our community is that the Enrolment process is user-friendly. The enrolment drive proved very successful for 2024 enrolments.

In 2023 St Joseph's recorded its largest count of Personalised Learning Plans (PLP) and Student Adjustment and Evaluation Plan (SAEP) in a 12-month period. A combined total of 117 plans were submitted for funding in 2023. During the annual Quality Assurance process, St Joseph's was found to be fully compliant with the school's adjustment and evaluation process for students on a PLP or SAEP.

A Meal Bank and School Lunch Register continued in 2023. The Meal Bank was used frequently by many families for a variety of reasons such as illness, financial stress, absenteeism of a parent, single-parent support, and family loss. The added strain of interest rate rises and cost of living increases has increased the level of need for assistance within our school community. The school lunch register also ensures that sandwiches are available to students when they have forgotten their lunch or when a family needs support.

Our Year Three to Six students and staff participated in the Lions Club Speeches. This event allowed our students to learn about the Lions Club's commitment to the Benalla community and the importance of volunteering and making a positive impact in our community. We are proud of the efforts of our students and we can see our school's mission and vision statements being lived through this great work. This is a wonderful opportunity for all children to experience public speaking and for our school to build strong connections to the Benalla community.

Parent Satisfaction

In 2023, the ORIMA Survey received responses from 11 parents at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, providing some valuable insights. A slight majority of 51% expressed a positive view of family engagement with the school, indicating a potential strength in the partnership between families and the school. However, 59% identified barriers to engagement, suggesting areas for improvement in fostering parental involvement. Additionally, 78% of parents felt that the school matches their child's developmental and learning needs, indicating a positive perception of the school and learning culture at St

Joseph's. A high percentage, 82% of parents have positive perceptions of the school climate, indicating a supportive and welcoming environment. Concerning student safety, 57% of parents felt their children were safe both physically and psychologically at school. Communication between the school and families was perceived positively by 66% of respondents in terms of timeliness, frequency, and quality. Moreover, 64% of parents expressed positive engagement with the school's Catholic Identity, indicating alignment with the school's values and ethos.

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.sjbenalla.catholic.edu.au