



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

2023

Annual Report to the School Community

ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL
BRUNSWICK WEST



St Joseph's School

185 Hope Street, BRUNSWICK 3056

Principal: Matthew Davey

Web: www.sjbwickw.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 915, E Number: E1076

Principal's Attestation

I, Matthew Davey, 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 22 Mar 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

When Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) launched our inaugural strategic plan MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World just over a year ago, I spoke about the need for our whole organisation to reflect on the biggest challenges that confront us, and to work at speed to find practical, ambitious, student-centred solutions.

As a relatively new governing authority, 2023 set us on the path to achieving our first goals, as we focussed our efforts on building strong foundations for success. The four pillars of MACS2030 – Inspired by Faith; Flourishing Learners; Enabled Leaders; and Enriched Communities - serve to guide our work on how we achieve our strategic intent.

When we surveyed our teachers in late 2022, over 80 per cent told us that they want access to quality teaching and assessment resources. So in January 2023, we secured a system-wide licence for MACS primary and secondary schools to access the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) assessment suite. The inclusion of the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Survey allows schools to monitor the wellbeing of their students and target resourcing to specific areas of need. Together, these tools provide a coherent and systematic approach to student assessment.

In partnership with Ochre Education, we began work on F-6 Mathematics curriculum resources, being developed in a phased approach over three years, and delivered the first tranche for F-2. A key consideration in developing the materials is ensuring teachers retain autonomy to tailor curriculum implementation to meet the individual and local needs of students.

This is an exciting development for our MACS community, clearly demonstrating the commitment we all share to delivering the best possible education opportunities for our 120,000 students and supporting our 10,000 classroom teachers to be the very best that they can be.

Archbishop Peter commissioned a comprehensive review of Religious Education curriculum, the first in over a decade. It offers us some challenges, but fundamentally is a hope-filled report that invites a path of ongoing work to develop a new RE curriculum for all Catholic schools. We continued Working Together in Mission with Parish Priests throughout the Archdiocese, including through regular roundtable discussions.

Across greater Melbourne, one in five students attend a Catholic school and 2023 saw steady growth in enrolments across our system, demonstrating the value families place on a Catholic education and the high quality, holistic education MACS schools provide.

As a system of schools, we can be better together, reducing the administrative load on our schools and freeing our teachers and principals to focus on what they do best.

I would like to pay tribute to our MACS school and office colleagues who have worked so hard to achieve our goals. We look forward to further strengthening those partnerships as we work together to deliver an education that inspires young people to enrich the world.

Yours sincerely

Dr Edward Simons

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

Vision and Mission

[Click here to see our Vision Statement](#)

School Overview

St. Joseph's School, Brunswick West, is a Catholic Primary School situated in the inner northern suburbs of Melbourne. St Joseph's School was established in 1911 due to a growing population in the West Brunswick area. St. Joseph's Parish was formed in February 1913.

- In 1918 the first Church was built. The Sisters of St. Joseph were at this time caring for the students. St Joseph's School celebrated its centenary in 2011, with the parish celebrating its centenary two years later in 2013.

During the 1920s Brunswick grew rapidly into a vibrant working class community. At this time, Brunswick was largely an Irish Catholic community. In 1927 work on what comprises the current main school buildings began, with many people contributing to the development of the Parish and school. The works were completed in 1929 and the buildings blessed by then Archbishop, His Grace Daniel Mannix.

In the 1950s the current St. Joseph's Church was built as the population continued to grow. St Joseph's welcomed migrants from Italy, Greece and the Middle East. Each of these groups has had an influence on St. Joseph's School, contributing to the atmosphere of acceptance and inclusion which still permeates the school.

Today, the school offers a comprehensive personalised education to approximately 210 students drawn largely from the Western region of Brunswick and Northern area of Parkville.

Parents are encouraged to become involved in the school through a variety of activities and are an integral part of our school. Many parents support the school through their involvement in the Parents & Friends Association, supporting their many fundraising and social activities.

There are also opportunities to volunteer in the school, such as a parent helper in for classroom and Library programs, and assisting in the school canteen.

The School Advisory Council also meet regularly throughout the year. The Council is comprised of 6 parents, with the Parish Priest and School principal ex officio members.

St. Joseph's, with a committed and highly professional staff, provides an exceptional standard of education for all students. There are 10 classroom teachers, supported by specialist teachers and in the areas of LOTE (Italian), The Arts, and Physical Education. Additional staff provide support in the areas of Learning and Teaching, ICT, Library, and Literacy and Numeracy Intervention,

Lunchtime clubs provide further opportunities for singing, craft, technology, drama, etc. Specialist instrumental music programs can be accessed by families as an extra-curricula option (parents arrange this privately with a qualified music teacher).

School Administration Officers ensure that the school administration runs effectively and efficiently and provides a friendly and informed initial point of contact with the school.

As a school we aim to be a significant part of the Parish and local community and our efforts are directed toward the full development of students and others within a Catholic environment. Every opportunity is taken to make use of facilities and services offered to the school. Family Masses celebrated on the First Saturday of each month offer full involvement in the Parish. Class Masses and whole school Masses are also celebrated throughout the year at either the Sunday Mass times or during the term. Education in Faith and social justice is a significant part of our mission.

Principal's Report

St. Joseph's Vision Statement speaks of striving "...to create an environment where students flourish, seek higher things and shape their world." Having been the principal of St. Joseph's for a little over six years now, I can clearly see this evident across the school. Contemporary learning programs, strong pastoral care practices and a schoolwide student wellbeing program ensures that St. Joseph's School aims to educate the whole child.

St. Joseph's has continued to implement many effective learning and teaching practices, e.g. flexible learning groups, feedback processes, the use of learning intentions and success criteria, and problem solving strategies in numeracy. St. Joseph's continues to work to make sure these practices and procedures are implemented consistent throughout the school.

In 2023, St. Joseph's undertook a school review. Conducted every four years, the review has two purposes: to ensure the school is meeting all the registration requirements of the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), and to review the school's learning processes for the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS). I am pleased to say that the review confirmed that the school is continuing to meet all registration requirements, and that there are some strong practices in place to ensure quality learning. In the reviewer's executive summary they remarked:

St Joseph's School is a welcoming, nurturing and inclusive community. The school has continued during this school improvement cycle to place a strong emphasis on the learning and wellbeing of students, demonstrating a commitment to enacting the school vision; striving together to create an environment where students flourish, seek higher things and shape their world.

The school's commitment to its Catholic ethos is visible and faith formation is a priority at the school.

In the Learning and Teaching sphere, an ongoing commitment to improving teacher practice and investment in professional learning has been prioritised.

The school's deliberate intent to strengthen and embed wellbeing programs supported students to build positive relationships.

Families value the 'community feel' and sense of connectedness that the school conveys, and they recognise and value the focus on Christian values and Catholic ethos of the school.

At the end of the review process, the reviewer recommended that the school:

- *Builds on leadership initiatives that guide, direct, and support enactment of the school vision and improvement in teacher practice and student learning.*

- *Deepens teacher and student understanding of student agency in their learning and in wellbeing*
- *Enhances the Catholic identity and culture of the school.*

With this in mind, the School Improvement Framework (SIF) and Annual Action Plan (AAP) reflect these recommendations. MACS advisers provided support not only during the development of the Framework and Plan, but also continue to do so as we embark upon its implementation.

I would like to acknowledge the commitment and dedication of the following leaders to their respective roles: Jackie Fox-Hooper (Deputy Principal and Wellbeing Leader), Sonia Scott (Religious Education Leader), and Sam Ryder (Engagement and Diversity Leader), along with the staff in general who continued to support, trial and implement many initiatives enthusiastically.

Finally, it is important to remember that, first and foremost, we are a Catholic primary school whose actions and decisions are guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ. This is the foundation from which we work in all aspects of school life. Therefore, providing a just and equitable education for all our students is our goal at all times. This is the faith that Mary MacKillop spoke of when she fought so hard to provide a faith based education for the poor with which she worked. Her immortal words - to "Never see a need without doing something about it" - are ones that echo the teachings of Jesus and are a constant guide for all the community here at St. Joseph's School.

Matthew Davey

Principal

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

That learning and teaching gives witness to the school's Catholic Identity

- Staff receive professional development in the history and traditions of the Sisters of St. Joseph ("The Josephites")
- That the example of Mary MacKillop is woven through units of work
- Students explicitly explore the traditions and history of our school through the pedagogy of encounter.

Achievements

Throughout the year, both students and teachers have deepened their understanding of the rich history, charism, and traditions of Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of St Joseph. Professional development sessions provided opportunities for staff to collectively determine how students' knowledge of Mary MacKillop should be tailored to each year level. Additionally, there was consensus among staff regarding which aspects of the Charism were most significant to the St Joseph's community. Junior and senior students engaged in the study of Mary MacKillop, with each year level focusing on a distinct aspect of her life. Notably, Yr. 5/6 students had the privilege of visiting the Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre, where they participated in guided activities led by the Sisters of St Joseph and friends of the heritage center.

This year, our focus expanded beyond merely examining the mission of Mary MacKillop and the Church to actively living out this mission. The school took on the role of a food security hub for the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre, with the Social Justice and Religion team spearheading a jam collection initiative. Supported by parents in the community, groups of Grade 6 students visited the ASRC in Footscray, gaining insight into the center's efforts to support asylum seekers.

In Term 3, all year levels participated in mission work by creating artworks inspired by Mary MacKillop, which were then sold to raise funds for Mary MacKillop Family Services. Grade 6 leaders organized a BBQ fundraiser and an awareness campaign supporting women's participation in the FIFA Women's World Cup. The school also continued its support of Project Compassion through student-led initiatives, such as an Easter Raffle, resulting in over \$2000 and material aid being generated to support those in need.

This year, emphasis was placed on enhancing the staff's ability to 'Recontextualize' the Catholic Faith, with a specific focus on scripture. Recognizing that many staff members do not come from a Catholic background, efforts were made to build their confidence in working with scripture, exploring its various dimensions. Professional Learning teams and a dedicated staff conference day facilitated this work, with Sarah Smith providing invaluable support and guidance. The feedback on her expertise was overwhelmingly positive, and staff eagerly anticipate further collaboration with her.

We continued to strengthen our connection with the local parish, with junior students preparing and leading class liturgies, Grade 3-6 attending parish mass termly, and ongoing promotion of the family mass, bolstered by the school choir. Additionally, Grade 3, 4, and 6 students were supported in preparing for and receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation.

Value Added

MACSIS 2023 DATA

STAFF DATA

How often does the school community invite discussion on the mission of the school?

2022 - 27%. 2023 - 57%

How clearly do you understand the Catholic beliefs and practices underpinning the policies and practices of the school?

2022 - 64%. 2023- 87%

How often does prayer take place at community events such as staff meetings, school assemblies and family gatherings.

2022 - 59%. 2023 - 87%

PARENT DATA

What extent is the Catholic Mission emphasized at your child's school?

2022- 67%. 2023 - 75%

To what extent is respect for other religions emphasised at your school.

2022 - 17%

2023 - 33%

To what extent are Catholic religious practices emphasized at your child's school?

2022- 67%

2023 - 83%

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To enact a whole school community model for teaching and learning excellence.

- That students will continue to develop as self-regulated learners who can measure and demonstrate better-than-expected growth in all domains
- That students can articulate where they are at in their learning and where they are going.
- That there are visible links between learning and wellbeing.
- That learning and teaching give witness to the school's Catholic Identity.

Achievements

2023 has focused on the science of learning, specifically through engagement strategies and through the development of staff understanding around opportunities to respond. A clear goal has been to continue to strengthen the links between learning and well-being through a PBL framework.

We have explored a variety of different coaching methodologies, and through this exploration, we have developed a plan to implement Instructional Coaching specifically through an online platform and coaching program, StepLab. StepLab has provided valuable insights into enhancing instructional strategies, support, tracking, and accountability.

We have continued to implement Teaching Sprints in 2023, focusing on Spaced Reviews. We have also started exploring how to set clearer learning intentions and introduced staff to level and specific success criteria.

In reading, our exploration of 'The Code' has deepened our understanding of foundational literacy skills. At the same time, the embedding and analysis of Dibels assessments have facilitated targeted interventions to support student literacy growth. Moreover, the development of banks for fluency tasks has enhanced our ability to address diverse reading needs effectively.

In writing, we have continued professional development to embed the Talk for the Writing program, use clear model texts and teacher toolkits, and developed a clear planning process.

In mathematics, we have explored and expanded our implementation of enabling, main, and extending tasks. As a staff, we have explored the launch, explore, and summarise model to extend our work on mathematical problem-solving and promote critical thinking and inquiry. Additionally, we have explored explicit maths teaching through *Ochre Education*.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Year 3 Reading - Well above the State Average with 73% of our students performing at Strong or Exceeding
- Year 5 Reading - Well above the State Average with 82% of our students performing at Strong or Exceeding
- Year 3 Maths - Well above the State Average with 82% of our students performing at Strong or Exceeding
- Year 5 Maths - above the State Average with 65% of our students performing at Strong or Exceeding
- Year 3 Writing - Well above the State Average with 85% of our students performing at Strong or Exceeding
- Year 5 Writing - At the State Average with 83% of our students performing at Strong or Exceeding

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	410	50%
	Year 5	524	69%
Numeracy	Year 3	426	82%
	Year 5	492	62%
Reading	Year 3	428	74%
	Year 5	521	83%
Spelling	Year 3	397	55%
	Year 5	500	76%
Writing	Year 3	428	84%
	Year 5	495	83%

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2023 due to participation not meeting these criteria or no students were assessed. Participants include students who were assessed, including non-attempt, or those exempted from the test.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To provide a safe and consistent learning environment that meets the social and emotional needs of each student

- That there are visible links between learning and wellbeing.

Achievements

In 2023, student and staff wellbeing continued to be a priority in all areas of the school. Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) continued to be a strong focus across our Wellbeing lessons. Our PBL team of teachers were heavily supported through extensive professional learning this year to develop their fundamental knowledge of the psychology of behaviour. The school partnered with the chair of the Association of Positive Behaviour and Associate Professor at the University of Queensland, Dr Shiralee Poed for coaching and a full day professional learning with our whole staff.

St Joseph's is proud to continue to be a Respectful Relationships Lead School. Students participated in weekly social and emotional skill lessons focusing on our school expectations, respectful relationships, identifying emotions and self-regulation. Positive behaviours were taught explicitly and reinforced. Wellbeing lessons support and build social and emotional learning opportunity.

ies for all our students. Lessons and activities built on students' ability to understand emotions and build their emotional literacy. They promoted resilience and the building of positive relationships between students, as well as students, staff and parents.

Throughout 2023, we continued to employ a chaplain to work with students and their families who may be experiencing grief, anxiety or other issues requiring a listening ear. 2023 saw the introduction of a new role of mental health in primary school leaders within the school. This role was supported by Melbourne University who provided training. The role is part of our continuing commitment to provide students and families with a range of services and promote mental health in the community.

The St Joseph's Engagement and Diversity Leader's major role in 2023 was to support funded and non-funded students with difficulties to achieve and experience success in all areas of school life. The Engagement and Diversity Leader facilitated Program Support Group Meetings (PSGs) and Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs), advised Leadership on matters regarding the needs of students with difficulties and supported teachers, parents

and students where needed to maximise learning opportunities for our most vulnerable students.

Value Added

- Inclusion of whole school Wellbeing themes
- Positive Behaviour for Learning implementation
- Continuing involvement in Respectful Relationships Program
- Investment in Staff professional learning in the wellbeing sphere.

Student Satisfaction

The school's overall school positive endorsement has remained unchanged from 2022, at 60%. However, a significant increase in most areas can be seen at the Yr 5 level.

Student Attendance

Parents have two options to notify the school of student absence:

- phone the school (an answering service facility is in place for calls outside of normal business hours)
- submit an *Absentee Form* via the [Audiri](#) App

At the conclusion of the morning attendance process, the school (administration staff) contact parents /guardians (via SMS) about any unexplained absences.

In situations of extended absence (more than two days) with no contact from a parent, the Principal will contact the parent for further details and to offer appropriate support if required.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	91.3%
Y02	93.4%
Y03	91.2%
Y04	89.1%
Y05	92.1%
Y06	91.5%
Overall average attendance	91.4%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To create a vibrant learning community characterised by a shared vision, a strong sense of team work, and focused on improving student learning outcomes, underpinned by supportive leadership

- That the professional capacity of the staff is enhanced
- That a shared understanding of outstanding, contemporary education is achieved

Achievements

Building leader and teacher capacity through collaboration and professional learning continued to be a major focus of the Leadership and Management sphere in 2023.

The Leadership Team supported and directed staff in a number of ways, such as collaborative planning, staff meetings and professional learning meetings. In 2023, a greater variety of staff took responsibility for leading professional development sessions for the staff.

Both executive and leadership staff met on a weekly basis to ensure the goals of the school were being actioned. As was the case in 2023, all members of leadership were once again involved in the Agile Leadership course, run by Simon Breakspear. Over the four days, they continued to explore a range of tools to assist school improvement.

The PBL Team supported the staff as they continued to implement PBL across the school.

The following key teams work with staff:

- Leadership Executive - Principal, Deputy Principal, Religious Education Leader, Engagement & Diversity Leader
- Leadership Team: Leadership Executive, plus Literacy Leader, Maths Leader, Digital Learning Leader
- Positive Behaviour For Learning (PBL) Team: Principal, Wellbeing Leader (also the Deputy Principal) and teachers from various year levels

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DIBELS - Administration and Results • OHS MODULES • PBL - Whole school closure day with Dr Shiralee Poed (Associate Professor, School of Education, University of Queensland) • Science of Reading • RE- Lectio Divina • Catholic Identity • First Aid - CPR/ Anaphylaxis <p>2023 was also a staff conference year. The focus of the conference was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the unpacking of the School Review Report with all staff (led by Leadership Executive and MACS Regional Learning Consultant, Joe Scerri) • understanding the context of the Gospels and what the implications are for the classroom curriculum (led by Sarah Smith, Religious Education consultant) 	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	27
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1200.00

Teacher Satisfaction

According to the 2023 *Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools - School Improvement Survey (MACSSIS)*, overall school positive endorsement (teacher satisfaction) is currently at 67%, which is in alignment with the MACS average. This figure marks an increase of 11% from the previous year.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	12.5%
Graduate	8.3%
Graduate Certificate	8.3%
Bachelor Degree	29.2%
Advanced Diploma	12.5%
No Qualifications Listed	29.2%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	27
Teaching Staff (FTE)	21.7
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	11
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	6.3
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To enhance the vibrant and welcoming community of St Joseph's, where partnerships are deepened within the school and are broadened with the wider community.

- That all parents will have a shared understanding of students as self-regulated learners
- That family engagement with their child's learning and in the life of the school will increase.

Achievements

In 2023, we focused on streamlining and updating our communication with parents by implementing a digital newsletter. This initiative not only made it easier for parents to read and follow links but also granted a greater number of staff access to the school newsletter, enabling them to communicate information specific to different facets of the school through the addition of the 'Spotlight On' section.

A particular focus for the school year was sharing the learning and teaching strategies through a series of parent workshops. Over three sessions, we discussed our vision for Positive Behavior Management, Literacy, and Numeracy. These workshops received highly positive feedback from parents and were well-attended.

An effort was made to gather more feedback from families on our practices and changes to practices through google forms.

Throughout the year, parents were invited to celebrate significant occasions such as Father's Day, Mother's Day, Grandparents Day/St. Joseph's Day, and sports day onsite. The Term 3 Learning Expo witnessed a strong turnout from the parent community.

In collaboration with the Parish, students and their families continued to attend monthly family masses. The final parish mass featured a post-mass BBQ, which attracted over 100 family members who shared a meal together.

In 2023, the school had its first opportunity post-COVID to participate in a school performance. Through performing arts facilitated by an outside company, students learned circus performance skills, culminating in a whole-school performance at the Preston Hall.

Grade 5 and 6 students were able to resume their engagement with local kindergartens, both through visits to work with students and by hosting local kindergarten students for lessons on-site. Our community engagement leader was also invited to collaborate with local kindergartens to present school readiness information, with a particular focus on early literacy skills.

Parent Satisfaction

64% of parents surveyed indicated they were happy with the current communication practices of the 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.sjbwickw.catholic.edu.au