



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

2024

Annual Report to the School Community



St Mary's School

91 Manning Road, MALVERN EAST 3145

Principal: Shane Tobin

Web: www.smmalverneast.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 1024, E Number: E1087

Principal's Attestation

I, Shane Tobin, attest that St Mary's School is compliant with:

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

Attested on 04 May 2025

About this report

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

Governing Authority Report

Whether in classrooms or across communities, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), took bold and ambitious steps this year to bring our MACS2030 Strategy: Forming Lives to Enrich the World, to life.

In 2024, MACS moved forward with purpose, transforming vision into action and progress into lasting impact. From aligning our teaching practices to enhancing our early years education, we took meaningful strides towards elevating learning experiences – and fostering excellence across our entire network.

In chartering our vision for 2030 and our pursuit of a world-leading Catholic education system, we made significant progress across the four strategic pillars beneath our Purpose and Vision.

Inspired by Faith, we advanced our multi-year program to lift the theological capabilities of all teachers to support the teaching of RE in MACS schools. Our bold ambition here is for all teachers to be accredited by 2026. We developed a new faith formation strategy and are in the process of developing resources to facilitate vastly improved formation for our teachers.

To continue developing our Flourishing Learners, we delivered our Vision for Instruction, leading the way in Victoria as the first education system of scale to unify teaching approaches across almost 300 schools to ensure every student benefits from high-impact, evidence-based teaching methods.

With nearly 100% of our educators engaged in professional learning programs to bring this vision to life, our approach is also resonating beyond our own system, providing a model for best practice that is informing educational discussions across the state.

The year also marked the establishment of MACS Early Years Education (MACSEYE) to bring Outside School Hours Care services to MACS schools and to establish early childhood education centres in new and existing MACS primary schools. MACSEYE is now providing OSHC services in 34 MACS schools, and is expanding to over 100 by the end of 2025. While change brings challenges, the progress MACSEYE has made in 2024 has been remarkable and we're confident it will have a profound impact on our communities.

Our principals and teachers continue to raise the bar across our schools and our work to support them as Enabled Leaders is ongoing. In the past year, we set to work re-imagining leadership and, in the process, strengthened our principal appointment process and introduced more flexible models of principalship.

We established a new MACS Code of Conduct that embodies our collective commitment to fostering a safe, respectful and nurturing culture across every school and office.

And lastly, but not least, we continue to find ways to strengthen our partnerships and create new and Enriched Communities that ultimately deliver an education that inspires young people to enrich the world with several new schools opening their doors in 2024. By adapting to shifting community needs, we are ensuring that high-quality MACS education remains accessible where it is needed most.

As we continue working towards our MACS2030 vision, we are deepening our understanding of what it means to be a truly connected Catholic education system – one where collaboration strengthens outcomes and a shared mission drives success.

Thank you to all our students, staff, families and community members for being part of our journey so far.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Edward Simons

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

Vision and Mission

Vision

At St. Mary's Malvern East we are all responsible for being a welcoming, inclusive Foundation to Year 6, Catholic community.

Through respectful partnerships, we strive for excellence and take action in a contemporary world.

Mission

Our aim is to foster the formation and growth of the whole person within a faith filled, safe and respectful environment.

We do this by...

- Living our Faith through action,
- Knowing, nurturing and challenging every child,
- Striving for excellence, innovation and inclusion in teaching and learning,
- Promoting positive partnerships.

School Overview

St Mary's is a Foundation to Year 6 school, situated in Malvern East. Archbishop Mannix laid the foundation stone for the school in 1918 and the Brigidine Sisters were the first leaders of St Mary's School.

Over the years, St Mary's School has undergone many changes and improvements with building works and extensions. Our most recent upgrade was completed at the beginning of 2024, and includes facilities and learning spaces such as a dedicated First Aid room, meeting spaces and offices, a large Library, four upgraded classrooms, including two Foundation classrooms with their own bathroom facilities and a lift, which services all five levels.

St Mary's School has a committed and innovative staff who strive for excellence in every area of the curriculum. The students are motivated and conscientious and achieve high results at a state and national level. St Mary's School prides itself on the education of the whole child and enriches the core curriculum with specialist subjects such as Mandarin, Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education and Digital Technologies/STEM.

St Mary's School is strongly supported by the parent and parish community. At St Mary's School we recognise and develop the potential of each person as a unique individual, and embrace a shared understanding that God's love and Christ's teachings are at the centre of our values and beliefs.

Our strategic intent is to implement contemporary, high quality learning and teaching practices to ensure every student thrives.

Principal's Report

When reading through this Annual Report to the School Community, there is an enormous sense of collective pride that the staff and I have when reflecting on the exceptional levels of success and achievement at St Mary's School in 2024.

One of the most significant achievements from 2024 was not only moving into our newly refurbished spaces at the commencement of the school year and celebrating with an Official Blessing and Opening with the entire school community, but being able to utilise our new spaces throughout the year. When planning for these significant upgrades, every member of our school community was considered, and it was an absolute pleasure to see this vision come to fruition. From the more welcoming front office, to the dedicated first aid facilities, Library space, four refurbished classrooms, private meeting spaces for families and allied health professionals, to a lift which services all five levels of our main school building. There is no doubt that our entire St Mary's community has benefitted from these beautiful upgraded spaces, and we have been able to create calm, inspiring places to learn and flourish.

Following the immense success of the Spring Fair at the end of 2023, where over \$70,000 was raised to fund a new adventure playground, our Student Representative Council played a significant role in the playground upgrade throughout 2024. Student voice and feedback was vital in not only the playground design, but also in selecting the colours of our new playground. The tireless work from our students, parents and staff ensured our new playground was installed, officially opened and enjoyed by all students prior to the end of the 2024 school year. In addition to the playground upgrade, the Student Representative Council also successfully contributed to the choices which were made in regards to the cubby house investment, following a successful end of Term One Colour Run.

Finally, throughout 2024 our staff worked incredibly hard to commence bringing the Vision for Instruction document to life within our context. This document forms part of the strategic plan from Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools, MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World. For our staff, this has required a number of dedicated professional learning sessions to refine our teaching practices based on the Science of Learning. By the end of 2024, St Mary's School had made a strategic decision to make a significant investment in two new, evidenced-based Literacy programs. Initialit was purchased for all Foundation to Year Two classes and SpellEx was purchased for all Year Three and Year Four classes. The staff and I look forward to implementing these programs in 2025 and beyond.

In considering all of our successes, I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the ongoing roles that are played by a range of essential parent bodies in the life of St Mary's School. These include, our School Advisory Council which provides advice on the strategic direction for our school, and who was led by Chair, Mr Ross Andrews. Our Parent Committee and various sub committees have also contributed significantly, especially in regards to fundraising and the development of building social capital. In 2024, our Parent Committee was proudly led by Mrs Jane De Cruz and Mrs Cass Ballard. Finally, I would like to thank the Parish Pastoral Council, which works to support Father Gallacher and Assistant Parish Priest, Father Tom Christie, who continue to work tirelessly to respond to the needs of our large parish community.

After a year of settling into our newly refurbished learning spaces, the staff and I are excited about the possibilities that lie ahead, and we look forward to working in collaboration with our families and wider school community to ensure St Mary's School continues to be a place of learning, where all students are known, nurtured and challenged.

Kind regards,

Lauren Jones

Acting Principal

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To embed initiatives which promote student voice and agency in learning, wellbeing, safety and social justice issues.

Intended Outcomes:

Students will be valued and active decision-makers and innovators on matters of student learning, wellbeing, safety and responsibility.

Establish new partnerships to further support the development of student voice and agency in local and global social justice issues.

Achievements

Professional Learning:

- Professional learning took place to support teachers to make differentiated report comments regarding student achievement in Religious Education and to be introduced to, and become familiar with, the Religious Education underpinning of the MACS 2030 Position statement. Further professional Learning about different forms of Prayer was undertaken as well as a session with staff preparing for the Feast of the Assumption. The Religious Education Leader facilitated an introduction to the Jubilee 2025 including its theological underpinnings.
- The Religious Education Leader attended the Southern Religious Education Leader Network days. These days are valuable as the information gained allows the RE leader to pass on important messages from the wider system and to collaborate and share practice with other RE leaders.
- The Religious Education Leader served on the Executive of the Southern Region Religious Education Network for a second year.
- A number of staff availed themselves on online Professional learning opportunities which contributed towards their maintenance of the Accreditation to teach Religious Education. The Religious Education Leader attended a briefing about the Religious Education Curriculum Framework report. This report will establish the framework for the teaching of Religious Education in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne for the next

four years. Further work will be completed on this report and its possible introduction into schools in 2026.

- Staff explored the MACS Accreditation policy and were shown how to update the TAP portal on CEVN to note their hours for the purposes of gaining and maintaining accreditation according to the policy. The TAP portal was updated to register all professional learning during 2024 and accreditation hours applied to individual staff profiles.
- St. Mary's maintained its subscription to Butterfly House, a music website which teachers can access for liturgies, Feast days and special events.
- The Deputy Principal, Ms Lauren Jones attended the Melbourne Catholic Professional's luncheon at which the guest speaker, Sr. Mary Sarah Galbraith addressed the audience about the vital roles played by Catholic Schools in our community.

Faith Development:

- Fr. Michael Gallacher, PP. led staff in a Faith formation session with a focus on vocations and his individual faith journey. He generously answered staff questions upon a range of current topics outlining the Church's position.
- Some staff completed faith formation online opportunities facilitated by the MACs Southern Region Learning consultants.
- The school supported two staff members to attend the 'Inspired to Lead' program in 2024. This program aims to support participants to grow in faith, be inspired by passion, and confidently align actions in the work context with faith, mission and Catholic identity. The program emphasizes both personal and professional development as part of an ongoing formation journey. One participant travelled to Rome, Siena and Assisi as part of the program with a group of pilgrims and another undertook a personal journey to Italy followed by a retreat.
- Weekly seasonal prayers were published in the staff and school newsletters.
- Individual staff prepared a prayer before Professional Learning meetings.
- Classes engaged in daily prayer supported by the purchase of texts for Years Three to Six containing the readings of the day.
- Texts including 'Guided meditations for children' and 'Teaching the Miracles' were purchased through Pauline Books.

Liturgies / Community Partnerships:

- The Principal, Mr. Shane Tobin, led a prayerful liturgy for staff on the first day back at school. St Mary's is a Catholic school and the importance of Prayer as central to our

vision and mission is underscored by the priority which is given by the Principal as the first thing we do as a staff at the commencement of a new year.

- The Principal attended some Parish Council meetings. This supported the building of school and Parish connections through a shared understanding of the perspectives of each.
- A whole school welcome Mass was celebrated in the first week of the new school year which included the blessing of class candles. This allowed an opportunity to welcome new families and students into our school community.
- A Commissioning Mass for Year Five and Six students, Parent committee members and Staff was held followed by a morning tea catered for by the parent community. This was an opportunity for the whole community to come together to begin the school year.
- The whole school celebrated the Feast of St. Patrick at a Mass. This Mass also celebrates Catholic Education Week. A selection of senior students attended Mass at the Cathedral together with the Principal and senior school teachers.
- Catholic Education Week was marked with classes undertaking MACS provided Religious Education Units based upon the 2024 theme, "In the light of Christ".
- Students, staff and parishioners celebrated Shrove Tuesday by enjoying a feast of pancakes, provided by our Parent Committee.
- Ash Wednesday was marked by a whole school Mass and Caritas Project Compassion boxes were distributed to each family.
- In April, the new school refurbished spaces were opened and blessed by Bishop Tony Ireland supported by Parish Priest Fr. Michael Gallacher and Monsignor Stuart Hall.
- Reflection days for each of the Sacramental classes were held. These days provide an opportunity for a deeper understanding of the Sacrament to occur in the week preceding the Sacramental Mass.
- The Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist were celebrated with students and families in attendance. In addition, two students were baptised prior to the Sacrament of First Communion.
- A Family Faith Night was facilitated for students in Foundation. This night was well attended by families and was based upon the theme of God's Creation.
- A Faith afternoon for students in Years One and Two was held in the Hall. This was well attended by parents. Students and parents rotated through various activities linked to what they had been learning in Religious Education. The theme of the afternoon was 'Who do you say I am?' and invited students and parents to explore the concept of man being created in the image of God.
- A Junior school family mass was celebrated on Palm Sunday followed by refreshments provided by the class representatives. This Mass offers an opportunity for the community to come together at the commencement of Holy Week.
- Advent liturgies were led by different year levels during December to which parents and parishioners were invited.

- The Stations of the Cross were dramatically depicted by Year Five and Six students who had read and interpreted a passage of Scripture relating to each Station. In addition, other classes became involved through the preparation of artwork relating to the modern interpretation of the Stations.
- Commemorative liturgies for Mother's Day, Father's Day, ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day were celebrated as a whole school led by various Year levels.
- Sacramental Classes regularly attended Parish Masses.
- The Religious Education Leader liaised with and supported the Parish Catechist to deliver sacramental classes to students not enrolled in our school. This included providing home learning materials, certificates and stoles for the Sacrament.
- The Parish Feast Day was commemorated with a whole school Mass followed by a whole school incursion.
- Foundation students performed a Nativity play for families in the final week of the year. This occurred in the Church this year and was very well attended by families.
- The whole school attended Mass for the Feast of the Assumption.
- An End of Year Mass was held to commemorate the end of the school year and to farewell the Year Six students leaving in 2024.
- The Feast day of St. Mary MacKillop was marked with a Liturgy led by Year Three. An award was given to a student from each Year level who displays the values and mission of St Mary of the Cross.
- During October, classes focused on learning the special prayers celebrating Mary such as the Hail Mary.

Social Justice:

- Project Compassion fundraising occurred in each classroom throughout Lent and boxes were distributed to each child.
- Fundraising initiatives were led by the school Student Representative Council including a successful Pyjama day at which students were asked to bring pantry items to restock the supplies for St. Vincent de Paul Malvern chapter.
- Donations were collected and provided to the Malvern Emergency Food program organised by the SRC.
- Students participated in Harmony Day activities, aimed to celebrate the diversity of the Australian community and foster a climate of respect, tolerance and inclusion.
- There was an Easter raffle donation of hampers for St. Mary's Care families.
- St Mary's Care outreach group continued to provide support for school families in need.

ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day merchandise was sold by Years Five and Six students to raise funds for Legacy and the RSL.

Value Added

As above.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal

To use research, evidence informed and consistent pedagogical practices to implement high quality learning and teaching that enables every student to thrive.

Intended Outcomes

Teachers and students will use two way feedback to enhance student learning and teacher practice.

Students will utilise metacognitive strategies to improve awareness of their own learning, to self-regulate and sustain motivation to learn.

Achievements

- All curriculum leaders attended regular Network sessions facilitated by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) staff, including the School Wide Improvement Framework (SWIF) network meetings.
- Our Enrichment Program continued throughout the year, whereby a range of students from Year One to Year Six were selected, based on data, to take part in a range of enriching activities and competitions, including by not limited to, Dorethea MacKellor Poetry, ATOM Photography and the Australian Catholics Young Journalist competition. These enriching experiences provided authentic opportunities for students to further develop skills in a range of areas such as photography and poetry writing.
- Another aspect of our Enrichment Program has seen the continuation of the student newspaper, 'The Mary-Go-Round', where a number of students contributed a range of articles that were published in the newspaper. The Mary-Go-Round has become an integral part of the programs being offered here at St Mary's.
- Our Camp Programs for students in Year Three to Year Six were once again well received. Year Three enjoyed a night at PGL Campaspe Downs, Year Four spent two nights at Lady Northcote, while our Year Five and Year Six students experienced two nights at a very successful Leadership camp at The Summit.
- Dedicated a School Closure Day in Term Three to continue building staff knowledge around a high impact teaching strategy; Metacognitive Strategies. This included developing a St Mary's scope and sequence, ensuring students are explicitly taught these strategies at an age appropriate level. During this School Closure Day there was

also an opportunity to commence a 'soft launch' of the Vision for Instruction document as communicated through Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools.

- Our students in Year Three and Year Five were supported in preparing for and participating in the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).
- All classes participated in a range of enriching incursions and excursions to further enhance their learning.

Inquiry

- All teaching staff were supported with planning new units of work through participation in personalised meetings, at the end of each term. These sessions provided teaching staff with an opportunity to plan and prepare a rich and engaging unit of work based on a range of core curriculum areas, structured from an authentic problem and following the Design Thinking Process.

English

- Two opportunities for Public Speaking courses were again offered during 2024. Advanced Presentation Skills coordinator, Mrs. Sandra de Geest worked with Year Five and Six students during Term One on learning the basics of public speaking. Then, in Term Three, Year Four enjoyed a workshop run by Superspeak/Speak Stars with a focus on building public speaking skills. Well attended parent sessions were held for both Year levels.
- Our senior students were invited to participate in a Public Speaking and Debating workshop at Salesian College.
- Regular English Updates featured in the School Newsletter, sharing resources and overviews of what has been explored in classrooms, and across levels. Topics included information about the Grattan report 'The Reading Guarantee', A report about the success of Book Week 2024, and a report on the InitialLit training undertaken by Junior school staff.
- Literacy Intervention continued for low attaining students across a variety of year levels. The Literacy Intervention facilitators worked with small groups of students across a number of sessions each week through the MiniLit Sage program, with a particular focus on alphabet recognition and decoding strategies. In addition, Learning Support Officers implemented the MultiLit program for a number of Year Two and Year Three students. This program involves 1:1 support. Selection for the programs is considered by the Student Support Team (formerly Intervention team) through fortnightly meetings considering an analysis of current data.
- A range of whole school Literacy assessments took place throughout 2024, all of which helped to monitor growth and achievement. These assessments include, but are not limited to Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark assessments, South Australian spelling tests, Phonics check for Year One students, Record of Oral language, DIBELS - Dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills and the annual Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) Reading.

- In 2024, Foundation students undertook the English Online Interview. This 40 minute individual assessment was mandated to be completed by Catholic schools. The assessment includes foundational skills of reading and writing including phonics and phonemic awareness, reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, writing and oral language skills.
- The Heggarty phonemic awareness program continued to be implemented as part of the Foundation - Year Two Literacy block. Following purchasing of the resources in 2023 Junior school staff were supported to implement the program during the first two Terms of 2024.
- Staff participated in professional learning sessions including preparation for reporting student achievement in literacy during Term One, analysing 2023 Progressive Achievement testing results and other literacy data, analysing NAPLAN data and preparation for Book Week 2024.
- St Mary's and specifically the Year Four teachers were selected to take part in a pilot project- "Uplift" for MACS. This involved the cohort trialling and providing feedback on a literature study unit of work implemented through the OCHRE platform.
- Teaching staff took part in professional development about familiarisation with the Victorian Curriculum 2.0 which is to be rolled out in 2025 including the implementation timetable.
- Four parent helpers literacy course sessions were run to upskill parents to be able to assist in the classrooms.
- St. Mary's participated in National Simultaneous Storytime when anyone can join a link to a live story reading at the same time across Australia. Teachers were provided with resources and students enjoyed a craft activity based upon the featured text "Bowerbird Blues".
- Book Week 2024 involved a very successful Book Fair which ran for five days and raised over \$1200 for the school. Parents and Grandparents were able to purchase quality books from Lamont Books and students enjoyed making wish lists to request their selections. The funds raised were used to purchase additional decodable texts for Year One. Book Week activities included an author visit from Joel McKerrow for Years Three to Six, Perform Education session for years Foundation to Year Three. Two copies of all of the shortlisted CBCA books were purchased for the library.
- A thorough analysis of NAPLAN data in Reading, Language Conventions and Writing was undertaken by staff looking for opportunities and celebrating student achievement.
- The Premiers Reading Challenge was completed by a record 38 students including every Year Five and Six student!
- The Literacy Leader attended the MACS 'Teach Well' program across five professional development days with a focus on explicit instruction and cognitive science.

Mathematics

- A Family Maths Night was held in Term One to continue to build the connection and engagement of families in Mathematics.
- A range of whole school Mathematic assessments took place throughout 2024, all of which helped to monitor growth and achievement. These assessments included, but are not limited to Pre and Post Assessment, Westwood Speed tests, Maths Online Interview (MOI), Early Number and Algebra interviews and the annual Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) Mathematics.
- Regular Mathematics updates included in the School Newsletter, sharing resources and overviews of what has been explored in classrooms, across levels and providing helpful strategies for parents to help their child at home.
- Explored the OCHRE resources in Mathematics with opportunity for teachers to introduce OCHRE Daily Reviews in their teaching of mathematics.
- Mathematics Intervention offered for students requiring further support in mathematics. The Mathematics Intervention teacher worked with small groups of students twice a week, with a particular focus on number intervention, including place value, the four processes and a strong emphasis on mental strategies.
- Students involved in a variety of national Mathematics competitions.
- Implementation of the Early Years Numeracy and Algebra assessments and targeted teaching across Foundation to Year Two. Early Number and Algebra further enhances knowledge of the Victorian Curriculum in the Number and Algebra strand, progressions of learning and assessment practices and pedagogical approaches, in order to plan and implement learning cycles for students at their point of need.
- Adapted our reporting in mathematics to assess the Mathematics 2.0 Curriculum, implementing efficient data methods to analyse each student's achievement.
- Introduced Mathseeds as a supportive online platform for home and school.
- Key focus on assessment, data and differentiation through staff Professional Learning.
- Teachers developed capacity to create and implement teacher designed pre and post assessments.

Specialists Subjects

- **Digital Technologies /STEM:** In 2024 St Mary's introduced Digital Technologies/STEM as an additional specialist subject, with all students, Foundation to Year Six taking part in weekly classes for the duration of a semester. The focus on lessons began with cyber safety and using devices safely and appropriately, before moving into lessons requiring

coding and robotics. St Mary's School invested in a series of interactive lessons from a company called, Inform & Empower, which were well received by students and families. As a school community we continued to acknowledge Safer Internet Day in February. Pleasingly our senior students contributed to the annual STEM Mad Showcase again, with one student group being declared the winners here in Victoria, which enabled them to travel to Brisbane for the National STEM Mad Showcase, competing with schools around Australia!

- **Visual Arts:** Throughout 2024 visual arts continued to be well received by many students as they engaged in a variety of artists studies, and completed many creative and colourful pieces of art.
- **Music:** Our Music program continued to flourish throughout 2024, with musical instruments being learnt and connections being made with Inquiry learning across the classrooms. Music World also continued to facilitate the Guitar Ensemble before school to those families who were interested. Our senior students also greatly benefitted from a Harmonica music incursion. A highlight from the Music Program throughout 2024 was the success of our whole school bi-annual performing arts concert, A New Fairy Tale, held at Kingston Town Hall in Term Three. It was well attended by members of our school community and it was clearly evident our students thoroughly enjoyed showcasing their singing, dancing and acting skills in front of a live audience.
- **LOTE: Mandarin:** Students continued to participate in weekly Mandarin classes, where they were immersed in the culture of China, as well as the language.
- **Physical Education:** In 2024 our students participated in sporting opportunities which included, but was not limited to, lawn bowls, soccer, cross country, hockey, netball, AFL, athletics and swimming. Two events throughout the year which were no doubt a highlight on the calendar for all students was the annual Footy Colours Day and Colour Run. To show our support for the Paris Olympics, St Mary's School hosted a national Green & Gold Day, inviting students to wear their Australian colours with pride. As a school community we were also fortunate to welcome a past Olympian to our school, Brooke (softball pitcher). We also continued with Foundation to Year Six swimming lessons held at Ashburton pool, followed by our Years 2-6 House Swimming Carnival at the end of the year. Students in Year Five and Six also enjoyed a series of bike education lessons.

Student Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes in NAPLAN for the 2024 school year were exceptionally strong.

Year Three

Of the five marked areas of NAPLAN, the strongest results for Year Three, 2024, were from the Writing and Reading assessments.

- * Writing - 100% of Year Three students scored in the top two proficiency strands of strong and exceeding, which is an increase from 97% in 2023.

- * Reading - 96% of Year Three students scored in the top two proficiency strands of strong and exceeding, which is an increase from 81% in 2023.

- * The remaining assessments saw 88% of students within the top two strands for Numeracy, 76% within the top two strands for Grammar & Punctuation and 64% within the top two strands for Spelling.

- * Pleasingly, no students were marked in the lowest proficiency strand, Needing Additional Support, in any of the Year Three NAPLAN assessments.

Year Five

Of the five marked areas of NAPLAN, the strongest results of Year Five, 2024, were from the Writing and Numeracy assessments.

- * Writing and Numeracy - 100% of Year Five students scored in the top two proficiency strands, strong and exceeding, which was the same result in these two areas in 2023.

- * The remaining assessments saw 93% of students within the top two strands for reading, 86% within the top strands for Grammar & Punctuation and 80% within the top two strands for Spelling.

- * Pleasingly, no students were marked in the lowest proficiency strand, Needing Additional Support, in any of the Year Five NAPLAN assessments.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	483	76%
	Year 5	523	87%
Numeracy	Year 3	479	88%
	Year 5	555	100%
Reading	Year 3	470	96%
	Year 5	558	93%
Spelling	Year 3	436	64%
	Year 5	501	80%
Writing	Year 3	466	96%
	Year 5	554	100%

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2024 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

Goal

To embed initiatives which promote student voice and agency in learning, wellbeing, safety and social justice issues.

Intended Outcomes

Students will be valued and active decision-makers and innovators on matters of student learning, wellbeing, safety and responsibility.

Establish new partnerships to further support the development of student voice and agency in local and global social justice issues.

Achievements

- St Mary's School once again celebrated and promoted a dedicated week to Student Wellbeing (SWELL Week) at the beginning of the year, where all classes took part in fabulous sessions to build teamwork, and positive and respectful relationships. As part of the week, students met with their Buddy classes and enjoyed a picnic together.
- Supported the "Bullying No Way: National Week of Action" in August. During the Monday morning assembly, our student leaders reminded all students to be kind, inclusive and respectful, especially during such an important week.
- A range of resources were purchased to further support the teaching and learning of wellbeing, including, but not limited to new sandpit toys and social and emotional picture books.
- In collaboration with our Student Representative Council, our whole school positive reward system was reinvigorated, whereby staff handed out raffle tickets to students who exhibited positive and respectful behaviours. Students were then encouraged to write their name on the ticket and add to the new school raffle barrel. During each Monday morning whole school assembly a name was drawn out of the barrel with that student winning a voucher for their class, where they could choose between 20 minutes of extra play or 20 minutes of free time within the classroom. This new approach successfully sought student voice and enabled not just individual rewards for students, but also promoted positive behaviours for whole classes.
- Students across all classrooms were assigned a buddy class, with Foundation students receiving a buddy from the senior classroom. These buddies and buddy classes provided wonderful opportunities for students to connect across a range of

year levels, build friendships and support each other with a range of classroom based activities.

- The Student Representative Council (SRC) was once again well received from the beginning of the year, with a number of students across all grades writing to apply for the positions. After applying, students were then democratically elected by their peers and SRC badges were awarded to students during an assembly in Term 1. Amongst many other initiatives, our SRC leaders hosted the annual PJ Day, where students and their families donated non-perishable food items to the Malvern Emergency Food Program (MEFP).
- In 2024 our SRC also met regularly to provide student voice on the new adventure playground which was purchased with the money raised at the Spring Fair (November 2023). The students chose specific playground pieces, including a double slide and a spider net, as well as the colours of the playground.
- Money raised from our annual Colour Run was used to purchase two cubby houses for our lower playground. The Student Representative Council also met regularly to consider how these cubby houses could be decorated.
- Student Wellbeing Updates continued to be a regular feature in our School Newsletters this year, covering a range of topics, including Growth Mindsets, Habits of Mind, Mindfulness, mindful breathing, helpful resources for families, and of course updates from the classrooms and SRC meetings.
- Ongoing use of our Happy Families membership with appropriate articles being shared with parents through our weekly school newsletter, which provided expert resources for staff and parents.
- Dedicated a professional learning community meeting to discuss, analyse and action our 2023 student MACSSIS data.
- Explored and discussed the Child Safety Standards during regular staff briefings and professional learning communities.
- Acknowledged and celebrated special days, including, but not limited to; R U Ok? Day, Harmony Day, Australia's Biggest Child Safety Lesson and National Ride to School Day. All of these days promote such wonderful messages, that as a school we greatly value.
- Transition programs were prioritised for students transitioning to Foundation in 2025 and also Year 5&6 2025 through a range of strategically planned experiences and opportunities. All students across each level also took part in a transition morning to assist in transitioning to a new class with a new teacher and peers.
- Our Foundation 2025 families were invited to attend a Starting School in 2025 session with psychologist Carley McGauran. This was very well attended with families not only benefitting from tips and tricks from a psychologist, but also receiving final bits of information from the school, which concluded a comprehensive transition program.
- Students in Foundation and Year One and Two participated in five to six Wellbeing incursions as part of the SEAL, The Drama Toolbox program. This program supported positive transitions to school and developing respectful relationships.

- St Mary's School welcomed back the Life Ed van during Term Three, which provided an enriching experience for all students in Foundation to Year Six. Our Foundation students took part in a workshop titled, *My Body Matters*, while students in Year One and Two participated in a workshop, *Ready, Steady, Go. Friends and Feelings* was the focus for our Year Three and Year Four students, while senior students in Year Five and Year Six completed the workshop titled *Relate, Respect, Connect*.
- After seeing a need with many of our students, St Mary's School invested in an online webinar for our parents, *School Anxiety Webinar*. This webinar was facilitated by Michelle Mitchell and Karen Young, with the replay, slides and resources being shared with all families afterwards.
- Supported the Wellbeing Leader to attend the MACS Student Wellbeing Conference. A focus of the day was around student attendance, and the impact this has on students both short and long term. Following this conference, key messages were shared and discussed with staff at a professional learning community meeting.

Value Added

As above.

Student Satisfaction

Students in Years Four to Year Six were invited to participate in the 2024 Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools - School Improvement Survey (MACSSIS). Overall, 52 students completed the survey and answered a series of questions covering ten domains as listed below.

1. Rigorous Expectation
2. School Engagement
3. School Climate
4. Teacher-Student Relationships
5. School Belonging
6. Learning Disposition
7. Student Safety
8. Enabling Safety
9. Student Voice
10. Catholic Identity

Our results demonstrate that our students scored St Mary's School both above and well above the 2024 MACS average across all ten domains. The strongest scoring domain for 2024 was Rigorous Expectation, with an overall positive endorsement score of 81%. The questions within this domain asked students to reflect on how much they feel that their teachers hold them to high expectations of their effort, understanding, persistence and performance. With an overall positive endorsement score of 79%, domain six, Learning Disposition was our second highest score. The questions within this domain asked students to reflect on their mindsets as a learner.

Student Attendance

At St Mary's School all class teachers are required to maintain the electronic roll on SIMON (online management system).

Rolls are completed twice daily, morning and afternoon. Office staff contact parents, via telephone, of any students marked as "absent" without any prior parent notification. Parents are requested to notify the School Office of any absence prior to 9am. This can be done by either calling or emailing the Office. Parents can alternatively mark their child as absent for the day, directly on the Parent Access Module (PAM), though SIMON. A record is kept on SIMON of any Parent Notified Absences.

Parents/carers must sign their child in, if they arrive after 8:50am. Parents/carers must sign their child out if leaving the school before 3.10pm. This can be done through the Student Kiosk, on the iPad in the School Office. The Student Kiosk updates the classroom rolls automatically. If there is unsatisfactory attendance, the parents are contacted to discuss ways of assisting and supporting in order to improve the situation. Parents are asked for an explanation and invited to respond.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	89.2
Y02	93.7
Y03	91.2
Y04	91.4
Y05	90.8
Y06	92.9
Overall average attendance	91.5

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal

To continue to grow and maintain a staff culture of high performance and development.

Intended Outcomes

Embed consistent school wide approaches for staff to give and receive feedback on a regular basis to refine teaching performance.

Develop and implement staff individual professional learning plans and associated goal setting in line with St Mary's SIP and AAP.

Leadership capacity is built and enhanced across the school.

Achievements

- The Principal and Deputy Principal met on a regular basis with a Marketing Consultant covering many aspects of our strategic school marketing, including but not limited to the following;
 - Maintaining and updating the School website, including the publications of regular blogs to increase website traffic
 - Monitoring Enquiry Tracker in regards to possible student enrolments across all levels, although predominantly for Foundation 2025
 - Social media support
 - Community marketing including the Calendar campaign for 2025
- Hosted our annual Open Days and Open Night for prospective families. All events were well attended, and with families booking a space for their tours, St Mary's School was able to provide personalised, follow up communication after tours took place. Invested in a professional photographer to capture a series of photographs to be used in promotional materials and on social media accounts and on our website.
- Celebrated World Teachers' Day, which provided an opportunity to acknowledge and thank our amazing teachers and staff. We are so blessed to have such a dedicated group of teachers and staff. They work hard each and every day to make sure every student is known, nurtured and challenged!
- The School Advisory Council (SAC) met regularly throughout the year and provided ongoing support and feedback to the school on matters including, but not limited to, financial matters, class structures, marketing and retention.

- Continued utilising the online platform, Enquiry Tracker, as a resource to be able to better manage school enrolment enquiries, including Open Day attendees and enrolment applications.
- Ensured all staff maintained current Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) certification, Mandatory reporting modules and all relevant First Aid, CPR and Anaphylaxis training.
- As a staff, we reviewed and updated our Ongoing Reporting structure by introducing reporting checklists in Term One and Three. This was well received by families as they could see how their children were tracking based on some specific achievement statements in English and Mathematics along a five-point achievement scale.
- Commencing in January 2024, we began moving into our newly renovated spaces. Our new purpose built Library was set up, as were the new senior classrooms (Year Five and Six) and Foundation mezzanine level.
- At the commencement of Term Two we hosted an official opening and blessing of our new spaces. We welcomed a range of special guests including past Parish Priest, Monsignor Stuart Hall and our new priests Father Michael Gallacher and Father Tom Christie. Architects, Builders and MACS representatives were also present for the celebrations.

Supported three staff members to become accredited in the Team Teach Training program, which supports staff to ensure a holistic approach to student behaviour management and de-escalation strategies.

- Dedicated a school closure day to prioritise staff mental health and wellbeing. The sessions were facilitated by staff from Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools.
- Facilitated a series of successful open days, with high attendance numbers and a streamlined approach for prospective families to be able to register and then receive a series of follow up nurture emails.
- Continue hosting personalised school tours for families three times a week. These personalised tours were specifically helpful for families who may have missed the Open Day campaign or were wanting a more personalised experience in regards to questions wanting to be asked.
- The Principal and Deputy Principal supported the Parent Committee (PC) by attending monthly meetings and supporting their two focus areas of building social capital amongst parents and families and fundraising. Special thanks to our active Parent Committee for also hosting the annual Christmas lunch for staff. This was a lovely way for families to acknowledge the hard work of our staff throughout the year.
- Four school leaders attended the Crucial Conversations professional development program as part of the South Central Principal Network.
- The School Leadership team undertook research into available systematic, synthetic phonics programs before deciding to purchase the Initialit program, one of the MultiLit suite of Literacy programs. This involved attending webinars and visiting other schools to observe programs in action. Initialit is an evidence-based whole-class literacy program providing all children with the essential core knowledge and strong foundations to become successful readers and writers. Initialit is a three-year

program, covering the first three years of school (Foundation to Year Two). In the context of a Response to Intervention framework, InitialLit is a Tier 1 program, designed to be delivered to whole classes by classroom teachers. The program complements the Intervention program already offered by the school.

- Significant investment was undertaken by St. Mary's to appropriately resource the InitialLit program. This included the purchase of all necessary resources including decodable texts and teaching materials as well as two day professional development for five staff.
- Coordinated the facilitation and analysis of the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools - School Improvement Survey (MACSSIS) for staff, students (Years 4-6) and parents.
- Supported the Deputy Principal to attend the DP Conference.
- Supported the Principal to attend the Spiritus International Formation Program.
- Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools sponsored the Deputy Principal to attend a Masterclass, Building Growth Cultures with Simon Breakspeare and Tom Sherrington.
- Supported all Foundation to Year Two teaching staff and Literacy Leader to attend a two day InitialLit Training program.
- In collaboration with the Parish, the school invested in the restoration of the Parish Hall floor and completed some lighting upgrades.
- The Principal attended the Annual Archdiocesan Celebration of Principalship.
- Year Six staff and Religious Education leader facilitated our annual end of year Mass and Year Six Graduation.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2024
<p>St Mary's School strategically prioritizes ongoing professional development for all staff. We are proud to have made significant investment and commitment to staff professional learning to further support key aspects of our 2024 Annual Action Plan.</p> <p>Core professional learning activities held throughout 2024 have been listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAT data analysis workshops - Reading Comprehension and Mathematics • 2024 NAPLAN data analysis workshops • First Aid training - CPR, basic First Aid skills and administration of EpiPens • Staff development continuing to explore the Child Safe Standards • Exploration of the new English 2.0 curriculum • Increased staff development in Ongoing Reporting, ensuring our processes and procedures, including platforms, were streamlined for ease of use for both staff and parents • Increased professional development opportunities for all staff around neurodiversity, specifically Autism and Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA). All teaching staff completed the Positive Partnerships Modules around supporting students in classrooms with Autism. • Professional development around supporting students with anxiety and improving student attendance rates (following Wellbeing leader attending a Wellbeing Conference) • Launched the new MACS 2030: Vision for Instruction documents. Begun exploring the Science of Learning and how students learn, cognitive load theory and Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction • Professional development around utilising MathsSeeds, a new online resource for all Foundation to Year Six students, as well as the new mathematics OCHRE Resources • Deepening staff faith formation - facilitated by Father Michael Gallacher • All staff participated in an analysis PL session based on data received in 2023, prior to participating in the 2024 Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools - School Improvement Survey (MACSSIS) <p>Curriculum Leaders:</p>

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
Principal Networks (South Central) Deputy Principal Networks and Conferences Religious Education Leaders Networks Student Wellbeing & Learning Diversity Networks Digital Education Networks School Wide Improvement Forum (SWIF) School based Leadership Days	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2024	24
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1687.00

Teacher Satisfaction

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, were once again invited to participate in the 2024 Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools - School Improvement Surveys (MACSSIS). Responses were received from a total of 19 staff members. Staff answered questions covering fourteen domain areas.

St Mary's School is once again very proud of our positive results, which have been consistently achieved since MACSSIS began in 2021. Our 2024 staff data once again places us above and predominantly, well above the 2024 MACS average.

Our strongest domains were, *Collaboration in Teams* and *Collective Efficacy*, both scoring a positive endorsement score of 98%, well above the MACS average of 70% and 75% respectively. The specific questions associated with the *Collaboration in Teams* domain asks staff to reflect on how well teachers work together in teams to improve teaching and learning. While the questions for the *Collective Efficacy* domain asks staff to reflect on the perceptions teachers have that the staff at this school have what it takes to improve instruction.

These positive results indicate that the staff at St Mary's School are extremely focused and dedicated to working collaboratively on shared improvement strategies, and reinforces the idea that everything we do is to ensure the full flourishing of all students.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0
Masters	4
Graduate	3
Graduate Certificate	1
Bachelor Degree	18
Advanced Diploma	2
No Qualifications Listed	2

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	22
Teaching Staff (FTE)	16.57
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	4.66
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal

To provide opportunities to foster and promote parent engagement and community connections.

Intended Outcomes

Build strong partnerships to engage parents in their child's learning journey.

Seek authentic connections with organisations and businesses to support student learning and promote the school.

Achievements

- The Parent Committee held a Welcome Morning tea for all parents at the beginning of the school year, this was a wonderful way to ensure all new families to St Mary's felt connected and welcomed.
- Summer Drinks were also hosted by the Parent Committee in February, as a way of celebrating the commencement of the new school year, providing another opportunity for families to connect in an informal way.
- The Parent Committee kindly organised a range of hot food day treats for students such as hot cross buns during Easter celebrations and party pies and a drink on Footy Colours day.
- Students involved in the Enrichment Program produced a Termly Student Newspaper 'The Mary-Go-Round' showcased a range of school highlights and achievements and this was published across the school community, including the school newsletter.
- Parents were again provided with opportunities to engage directly with their child's learning journey through the publication of work samples in their Learning Journal, through the Seesaw platform. More specific ongoing reporting opportunities were introduced to families in 2024, whereby at the end of Term One and Term Three, classroom teachers completed a checklist. Teachers used the checklist to mark a range of achievement statements for English and Mathematics across a five-point continuum.
- What has become a much loved annual event, the St Mary's Colour Run took place again at the end of Term One. All money raised for this event went towards the purchase of two new cubby houses for the lower playground.

- St Mary's School once again supported the Poppy Appeal as we prepared to commemorate both ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day.
- St Mary's Playgroup was successfully held on a fortnightly basis during Term Two and Three in one of our new learning spaces. Not only did this provide an opportunity for St Mary's School to showcase staff and facilities to prospective families, it also provided a wonderful service to the local community for young children to have a safe and happy space to play.
- Our Kinder Liaison Leader proactively collaborated with a range of local kindergartens on a range of strategies, including building on our Kinder Connections program. This program enabled Year Four students (future buddies) to visit a range of kindergartens in small groups to build positive relationships. Always a highlight of the Year Four calendar, the students engaged in a variety of shared learning experiences at Sunnyside Kindergarten, Little Paddington Childcare Centre and Kindergarten, Early Years at Phoenix Park, The Learning Sanctuary, Ewing Kindergarten and Samantha's Child Care Centre.
- St Mary's School is fortunate to have a very proactive and supportive Parent Committee who meet regularly throughout the school year with the purpose of not only fundraising, but also promoting a range of social events for parents, which assist in building connections. Social events include, Golf Days, Year Level dinners, breakfast for Mother's Day and Father's Day, and the annual Mid Life Crisis (MLC) Cup in collaboration with St Roch's Primary School.
- In 2024, St Mary's School hosted a 'School Readiness the St Mary's Way' Information Night, facilitated by our Kinder Liaison & Playgroup Director. This night was well attended by both existing families with Foundation children due to commence school in 2025, and prospective families who were encouraged to attend by their kindergartens
- In collaboration with the Parent Committee, St Mary's School held a Working Bee each term to ensure outdoor areas are maintained. With each family contributing to at least one Working Bee throughout the year, these Working Bees continued to provide an opportunity to further build community connections and networks.
- St Mary's families continued to be invited to regular School Assemblies each term, which saw students receiving awards and class presentations being proudly showcased.
- After a Literacy helpers training session, our Foundation to Year Two classes welcomed parent helpers into classrooms to assist with reading activities.
- Alongside a number of Foundation 2025 transition opportunities, St Mary's staff facilitated the annual Foundation Information Night. This provided an opportunity for our Foundation 2025 families to gather to hear from our Foundation 2025 teachers, and to learn about how they can help their child prepare for school.
- The St Mary's community was invited to attend our Biannual School Concert, A New Fairy Tale. This event took place at the Kingston Town Hall and was a wonderful way for the students to proudly showcase their singing and dancing on a large stage. It was

also a wonderful opportunity for our community to connect and celebrate lots of learning.

- The School Retention and Director of Connections Leader actively engaged with local secondary schools to strengthen transition pathways and build collaborative relationships with schools such as Avila College, Salesian College, Siena College, Sacred Heart Girls College and Xavier College. As part of this initiative, secondary school staff visited our school to deliver targeted programs and activities for our students. These opportunities have allowed our students to become familiar with secondary school environments, expectations, and staff, helping to reduce anxiety and build confidence about the transition to secondary school.

Parent Satisfaction

As above.

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.smmalverneast.catholic.edu.au