



**ST MARY'S SCHOOL**  
GEELONG



# St Mary's School Geelong

2020

## Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 0549

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## Contact Details

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## Minimum Standards Attestation

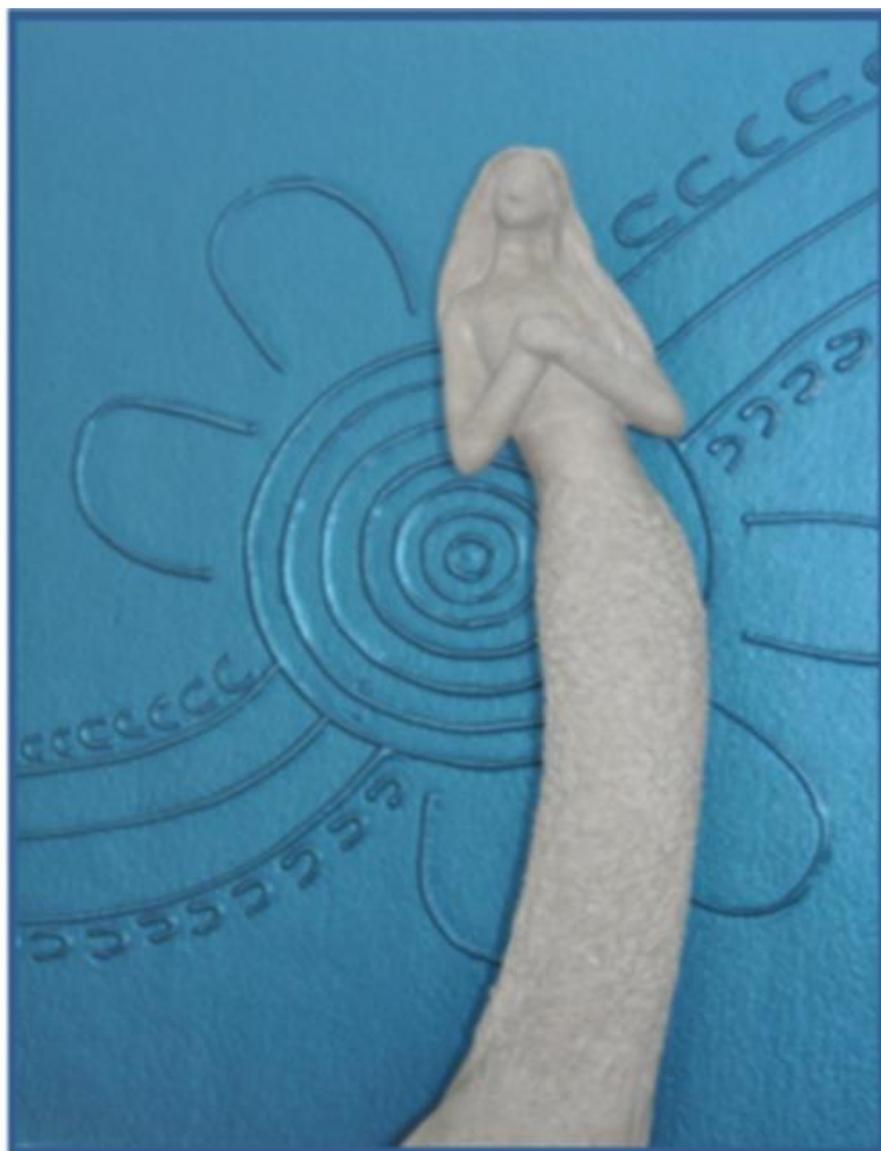
I, Annice Lappin, attest that St Mary's School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in *the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2020 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

30/04/2021

**NOTE:** The School's financial performance information has 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](http://www.acnc.gov.au)

## Our School Vision



***Following Jesus and his mother Mary,  
we aspire to be a compassionate, just and inclusive  
learning community, striving to be the best we can be.***

## School Overview

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, is part of St Mary of the Angels' Parish Geelong and is set on a one hectare site, adjacent to St Mary's Basilica and situated in the central business district of the City of Greater Geelong. The school is one of the oldest in the Geelong area, established in 1842. The school has operated from various locations and in 2010 the school was relocated from its previous site in Myers Street, to the current site, in Little Myers Street. St Mary's is one of four Catholic primary schools in the largest parish of Geelong, St Mary of the Angels. Fr. James Clarke is our parish priest.

The school buildings incorporate many modern features to support contemporary learning and teaching approaches. The two-storey building, while compact, includes four large learning areas, currently housing twelve class groupings that are flexible in design allowing for differentiated learning. Each learning area has its own library and resource area. There are two multi-purpose areas, an administration wing, meeting spaces, planning rooms, a staff room and a large undercover atrium. A lift is available to the second level and ramps provide easy access.

The school site has been carefully landscaped to provide two adventure playgrounds, grassed playing areas, an asphalt playing area, attractive gardens and seating areas. An adjacent drive-thru on the property provides easy access for parents to drop off and pick up children at the beginning and end of the school day.

The school's central location provides opportunities for students to use many of the outstanding educational facilities that the City of Greater Geelong has to offer. Our location is further complemented by the visible presence of our Parish Church, St Mary of the Angels' Basilica.

St Mary's School provides an inclusive education for girls and boys from Foundation to Year 6 with enrolments in 2020 totalling 243 students. There are two straight Foundation classes with multi-age structures from Year One to Year Six. A comprehensive curriculum based on the VicCurriculum, is taught as well as Religious Education in the Catholic Faith as set by the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

St Mary's School remains diligent in working to achieve the goals and targets identified in the School Improvement Plan across the five spheres of; Religious Dimension, Learning and Teaching, Student Wellbeing, Leadership and Management and School Community

St Mary's School values the strong and supportive relationship we enjoy with our parent community. The quality partnerships between home and school benefit the students' learning and wellbeing. Many opportunities for parents to be involved in our school and their child(ren)'s learning, are offered.

Our supportive Parents and Friends' Association, are strong contributors both financially and in community building. Their efforts are integral to the success of St Mary's School.

The School Advisory Board meets regularly and continues to provide an effective voice of the parent community as members include a representative from each of the year levels, the Principal and Deputy Principal, and an independent Chairperson. The School Advisory Board has the capacity to influence outcomes as it provides a wide range of viewpoints on the day to day and future operations of the school.

The strong spirit of partnership between our parents, teachers, students and the wider community remains a satisfying aspect of our school. As a Catholic school we strive to demonstrate our commitment to our faith and provide living examples of God's loving care for all people.

## Principal's Report

It is with great pleasure that I present the 2020 Annual Report to our school community. 2020 has been an unprecedented year with COVID-19 impacting throughout the world. Although many challenges arose, as a school community we faced adversity with positivity and remained solution focused to ensure the 2020 school year was very successful and rewarding for all at St Mary's School.

Our enrolments again slightly increased in 2020, totaling 243 students and this is testament to the high regard in which St Mary's School is held. Ms Marie Monea joined our school as the Deputy Principal and Learning and Teaching Leader. One new classroom teacher and three new specialist teachers also commenced at St Mary's School, bringing with them, a wealth of experience, fresh innovative and dynamic ideas.

The focus for the teaching staff continued to be an increased expectation of quality teaching and learning experiences for students, differentiated to meet each student's individual needs. At St Mary's School we aim to focus on 100% of students, 100% of the time. All staff are dedicated to providing a learning environment that suits the needs of our students. Our families, staff and wider community work together to provide an engaging learning community where students can thrive.

The Respectful Relationships program, which supports schools to promote and model respect, positive attitudes and behaviours, again was an initiative that positively contributed to our student wellbeing sphere. It teaches our students how to build healthy relationships, resilience and confidence. This program added value to our strong wellbeing culture and inclusive practices.

The 2020 school year began very smoothly with all students settling in to daily routines and establishing excellent learning patterns. Eight weeks in, no one could have predicted what was to come. Term Two and Three were disrupted with regional and statewide lockdowns and remote learning mandates for children of non-essential workers. St Mary's School remained open and supervised students of essential workers, onsite. Students who were also considered vulnerable were also invited to attend onsite on a part-time basis. In total, approximately 25 to 50 students attended school, onsite each day. Our home learning and remote learning catered to the needs of all students and community action days, wellbeing days and specialist days ensured that a balance was achieved.

It was wonderful to be able to welcome all students back to onsite learning after each lockdown. Their happy faces, laughter and enthusiasm for learning was a great indication that being back at school would be both enjoyable and productive. In Term Four, and back onsite, our educators were very aware that the final term of the year was one of the most important of the year, particularly in relation to our students' wellbeing and learning. There was a need for a fine balance of 'making up for lost learning' and having 'achievable expectations of our students', many of whom had worked extremely hard at home over the previous six months. Our educators planned rich and rigorous units of learning for all the students and term overviews were communicated with all parents/carers. Time to focus on student wellbeing was also provided.

Throughout the year, school staff continued to go above and beyond to meet the students' numerous needs. Giving our students a camp experience was a priority, but only if it was safe to do so. While the original camps did not proceed, alternatives were investigated and were held in the last few weeks of the school year.

Some other 2020 programs, initiatives and events that involved many members of our community including, students, parents, families and the local community working together, proceeded, including:

- School Advisory Board meetings
- Parents and Friends' Association meetings
- Fundraising and Friendraising Events (Breaky for Viqueque, Chocolate Drive, Easter Raffle, Mother's Day and Father's gifts, Color Run.)
- Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program (modified)
- Participation in World Day of Prayer
- School Assemblies (Limited)
- Professional Development for all staff
- Program Support Meetings with parents of students with additional needs (Zoom)
- Excursions
- School Sporting Events
- Camps
- Pre-service Teachers
- Swimming Program
- Parent/ Teacher Interviews P-2 (Zoom)
- Learning Conversations 3-6 (Zoom)
- Book Week - and Read-A-Thon
- Year 6 Graduation

We are a Catholic school, proudly celebrating our Faith in many and varied ways. Thank you to Fr. James Clarke, our Parish Priest, who again provided spiritual guidance throughout 2020 and ensured a close relationship between the school and parish. His dedication and ongoing work in the faith development of our staff and students and the support he has given our Religious Education Leader, has been most valuable.

Thank you to the members of the Parents and Friend's Association for their hard work and support. St Mary's School has a strong tradition of being a vibrant community and this was evident again in 2020 despite limited social interactions. Providing assistance and support to families in times of need was once again extremely appreciated and gratefully received by recipients. Thank you to the outgoing committee members for their generosity of time and dedication given to their roles.

Thank you to the School Advisory Board chair and members who have supported myself, the staff and students throughout the year. Thank you to the members finishing their tenure with the board. I thank you for your support and commitment throughout your time as parent representatives.

Finally, as I reflect on the unique year 2020 has been, I am proud of the collective efforts of all, that have enabled us to overcome the many challenges presented. To our families, the school-home partnerships have never been more important and I thank the families who have been unwavering in their support and worked in partnership with the school for the benefit of all, particularly our students; thank you. To the teaching team, your adaptability and innovation ensured our students were always provided with the very best learning opportunities, particularly during such trying times and is a credit to your talent, care and dedication to our students and families; thank you. To the learning support officer team, your positive attitude, patience and

guidance you show all students, particularly our most vulnerable, each and every day is very much valued by all; thank you. To the administration team, your organisation, reliability and careful management of workflows that keep our school operating, never go unnoticed; thank you. All support offered throughout our wonderful school community, has ensured staff, students and families remained united, even when physically apart.

I am very much looking forward to 2021 and all that it brings.



## Education in Faith

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOAL:

To further strengthen St Mary's School as an active and authentic Catholic community in which individuals are supported to live their faith in the contemporary world.

#### INTENDED OUTCOME:

That student interactions will demonstrate deeper commitment to Gospel values, social justice and the Christian call to service through rich and engaging units of learning that encourage participation through explanation, interpretation and reflection.

### Achievements

2020 presented many challenges that have been unique to all of us. In this unprecedented year, St Mary's School has further strengthened our faith by being an active and authentic community who cares, supports and looks after one another.

Student interactions have demonstrated a commitment to Gospel values and social justice through rich and engaging Religious Education units of learning that have encouraged participation through explanation, interpretation and reflection.

The Sacramental program was interrupted due to the Coronavirus pandemic but our Sacramental content in years 3, 4 and 6 was still taught to our students. With restrictions relaxed towards the end of the school year, Sacramental celebrations proceeded for Confirmation and Reconciliation. The 2020 Eucharist candidates will celebrate their First Eucharist in 2021.

It is important to note that the Sacramental program provides powerful learning experiences for our students that gives them the confidence to wonder, reflect and develop in the light of Jesus. At St Mary's School we take great pride in developing the knowledge of our students as they undertake their Sacramental Journey.

In 2020, St Mary's School continued their partnerships with Social Justice organisations such as the St Mary's Parish Pantry, CARITAS, St Vincent De Paul as well as maintaining our partnership with the St Mary of the Angels' partner Parish of Mary Immaculate in Viqueque, providing them with financial support and friendship. Being involved in these initiatives instills the importance of being a just, compassionate and inclusive community that inspires our students to learn about the wider world and care for others through their faith connection.

Looking forward to 2021, St Mary's School will continue to build Christian relations, modelling aspects of Social Justice in staff and students and encouraging love and understanding with all people. We will continue to build on strengthening meditation and mindfulness and for this to be an embedded practise at our school. The teaching staff will also be provided with Professional Development opportunities, drawing from a range of experts for enriching Religious Education Pedagogy and Teaching.

#### A Prayer for Times of Uncertainty

We pray in this time of uncertainty and distress for all those who are suffering, may we know your healing power,

When we are afraid for ourselves and our loved ones, give us your strength and courage.  
When we feel alone and isolated, reassure us with a sense of your presence.  
Give wisdom to those in authority and may our community work together for the good of all.  
We give thanks for those who care for others and ask you to bless them in all they do.  
In Hope and Peace,  
Amen



#### VALUE ADDED

- Strengthening meditation and mindfulness practices
- Collaboration with parish schools and parish priest to plan and celebrate the Sacraments
- Maintaining links with local Catholic organisations such as St Mary's Parish Pantry
- Encouraging students and their families to strengthen their relationship with the parish by attending Sunday Mass regularly
- Visible display of religious symbols, icons and student artwork promoting Catholic Identity around our school
- Contributing to the visible, public display of religious symbols, icons and student artwork outside the Basilica, promoting parish events and celebrations
- Christ-centred community activities, building awareness of diversity and social justice
- Acknowledging the sacred moments in our church calendar, such as journeying through the 'Stations of the Cross'
- Weekly faith-centred tasks and activities during Remote Learning that families were invited to participate in

## Learning & Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOAL:

To develop educator capacity and practice to maximise impact and deep learning.

#### INTENDED OUTCOME:

Educators collaborate to design learning that is evidence informed, utilises high impact strategies and challenges all.

### Achievements

In 2020, a new Learning and Teaching Team was established. This team brought together learning leaders in Learning and Teaching, English (F-2), English (3-6), Mathematics and Innovation and Coaching. With the central aim of beginning to align evidence informed practice across the school, already establishing in the junior classes, the team's strategic action was to further build the knowledge of all educators in the Science of Reading.

At the commencement of state-wide COVID-19 pandemic school closures, the strategic plan for learning and teaching was redirected to Remote Learning. St Mary's School provided two successful Remote Learning iterations: Home Learning (Term 2, 2020) and Remote Learning 2.0 (Term 3, 2020). Although the two iterations were significantly different in design and structure, each Remote Learning Program was underpinned by four main design principles;

- Purposeful learning - remaining true to delivering the planned English and Mathematics content with a particular focus on designing learning to meet the needs of all students.
- Family focused - engaging families, where possible, to work together and being aware of their needs.
- Technology balanced - streamlining online platforms and using screen time purposefully.
- Aligned practice - ensuring school communication and expectations were consistent across the school.

In the days preceding each school closure, classroom programs and term overviews were skilfully modified, and staff adapted to new ways of delivering the school's intended learning priorities. The school's Home Learning Program (Term 2) offered families;

- Year Level Timetables.
- Class based English sessions, posted on Seesaw Journals.
- Learning Menus, published weekly, with tasks in Mathematics, We Discover (Inquiry), Italian and Specialist Subjects.
- Teacher Check Ins and instructional videos, posted on SeeSaw Journals.
- Community Action Days, celebrated each Friday.

Using feedback from staff and parents/carers, the school's Remote Learning Program (Term 3) was redesigned and offered families:

- Year Level Timetables.

- Class based English, Mathematics, Religious Education and Inquiry sessions with instructional videos, posted on Google Sites (F-2) and Google Classroom (3-6).
- Regular Google Meet sessions.
- Teacher Check Ins posted on SeeSaw Journals.
- Weekly 'Specialist Days', enabling students to engage in a rotation of Art, Physical Education and STEM and providing staff with structured planning and meeting time.
- Community Action Days, celebrated each Friday.

Onsite learning continued for children of essential workers and vulnerable students. Along with the school's educators, Learning Support staff provided much care and expertise to deliver the Remote Learning Program onsite.

We acknowledge the many demands placed on families and school staff during the extended periods of school closure. We are proud of our school's community - the dedicated staff and supportive family partnerships, which ensured the success of the school's Remote Learning Programs.

Despite the redirection in strategic actions for Term 2 and Term 3, further building the knowledge of all educators in the Science of Reading, remained a priority. All teaching staff were enrolled in Reading, Spelling and Grammar online professional learning modules, designed by linguist Lyn Stone, and complemented the school's chosen mentor text, Reading For Life; also by Lyn Stone. The school was fortunate to host Lyn Stone, via Zoom, for a day in Term 3 that introduced staff to important components of evidence informed instruction in reading, writing and spelling, particularly, phonological awareness, morphology, etymology and orthographic mapping.

Throughout the year, staff were invited to participate in the DIBELS Training, offered by University of Oregon. School leaders and educators gained accreditation to administer this reading assessment, aligned with Science of Reading practice. The assessment was trialled across the school in Term 4 and its data was integral to making informed teacher judgments on student achievements.

Student learning was further supported through participation in;

- Daily Italian sessions, underpinned by the Autonomous Language Learners (ALL) approach, focusing on using functional language and gestures to support learning.
- Systematic synthetic phonics instruction, utilising the Little Learners Love Literacy approach.
- Inquiry units of work, in the curriculum areas of Science, Humanities, Health, Design and Learning Capabilities.

The year's extended periods of remote learning challenged our staff, students and families to find new ways of teaching and learning. However, the strength of the community's supportive partnership between home and school contributed to a productive and rewarding year of learning.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Due to the Australian Government deciding to cancel 2020 NAPLAN and the extended periods of school closure, the school's Data Plan was revised for Term 4, 2020. Key student assessments included;

- Progressive Achievement Tests in Reading and Numeracy.
- Soundwaves Diagnostic Assessment.
- Little Learners Assessment of Reading Skills (LLARS).
- Little Learners Assessment of Spelling Skills (LASS).
- DIBELS Assessment.
- Early Years Numeracy Interview.
- TORCH.

After some exploration in 2019, the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessment, offered by the University of Oregon was introduced throughout the school in Term 4. Each one-minute DIBELS subtest measures critical skills and abilities that are necessary for reading success and also offer both benchmark and progress-monitoring forms.

Baseline data, collected in November 2020, illustrates;

- Phonics, students' knowledge of the alphabetic code, is a strength within the junior school; particularly noted in two subtests: oral reading fluency and nonsense word fluency.
- Building phonological awareness, the ability to isolate and manipulate sounds in spoken words; will be a priority for 2021 throughout the school.
- The explicit teaching of reading fluency, reading with expression, automatic word recognition, rhythm and phrasing and smoothness; is required in the senior school.

The successful implementation of the DIBELS assessment throughout the school provided leaders and educators with information about students' reading performance, identifying students who would most benefit from intensive or strategic intervention. Each DIBELS subtest will feature in the school's Data Plan in 2021.

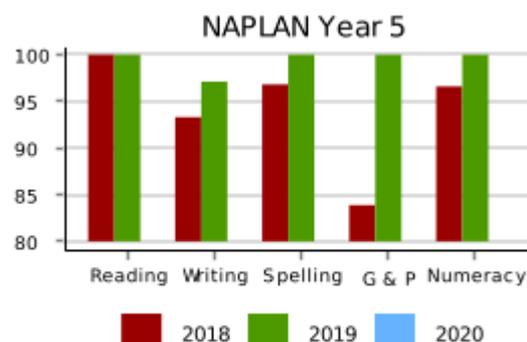
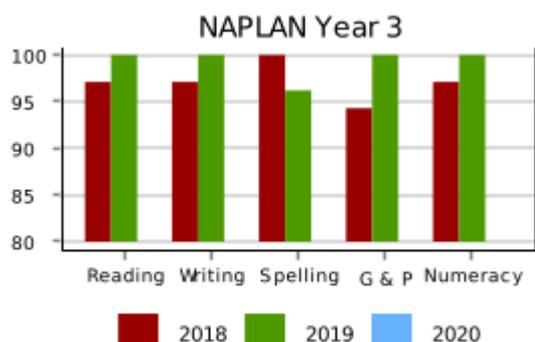


PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019	2020	2019 – 2020
	%	%	Changes	%	Changes
			%	*	*
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	94.3	100.0	5.7		
YR 03 Numeracy	97.1	100.0	2.9		
YR 03 Reading	97.1	100.0	2.9		
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	96.2	-3.8		
YR 03 Writing	97.1	100.0	2.9		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	83.9	100.0	16.1		
YR 05 Numeracy	96.6	100.0	3.4		
YR 05 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Spelling	96.8	100.0	3.2		
YR 05 Writing	93.3	97.1	3.8		

\* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

\*\* Data cannot be reported for this year as the number of students that sat the test was below 5 and the data has been suppressed for privacy reasons in accordance with the ACARA NAPLAN data reporting provisions.

\*\*\* No students sat the NAPLAN tests in this year level and in one or both of the relevant years.



## Student Wellbeing

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOAL:

To cultivate learners who are adaptable, motivated and empowered.

#### INTENDED OUTCOME:

Explicit strategies for social and emotional learning are embedded.

### Achievements

The wellbeing of all our students, staff and families remained a high priority throughout the duration of 2020. Practices and processes were put in place to ensure that everyone was supported during the challenges of 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

St Mary's School remains committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. We pride ourselves on our positive school culture, one of which is highly inclusive, respectful and nurturing, contributing to the positive wellbeing of all in our community.

In 2020, St Mary's School continued to consolidate practices for supporting student wellbeing. We recognise that wellbeing impacts learning and contributes to overall health and success of students. Our students are at the core of all we do and all staff continue to promote positive experiences to ensure students are engaged and connected to their learning. The focus in 2020 was continuing all initiatives that supported the explicit teaching of social and emotional learning. The Respectful Relationships initiative continued to be embedded at St Mary's School.

The Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) Learning Curriculum to support students' social and emotional development was taught on a regular basis, and events and initiatives occurred each semester to further the learning and focus of developing respectful relationships.

The School Wide Positive Behaviours Support (SWPBS) continued to be a major focus of our school throughout 2020 to support classroom and playground management and provide a consistent whole school approach. Fortnightly behaviour foci were included in teachers' morning routine, to solidify the SWPBS.

Classroom and playground Behaviour Management flowcharts were reinforced and used across the school to provide a consistent behaviour management approach. Each classroom teacher created a classroom agreement based on the classroom and playground Behaviour Management flowcharts.

Various strategies were implemented or consolidated to enhance student wellbeing in 2020 at St Mary's School. These included circle time, meditation, restorative practices, brain-breaks, safety plans for students with behaviour needs and the teaching of growth mindset.

The student leadership structure again aimed to develop student leadership, develop strong student role models and include student voice. Senior students were educated on what it takes to be a good leader and were invited to give speeches to apply for leadership positions. School Captains and House Captains were elected by students and staff. There were a range of leadership opportunities for the students which included: isea, icare, respectful relationships' committee, STEM leaders, buddy leaders and kitchen greenies. These leadership positions gave

students the opportunity to have a voice and positively influence the school in an area they were passionate about.

The facilitated play initiative continued in 2020 to support students with social and emotional needs during our break times. Facilitated play was facilitated by a member of staff who would stay with small groups of students during breaks and build their capabilities in turn taking, patience, play and social problem-solving. Students would opt into facilitated play during break times if they were feeling isolated, needed support or wanted a break from the playground.

The Student Wellbeing Leader was provided with further professional development, including attendance at the Berry Street Education Model professional development with the Principal. Due to COVID-19, the final three sessions were conducted via Zoom. Aspects of the Berry Street Educational Model were modelled in our school, in particular through the 'Morning Routine'.

Student Wellbeing staff meetings were used to professionally develop staff on the need to make adjustments in order to best support students. The emphasis was on prevention, working on the underlying belief that when structures are in place for individual students, these can prevent further issues from arising. In maintaining a calm environment and supporting students with mindfulness, whole school meditation continued in all learning spaces. Each day after recess, the whole school engaged in meditation, giving students the opportunity to practise mindfulness as a tool toward self-regulation and as an enhancer of student and staff wellbeing.

With the impact of COVID-19, staff went above and beyond to ensure that students were supported while working both remotely and onsite. Leadership ensured that families were coping with the ongoing challenges of supervising their children, while also in many instances, working from home. Student and family check-ins were regular and various strategies employed to ensure a sense of community was maintained, even though distance was mandated.

#### VALUE ADDED

St Mary's School has worked collaboratively to improve and enhance student wellbeing and meet student learning needs of all students through:

- Regular teaching of the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Learning.
- Curriculum to explicitly teach social and emotional learning and behaviour expectations
- Emphasis on safe, responsible and respectful behaviours and consistent behaviour expectations and behaviour management processes
- Strategic use of calming spaces, reflection sheets, reflective meditation and teacher request forms for students needing space and time for de-escalation and one-on-one staff support
- Regular communication and Program Support Group (PSG) meetings to support students with social and emotional learning needs and their families.
- Professional development for staff in Respectful Relationships content, de-escalation and effective wellbeing strategies
- Leadership opportunities for senior students.

## STUDENT SATISFACTION

Students reported that they feel valued and supported at St Mary's School. They also expressed their gratitude for the opportunities they had throughout the year. Through both formal and informal methods, students communicated that they were well cared for by their teachers, both during onsite and remote learning. Learning tasks and activities were created with the students and their families at the forefront. Teachers checked in regularly with students to ensure positive wellbeing and offered timely feedback on work submitted. Students with additional learning needs were provided with additional levels of support and strategies put in place to assist with transitions between onsite and remote learning. Overall, student satisfaction with St Mary's School remained high.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

St Mary's School ensures all duty of care expectations are met to support student safety.

'Going to school every day is the single most important part of your child's education' - *Every Day Counts*, Victorian State Government.

Regular student attendance is vital as it affects their school work (academic growth and progress) and social adjustment (attitudes to school). Therefore, at St Mary's School, regular student attendance is expected and encouraged. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly.

### Student Attendance Roll

School attendance rolls are legal documents and are marked twice daily: 8:58am (morning period) and 1:58pm (afternoon period). Students arriving to school after 8:58am must be signed in by a parent/guardian using the school's VPASS system, located at the front office.

### Absence from School

In the event where a child is absent for any reason, the school's student absence procedure must be followed. Families are required to send a written correspondence to: [absence@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au](mailto:absence@smgeelong.catholic.edu.au) as well as their child's classroom educator prior to 8:58am on the day of absence. When correspondence from families is not received, the student absence will be considered to be 'unexplained'. All unexplained student absences are followed up with an SMS, alerting families to the fact that their child is absent without notification and a reason. The Principal follows up extended periods of absence with a phone call.

Families planning a holiday during school term time must provide formal correspondence to the Principal and classroom educator prior to the child's absence. Please note: educators do not prepare and assign work for students during this time of holiday absence.

### Recording of Absences during Remote Learning Periods

For children of essential workers, who were attending onsite, the procedure for school absence remained the same.

For students learning remotely, they were required to check in via a Google Form or through Seesaw. This information was then recorded daily on nForma.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y01	89.4%
Y02	90.9%
Y03	90.6%
Y04	89.8%
Y05	89.9%
Y06	89.2%
Overall average attendance	90.0%

## Child Safe Standards

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOALS:

To ensure St Mary's School is compliant with all Child Safe Standards and develops further as a Child Safe School.

#### INTENDED OUTCOME:

To ensure the safety of all students

### Achievements

The safety of all students at St Mary's' School, continued to be a focus. The Principal and Student Wellbeing Leader attended professional development to remain informed of the requirements of compliance, with relation to Ministerial Order No 870 that prescribes specifically what schools must do in order to comply with Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme.

The Principal and Deputy Principal took responsibility, in consultation with the wellbeing leader, to ensure the necessary policies, procedures and strategies to ensure legal and regulatory compliance were maintained.

The 'PROTECT, Identifying and Responding to all Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools' was revisited with all staff.

The revisiting of embedded procedures has led to staff having a clear understanding of what has to be reported and how support is offered. It has clarified our role as a school in child safety and highlighted to our community that child safety continues to be a school priority.

The school actively displays all the relevant information posters around our school, as a visual support of staff, students and families who may require support in making a report.

Child Safe matters are addressed at each weekly staff meeting and items are as noted on the agenda and in the minutes.

Ongoing training of teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers ensured all on the school site were aware of their obligations in relation to child safety.

Anyone who visits our school is required to acknowledge that they have read and will abide by the St Mary's School Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct.

All staff received ongoing professional development regarding Child safety and the Reportable Conduct Scheme to ensure the continual embedding of policies and commitments into every day practice.

Through our 'Respectful Relationships' strategies addressing the principle of inclusion and student participation and empowerment strategies were again revisited.

Human Resources practices were reviewed and processes refined to ensure child safety was addressed when employing new staff.

Copies of photo identification for all staff placed in personnel files to accompany Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration Cards and Working With Children Check cards.

## Leadership & Management

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOAL:

To develop a culture of collaborative professionalism, characterised by a shared intent, evidence informed practice and critical reflection.

#### INTENDED OUTCOME:

All stakeholders enact a shared vision for faith, wellbeing and learning.

Educators will engage in ongoing cycles of learning that involve goal setting and feedback.

### Achievements

In 2020, St Mary's School welcomed Marie Monea as the Deputy Principal and Learning and Teacher Leader. A new Leadership Team was created and recommendations from the school's 2019 School Review were to be implemented. The Principal and Leadership Team ensured all policies, procedures and documentation met all compliance requirements to meet all VRQA standards. 2020 was the first year in the four-year review period.

St Mary's School continues to be highly regarded by the school community. Relationships are built on high level trust, clear communication and decision-making processes which contribute to a positive ambience. Parents identify that the staff give witness to Gospel Values in their interactions with, and care for, the students and families. The school continues to evolve and is experiencing great success. The school is continuing to benefit from the explicit improvement agenda that it has been implementing.

Throughout 2020, the strengthening of a dynamic, Catholic learning culture, supported by positive relationships and engagement from staff, students and parents, was again the priority. This, at times, required the school to think and act differently, with extended periods of Remote Learning necessary, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns with schools closed to all students other than those of essential workers. I believe that as a school, we deserve to feel proud of how everyone adapted to the extraordinary circumstances we found ourselves in during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly, school staff. For extended periods of time this year, our school was very quiet, as we missed the very essence that brings life and joy to the buildings - all our students, learning together. I have been comforted by the many emails and cards I received from our families, thanking the teachers for their efforts to support their children during the lockdown.

Marie did an outstanding job, supporting teachers in organising Home/Remote Learning programs that endeavoured to meet the needs of all St Mary's School families. Her passion, expertise and organisational skills ensured each iteration of the Home/Remote Learning programs were a success. Moving to our remote learning model, could have presented challenges for our staff as we needed to do so at such a rapid pace. I take this opportunity to thank our staff for the way they quickly embraced the challenge of delivering engaging tasks and lessons to their students and for the support and care they provided for our students both onsite and offsite during this time.

The school continued to review strategies and processes to implement an explicit change agenda to improve student outcomes. During the past five years, there has been a shift to explicit teaching and differentiated learning. Evidence-informed strategies, collaborative planning, professional learning teams and clear processes for data analysis are supporting this shift. A whole school approach is beginning to be embedded with strategic actions in place to support this shift in 2021.

2020 saw a new School Improvement Plan being created for 2020-2023. The 2020 annual Action Plan was created and focused on improvement in all spheres. All staff members were involved in the 2019 School Review and have contributed to the creation of the 2020-2023 School Improvement Plan and 2020 Annual Action Plan.

Teacher, student and parent voice was emerging through clear communication and decision-making processes. There were also explicit processes for developing leaders and provision of professional learning. Due to COVID-19, and the disruption of remote learning, parts of the 2020 Annual Action Plan were placed on hold. The school felt that in responding to the needs of students, staff and families, the schools' priorities needed to be adjusted.

Teacher observation and feedback, as an explicit strategy contributing to the performance and development culture and ensuring consistency in learning and teaching was placed on hold, as was the launching of the new School Vision.

2020 again saw the leadership team working with teachers to build their capacity, through strategically targeted, professional development. All teachers and staff were given extensive opportunities to build their knowledge and skills in a range of areas, particularly with staff working from home for extended periods of time. A financial commitment to this endeavour, again saw all staff undertake extensive professional learning, mostly online or via Zoom. A commitment to professional development ensured that skill levels were of a standard to facilitate improvements in student learning. There is focused teaching and our students are experiencing success. I am very proud of the work that our teachers do, and I am very grateful for their continued dedication.

Overall, many gains have been made in the area of Leadership and Management and the evidence of this is the motivated and engaged, staff, student and parent population.

## EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

### Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

Due to COVID-19, many external professional development was conducted via online platforms when face to face was not permitted.

CEOM - Geelong Catholic Primary Principals' Network

GCDPN - Geelong Catholic Deputy Principals' Network

CEOM - Western Region Learning and Teaching Network Days

CEOM - Western Region Primary Mathematics Leaders' Network Days

CEOM - Western Region Primary Religious Education Leaders' Network Days

CEOM - Western Region Literacy Leaders' Network Days

CEOM - Inclusion Leaders' Network Days

CEOM - High Potential Learners' Days

CEOM - Leading Learning Initiatives Immersion

CEOM - Finance Cluster Meetings

CEOM - Geelong NCCD Network Meetings

CEOM - Respectful Relationships in Catholic school communities

- CEOM - Languages
- CEOM - LEAC
- ACU - Accreditation to teach Religious Education
- DET - NAPLAN Training
- School Based - Emergency Management Systems
- School Based - Faith Formation
- School Based - Weekly Professional Learning Team Meetings  
(Religious Education, Literacy, Maths, Student Wellbeing)
- School Based - Little Learners Love Literacy
- Learning Diversity Australia - Science of Reading
- Lyn Stone - Reading for Life, Spelling for Life, Tutoring for Life
- Reading For Life - Online Modules
- Growth Coaching - Coaching
- Webinar - Lea Waters
- Learning Difficulties Australia- Webinar Series
- University of Oregon - DIBELS (Reading Assessment) Online Modules

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	20
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1600

**TEACHER SATISFACTION**

St Mary's School staff remained committed to professional development and growth during 2020. Staff appreciated the scaffolding and structure provided to them, to ensure all professional obligations were met throughout the year. Improving teacher knowledge and capacity was a focus and professional development remained a priority.

With the impact of COVID-19 and the necessity for remote learning, with staff required to work from home, staff wellbeing continued to be a priority. Each staff member was given a "buddy" to have regular check-ins with and leadership monitored all staff throughout the year and ensured staff accessed the support they required.

Annual Review Meetings were conducted, with leadership receiving thanks and positive endorsement in all areas.

The data collected from school staff, in relation to school climate was very pleasing and is evidence of a cohesive and positive staff culture. The staff are supportive of one another and use a team approach. A strong collegial culture was maintained and teacher satisfaction and morale remained high.

### TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	76.3%
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### ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	80.0%
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### TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	20.8%
Graduate	8.3%
Graduate Certificate	29.2%
Bachelor Degree	58.3%
Advanced Diploma	12.5%
No Qualifications Listed	4.2%

### STAFF COMPOSITION

Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	23.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	18.7
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	12.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	14.7
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

## School Community

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOALS:

To empower families as partners of learning.

To seek, develop and sustain authentic community partnerships.

#### INTENDED OUTCOME:

Modes of engagement are responsive to parent feedback.

### Achievements

What a year 2020 was for all involved in the St Mary's School community. It was a year like no other and showed the true value of connection in an education and faith community.

In 2020, we welcomed Marie Monea, who was appointed as the Deputy Principal and at the end of the year, we said farewell to three staff members, who are all pursuing roles in other schools. We are very grateful for the contribution in 2020, of these staff members, along with our current and continuing staff.

St Mary's School values parents as partners and co-educators of their children. In 2020, we saw this partnership and the parent as teacher role, as being very significant, with the introduction of remote learning. During this time, parents as their child's first teacher became so important and with the guidance of the staff, truly did an amazing job, especially during such a challenging time. We are forever grateful for our parent community for undertaking such an important role, not once but twice throughout the year for extended periods.

During remote learning, families and teachers worked in partnership to create family focus learning tasks for the students of St Mary's School. Many of these tasks enabled families to work together in family groups and it was wonderful to see this shared through our platform - SeeSaw. Fridays' Community Action Days were a highlight of the week and each week a family was drawn out and received a gift voucher to enjoy from the businesses of many of our school sponsors. We were able to receive 'real time' feedback from families during this time and it supported changes during Remote Learning 2.0.

Families and staff worked together remotely for a number of months throughout the year and the introduction of technological platforms such as SeeSaw, Google Classroom 3-6 and Zoom, allowed for a more collaborative effort. Students' during this time, were also able to demonstrate their understanding and commitment to their studies in many independent ways. We again acknowledge the many sacrifices our school families made to be able to assist their child, whilst maintaining their own work commitments at home.

On returning to school and due to COVID-19 restrictions, families members and visitors were not able to be onsite. Students showed great resilience in being able to manage entering the school grounds themselves. Staff were there to greet them each day, even behind face masks. Communication via email or Zoom was more important than ever to ensure families continued to feel welcome at St Mary's School, without coming onsite.

In Term 4, students were able to enjoy extra activities that had been postponed during the year. A highlight was the Colour Run, school camps for 3/4 and 5/6 students, excursions across all year

levels, virtual excursions, the Sacraments of Confirmation and Reconciliation, 2021 Foundation transition mornings and Year 6 graduation. Even though these important school events and celebrations had to be modified to follow new COVID-19 Safe protocols, they were well attended and greatly enjoyed. Our social media platforms of Facebook and Instagram were continually utilised and engaged families with these activities, from a distance.

Communication with the administration staff and leadership through newsletters, phone calls and emails, allowed families the opportunity to still be connected to our school community. During such a challenging year, the efforts of all, indeed showed what a truly vibrant school community we have here at St Mary's School.

## PARENT SATISFACTION

Overall, parents/guardians reported that they enjoyed a strong partnership with St Mary's School and this was also evidenced throughout the lockdown periods. They generally reported positively throughout this very difficult year and they were pleased with the effective communication they received about ever-changing processes and protocols due to COVID-19. The level of support offered to families increased and as a community, we all supported each other.

St Mary's School gathered feedback both formally and informally from parents/guardians during 2020. Teachers called regularly to check in on family wellbeing and ensure home/school connection was meeting the needs of our families.

St Mary's invited families to provide feedback on their experience of remote learning;

"Thank you for the check in. I just wanted to reply to say thank you for the fantastic way you have organised the learning for the term so far."

"The learning structure is very flexible and engaging, often with tasks that all the children can get involved in." "......is loving connecting with his teacher and seeing comments and work from his friends online also. He's also loving his Italian lesson videos from Senora."

"I really appreciate receiving the Learning Plan on a Sunday, so I can be organised."

"I love that there is not a certain day or time that tasks must be completed, as some days seem to run well for school work and on other days we might do something else as a family for the bulk of the day!"

"My child's teacher is really prompt in replying to any questions I have and also to provide suggestions and alternate work in areas of concern."

"I am hoping we'll all be able to look back and see that we, as families and staff, did our best to keep the students safe, happy, inquisitive and connected in this time."

Overall, parent/guardian satisfaction with St Mary's School, remained high.