



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools

# 2025

## Annual Report to the School Community



**ST MARY'S SCHOOL**  
GEELONG

### St Mary's School

66-68 Little Myers Street, GEELONG 3220

Principal: Annice Lappin

Web: [www.smgeelong.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smgeelong.catholic.edu.au)

Registration: 549, E Number: E1056

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## Principal's Attestation

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I, Annice Lappin, 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 2025 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 01 Apr 2026

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## About this report

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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](#).

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## Governing Authority Report

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Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) continues to take bold and ambitious steps, guided by our MACS2030 strategy, to empower our students to flourish and step into the world as the leaders of tomorrow.

In advancing our 2030 vision and our ambition to deliver world-leading Catholic education, we celebrate the significant progress made across our four areas of strategic focus. The safety and wellbeing of our staff and students underpins everything we do, enabling an environment where learning grows with purpose, leadership develops in capability and confidence, and our communities continue to thrive through our shared Catholic outlook.

Inspired by faith in the Jubilee Year of the Catholic Church in 2025, we successfully implemented our Faith Formation Framework, to further strengthen faith education, offering deeper opportunities for spiritual development and meaningful engagement for students, staff and leaders alike. Faith is at the heart of all our schools, grounding our mission and inspiring students, teachers and staff to grow and lead with integrity.

The official launch and implementation of the Vision for Engagement (VFE) strategy demonstrated impressive results in our community of Flourishing Learners.

Anchored in evidence-based practise, the VFE strengthens our system-wide teaching and learning approach and enhances the daily engagement of students through the explicit teaching of positive behaviour, reinforcement and consistency. It sets clear expectations about attendance and includes a sustained focus on student mental health and wellbeing.

For learners to flourish, students must be safe, which is why we are continuing to strengthen our safety processes and risk management culture. Our focus is on providing training and professional development for all staff to ensure student safety remains top of mind in every decision we make, every environment we shape and every interaction we have.

To strengthen the pillar of enabled leaders, MACS has established consistent standards across schools for cultivating inspiring, capable leaders for students to observe.

In the past year, our Pathways to Principalship Programme and Women in Leadership Programme have both strengthened our principal appointment process and introduced more flexible models of principalship.

It is inspiring to see our principals and teachers continue to raise the bar, reflected in the extraordinary number of nominations received in our Best Teachers campaign.

Finally, we continue to create new and enriched communities, with the opening of a new primary school and children's hub in Melbourne's growing north, ensuring families have access to high quality education no matter where they live.

MACS Early Years Education (MACSEYE) continues to expand early years and outside school hours care services across our schools and communities, with continued growth planned for 2026.

These investments are not simply about building infrastructure. They are about building a dynamic, Catholic education system where every child has an opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.

Thank you to all our students, staff, families and community members for being part of our journey so far, and we look forward to continuing to serve as a supportive and guiding presence in your children's lives.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Edward Simons

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

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## Vision and Mission

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Guided by Mary, the first educator of Jesus, and inspired by their example, St Mary's School is a nurturing community where faith, respect and curiosity are at the heart of learning, empowering students to grow as compassionate, confident individuals ready to shape their own meaningful futures.

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## School Overview

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St Mary's 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 School 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 our school's learning and teaching approaches. The two-storey building, while compact, includes four large learning areas, currently housing eleven class groupings that are flexible in design allowing for differentiated learning. Each learning area has its own resource area. There is a multi-purpose area, an administration wing, meeting spaces, planning room, 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 practical and enjoyable outdoor play spaces for the students. In 2025, stage one of three, of our play space rejuvenation began. A multi-age adventure playground with a barrel canopy sunshade was installed. In 2026, the oval precinct will be transformed. A 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 and recreational facilities that the City of Greater Geelong has to offer. Our location is further complemented by the visible presence of our Parish Church, the 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 2025 totalling 220 students. There are two straight Foundation classes with multi-age structures from Year One to Year Six.

A comprehensive curriculum based on the Victorian Curriculum 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 Council meets regularly and continues to provide an effective voice of the parent community as members include parent representatives, the Principal, Deputy Principal, and the Parish Priest. The School Advisory Council has the capacity to influence outcomes as it provides a wide range of viewpoints on many matters.

The strong spirit of partnership between our families, teachers, students and the wider community remains a very 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.

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## Principal's Report

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It is with heartfelt gratitude and great pride that I present the 2025 Annual Report to the St Mary's School community.

The year has been both successful and enriching, marked by continued growth and a deepening commitment to excellence in all aspects of school life.

In 2025, our students achieved outstanding academic results, reflecting the strong focus on high quality teaching and learning across the school. Our educators continued to deliver engaging, evidence-based programs that challenged and supported every learner to achieve their personal best. This commitment to excellence was matched by the exemplary behaviour of our students, who consistently demonstrated respect, responsibility, safety and a genuine enthusiasm for learning. The positive learning environment evident in every classroom is a testament to the strong culture we have built together.

Student enrolment remained strong, reflecting the high regard in which St Mary's School is held within the Geelong region. We were delighted to welcome new staff members who brought both expertise and enthusiasm, further enriching our vibrant and supportive school culture.

The faith life of St Mary's School is a defining strength, reflected in the way Catholic identity is authentically lived each day. Prayer, liturgy and the celebration of the Sacraments are central to school life, providing regular and meaningful opportunities for students to encounter Christ. The strong partnership with our Parish enriches this experience, connecting students to the wider Church and deepening their sense of belonging. Faith is not only taught but actively lived through the integration of Catholic Social Teaching, encouraging students to respond with compassion, justice and service to others. The 2025 Year of Jubilee further strengthened this dimension, inviting the whole community into a spirit of renewal, hope and pilgrimage. Staff model faith through their witness and commitment, fostering a culture where spirituality is nurtured, relationships are grounded in Gospel values and every member of the community is supported to grow in faith. I extend sincere thanks to Fr James Clarke, our Parish Priest, and Fr Vinoth for their continued spiritual leadership and support of our school-parish partnership.

Our teaching team worked collaboratively to ensure that learning experiences were inclusive and responsive to the needs of all students. Learning support officers continued to play a vital role, working alongside teachers to empower every child, particularly those requiring additional support, to fully engage and succeed.

Each staff member is deeply committed to nurturing a learning environment where every child feels valued, supported and inspired. This is strengthened by the outstanding partnerships we share with our families and wider community. The sense of connection,

generosity and shared purpose across our school is truly remarkable and remains one of our greatest strengths.

Student wellbeing continued to be a cornerstone of our approach. Through the ongoing implementation of the Respectful Relationships program and the Resilience Project, students were supported to develop positive relationships, resilience and confidence. These initiatives further strengthened our inclusive and caring school culture.

Throughout the year, our educators delivered rich and engaging learning programs, with regular communication to families through term overviews. Staff consistently went above and beyond to support each child's academic, social and emotional growth.

Highlights of the year included our school camps, which provided memorable opportunities for students to learn and grow beyond the classroom. Year 3/4 students participated in an extended day camp along the surf coast, while our Year 5/6 students enjoyed their time at Kangarooie in Princetown. These experiences fostered independence, resilience and strong peer connections.

Our school community continued to flourish through a wide range of events and initiatives. The strong involvement in School Advisory Council and Parents and Friends' Association meetings, along with the success of community events such as the chocolate drive, Easter raffle, trivia night and colour fun run, reflected the spirit and generosity of our families. The school concert, Italian immersion opportunities, fresh fruit Fridays, lunch order days, feast day celebrations and Principals for a Day all contributed to the vibrant and joyful life of the school. Excursions, sports events, professional learning, Sacramental celebrations and the Year 6 Graduation further highlighted the dynamic and inclusive nature of St Mary's School.

I acknowledge with gratitude the Parents and Friends' Association for their unwavering commitment and generosity, and the School Advisory Council for their dedicated service and leadership. We extend particular thanks to those members concluding their terms this year.

Reflecting on 2025, I feel a deep sense of pride in all that we have achieved together. I sincerely thank our Leadership Team for their dedication to fostering a safe and supportive environment; our teaching staff for their expertise and care; our learning support officers for their compassion and encouragement; and our administration team for their professionalism and reliability.

Finally, to our students, thank you for your enthusiasm, kindness and love of learning. You are the heart of our school, and it is through you that St Mary's School continues to be a place where all can learn, grow and belong.

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## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOAL:

To deepen student engagement in Religious Education and foster active participation in the life of St Mary of the Angels' Parish.

#### INTENDED OUTCOMES:

That the school's Religious Education curriculum scope and sequence will be reviewed, refined and implemented.

That students will be engaged in meaningful, student-centered faith experiences, parish activities, Masses and liturgies, outreach programs and community events.

That staff faith formation continues to increase teachers' knowledge and confidence in articulating a Catholic perspective across all dimensions of their work.

That the school will create a new Vision statement that reflects the core of St Mary's School educational community, ensuring contributions from students, staff and parents.

### Achievements

In 2025, St Mary's School continued to flourish as a faith-filled and inclusive Catholic community, committed to providing meaningful opportunities for students, staff and families to encounter Christ and deepen their understanding of the Catholic Faith Tradition. Through intentional planning, the Religious Education Curriculum Framework and Catholic Social Teaching remained embedded across curriculum and assessment, ensuring authentic, engaging and purposeful learning experiences.

St Mary's School undertook a collaborative process to develop a new Vision Statement that reflects the heart of the school's educational community and its commitment to faith and learning. Students, staff and parents were actively involved in contributing ideas, reflections and aspirations, ensuring the final statement authentically represents the shared values and hopes of our school community. This process provided an important opportunity to strengthen partnerships and celebrate the unique identity of St Mary's School as a Catholic learning environment grounded in Gospel values. Alongside the new Vision Statement, a new school prayer was created, offering a meaningful expression of faith and unity that will continue to guide and inspire students, staff and families in their daily life and learning.

As a Catholic school, 2025 held particular significance as a Year of Jubilee, a sacred time in the life of the Church centred on renewal, hope, mercy and encounter with God. This Jubilee year became a defining feature of our faith life at St Mary's, shaping both our prayer and practice. A special highlight was the student pilgrimage around St Mary of the Angels Basilica, where students prayerfully journeyed together, reflecting on the meaning of pilgrimage as a symbol of faith, unity and spiritual renewal. This experience provided a powerful and tangible way for students to engage with the deeper significance of the Jubilee, strengthening their connection to the Church and to one another.

Liturgical life remained central to the spiritual development of our school community. Students regularly participated in the celebration of the Eucharist, Non-Eucharistic Liturgies and daily prayer. Year levels attended Parish Masses throughout each term, continuing to strengthen the close relationship between the school and the Parish of St Mary of the Angels. Whole school celebrations, including the Beginning of Year Mass, Ash Wednesday, Parish Feast Day, Remembrance Day, Advent liturgies and the End of Year Thanksgiving liturgy, brought our community together in prayer, reverence and joyful celebration.

Sacramental preparation continued to be a vital aspect of school life, undertaken in partnership with families and the Parish. Students engaged in formation programs integrated within the Religious Education curriculum. In 2025, students celebrated the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation at St Mary of the Angels Basilica. These Sacramental milestones were deeply meaningful moments of encounter with Christ, celebrated by the school community.

The Religious Education Scope and Sequence guided teaching and learning across all year levels. Students developed religious literacy through rich learning experiences that encouraged prayer, reflection and a deeper understanding of Scripture. Through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching, students were supported to connect their faith to real-world contexts and to recognise their role in contributing to the common good. Engagement with the Parish, including visits from the parish priest and assistant priest, Basilica tours and regular Mass attendance, further enriched students' understanding of their place within the wider faith community.

Staff faith formation remained a priority in 2025, particularly in light of the Jubilee Year. Building on previous formation, staff engaged in opportunities for prayer, reflection and professional dialogue centred on the themes of renewal, mercy and hope. These experiences strengthened staff capacity to authentically witness to their faith and to bring the spirit of the Jubilee into their teaching and daily interactions. Ongoing formation, including shared prayer and participation in Mass, continued to foster a strong sense of mission and shared purpose across the staff.

Throughout the year, our school community actively responded to the call to serve others through works of justice and charity. Families supported outreach initiatives including the Parish Pantry, Bayleaf Community Kitchen, Caritas and Catholic Mission. These

opportunities enabled students to live out their faith in practical ways, developing compassion and a commitment to the common good.

Student engagement in the prayer life of the school was further enriched through the involvement of the St Mary's School Choir. The choir played a meaningful role in key liturgical and Non-Eucharistic celebrations, including Mother's Day, Father's Day and Advent liturgies. Their contribution brought a sense of reverence, joy and unity to these important moments in the life of our community.

A highlight of the year was our celebration of the Parish Feast Day, which brought the entire school community together in prayer, reflection and shared celebration. Events such as these continue to strengthen our sense of belonging and remind us of God's presence in our daily lives.

The Baptism Preparation Program continued in 2025, offering students a meaningful pathway to encounter the Sacrament of Baptism. Through guided preparation, students explored the symbols, promises and significance of Baptism, supported by strong collaboration with the Parish. The celebration of Baptism at St Mary of the Angels Basilica was a joyful and sacred occasion, for the students and their families. This initiative remains a powerful expression of our Catholic identity in action.

Through these rich and varied experiences, St Mary's School in 2025 continued to provide multi-dimensional opportunities for students and staff to encounter the Sacred, deepen their faith and live out the Gospel. The Jubilee Year, in particular, offered a profound invitation to renewal and hope, leaving a lasting impact on the spiritual life of our school community.

## Value Added

- Integrated Faith Across Curriculum: Embedded the Religious Education Curriculum Framework and Catholic Social Teaching across curriculum and assessment cycles to create authentic, engaging learning experiences.
- Strengthened Liturgical Life: Maintained a strong focus on liturgical participation, with regular Eucharistic and Non-Eucharistic Liturgies and daily prayer across the school.
- Parish Engagement: Fostered stronger ties with St Mary of the Angels Parish through consistent attendance at weekday Parish Masses by each year level.
- Whole School Liturgical Celebrations: Held major liturgical events, including Beginning of Year Mass, Ash Wednesday, Parish Feast Day, Remembrance Day and Advent liturgies.
- Sacramental Program Success: Supported numerous students in celebrating the Sacraments.
- Continued the Baptism Preparation Program: preparing students for Baptism, highlighting Catholic identity in action.
- Guided by RE Scope and Sequence: Used the Year B Religious Education Scope and Sequence to build religious literacy and connect scripture to real-world contexts.

- Parish Priest Engagement: Enriched religious learning through class visits and Basilica tours led by the parish priest and assistant priest.
- Staff Faith Formation: Prioritised staff spiritual development and shared prayer, Mass attendance, and theological reflection.
- Acts of Justice and Charity: Partnered with local and global charities to put faith into action and nurture a heart for service among students and families.

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## Learning and Teaching

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOAL 1:

To improve student achievement in Reading (Letter Naming Fluency, Correct Letter Sounds, Words Recorded Correctly, Word Reading Fluency, Oral Reading Fluency) from Foundation to Year 6.

#### INTENDED OUTCOME:

By the end of the 2025, all students achieve 1 year's growth in DIBELS as expected from BOY to EOY benchmark data.

#### GOAL 2:

To improve student achievement in Spelling (graphemes and morphology) from Foundation to Year 6.

#### INTENDED OUTCOME:

By the end of the 2025, all students achieve 1 year's growth in Spelling Mastery as expected from the Spelling Mastery learning sequence and maintain 80% accuracy on periodic review tests.

#### GOAL 3:

To improve student achievement in fluency and automatic recall in Mathematics from Years 1-6.

#### INTENDED OUTCOME:

By the end of the 2025, all students achieve 1 year's growth in Numeracy fluency as expected from Acadience fluency benchmark data.

### Achievements

The Learning and Teaching sphere of the School Improvement Plan is directly informed by the key recommendations outlined in the 2024 School Review, which provided valuable insights into areas of strength and opportunities for growth. These recommendations form the foundation for the school's strategic direction, ensuring that improvement efforts are

purposeful, research-driven and aligned with the broader vision for excellence at St Mary's School.

Each identified priority from the review is carefully incorporated into the School Improvement Plan, creating a clear roadmap for sustained development. These priorities are then unpacked and translated into specific, actionable goals within the Annual Action Plan, enabling staff to focus on targeted strategies, timelines and measurable outcomes. This approach ensures that improvement is not only aspirational but also practical, systematic, and embedded in the daily life of classrooms across the school.

Learning and teaching at St Mary's School during 2025 has continued to grow from strength to strength, with a consistent focus on enhancing teacher expertise and capacity. Staff have participated in targeted professional learning linked to the latest educational research and best practice, deepening their understanding of effective pedagogy, assessment and differentiation. This ongoing commitment to professional growth ensures that every student's learning needs are met through purposeful and high-impact teaching. As a result, we have seen measurable improvements in student engagement, confidence and achievement across all learning areas. The strong alignment between teacher learning, classroom practice and student progress continues to strengthen our culture of continuous improvement, one where both teachers and students are inspired to learn, grow and strive for excellence together.

**The Learning and Teaching priorities for 2025 were as follows:**

**To improve student achievement in Reading from Foundation to Year 6.**

St Mary's School prioritised the systematic collection, input, and analysis of DIBELS data across all year levels. This data-driven approach provided teachers with accurate and timely insights into student progress across the key components of reading, including fluency, decoding, and word recognition. Using this data, teachers were able to identify specific skill gaps and plan targeted instruction and interventions to address them effectively. The DIBELS results also informed a multi-tiered system of support, allowing teachers to differentiate instruction according to students' levels of need. Through this structured model, all students—whether requiring additional support or extension—received learning experiences that were responsive to their individual needs, resulting in improved fluency and overall reading achievement.

Professional learning played a central role in strengthening teaching practice and ensuring a consistent, evidence-informed approach to reading instruction. Staff meeting time was allocated to review the Reading Rope model, deepening teachers' understanding of how word recognition and language comprehension work together to support skilled reading. This reflection ensured that planning documentation comprehensively addressed all strands of reading development across the school. In addition, all staff engaged in professional development with Dataworks to enhance their use of Explicit Instruction, focusing on clear modelling, guided practice, and immediate feedback. This consistent and intentional

approach to teaching has further strengthened reading instruction across classrooms, leading to measurable improvements in decoding, fluency, and student confidence as readers.

% of students achieving 8 months, (Feb-Oct) on DIBELS Assessments

Foundation: 96% (average months growth 10.96)

Year 1: 87.5% (average months growth 9.21)

Year 2: 78% (average months growth 8.8)

Year 3: 90.5% (average months growth 9)

Year 4: 88.2% (average months growth 9.25)

Year 5: 88.3% (average months growth 9.06)

Year 6: 97% (average months growth 9.60)

Across the school the average month's growth in reading is 9.4 months in an 8 month period. 90% of students achieved more than 8 months of growth.

**To improve student achievement in Spelling (graphemes and morphology) from Foundation to Year 6.**

St Mary's School continued to implement a structured and consistent approach to spelling instruction across all year levels. In Foundation, systematic phonics instruction commenced from the beginning of the year daily and then Spelling Mastery was introduced in Semester 2 daily. In Years 1 and 2, Spelling Mastery was timetabled daily for 30 minutes to provide explicit, systematic teaching of grapheme–phoneme correspondences and foundational spelling patterns. In Years 3–6, Spelling Mastery sessions were conducted four times per week, reinforcing and extending students' understanding of more complex morphological and etymological concepts. This regular, explicit instruction ensured a consistent focus on skill development and mastery across the school, supporting a steady progression in students' spelling accuracy and confidence.

To further support growth, targeted Tier 2 intervention was provided for students who had not met the previous year's expected spelling standards, ensuring individual learning needs were addressed through small-group, focused instruction. Extension opportunities were also implemented for students who had progressed beyond the Spelling Mastery Scope and Sequence (Book F), enabling continued challenge and enrichment. Teachers collected and analysed periodic review test data from Spelling Mastery Books C–F to monitor student progress and identify areas requiring consolidation. This systematic use of assessment data

allowed staff to refine planning and teaching, ensuring that all students experienced measurable growth in their spelling knowledge and application.

### **PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS MOVING TO NEXT SPELLING MASTERY LEVEL**

Foundation: - 69%

Year 1: 100%

Year 2: 69%

Year 3: 95%

Year 4: 51%

Year 5: 62%

Year 6: 76%

### **To improve student achievement in fluency and automatic recall in Mathematics from Years 1–6.**

St Mary's School introduced a whole-school focus on developing mathematical fluency through daily practice and targeted assessment. Acadience fluency assessments were initially implemented as part of the school's assessment schedule; however, these did not provide the detailed diagnostic data required to effectively inform teaching and learning. As a result, Measurement and Intervention for Numeracy Development (MIND) assessments were adopted to give teachers more precise insights into students' strengths and areas for development. This data-driven shift enabled staff to plan and implement focused teaching strategies that directly addressed students' specific fluency needs, ensuring greater accuracy and automaticity in mathematical recall.

Professional learning opportunities were provided for teachers to deepen their understanding of mathematical fluency and its role in building conceptual understanding and problem-solving capacity. Staff explored evidence-informed approaches and programs to ensure fluency development was accessible to all learners, regardless of their starting point. Daily mathematics fluency sessions were embedded into year-level timetables from Foundation – Year 6, allowing students to engage in regular, structured practice designed to build speed, confidence and flexibility with number facts. This consistent, school-wide approach has strengthened students' foundational number knowledge and enhanced their ability to apply mathematical thinking with greater efficiency and confidence.

### **To improve active student engagement in learning from Foundation to Year 6.**

St Mary's School focused on strengthening teacher practice and classroom culture through evidence-informed coaching and mentoring. Throughout the year, leaders investigated a

range of coaching and mentoring models to identify those most suited to the school's context and priorities. Professional learning opportunities were then provided through leadership-led coaching for all teaching staff, enabling leaders to receive targeted feedback and support. The use of Tom Sherrington's Walkthrus further enhanced this process by providing clear, practical strategies for implementing consistent behaviour norms and routines across classrooms. This structured approach promoted greater student engagement by ensuring a calm, predictable and focused learning environment where expectations were clear and learning time was maximised.

St Mary's School has begun to establish a sustainable coaching model that supports ongoing teacher reflection and growth. Staff will continue to engage in cycles of coaching that encourage them to analyse and refine their classroom practice in light of the professional development undertaken throughout the year. The use of teacher scripts and consistent instructional routines has supported this process, helping teachers to deliver lessons with clarity and precision while maintaining strong student engagement. This ongoing commitment to reflective practice and instructional improvement ensures that active student engagement remains at the centre of all teaching and learning at St Mary's School.

St Mary's School continues to be recognised for its excellence in learning and teaching, both within the school and across the wider educational community. This year, the school was invited to share its success in Spelling at a MACS conference, highlighting the impact of structured, systematic instruction and evidence-informed practice. In addition, St Mary's School has proudly welcomed numerous schools from the Geelong region, providing opportunities for colleagues to observe and learn from our calm, structured classrooms, knowledge-rich curriculum and explicit teaching in both Mathematics and Reading. These visits have included observations by educational leaders such as Rebecca Ryan, Program Lead for Flourishing Learners at Education Strategy and Performance, reflecting the high regard in which our teaching practices are held. Through these experiences, St Mary's School continues to demonstrate its commitment to excellence and to supporting the professional growth of educators beyond our own community.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

### **NAPLAN RESULTS 2025 (Cohort Progress)**

#### **Reading**

Students at St Mary's School demonstrate strong progress from Year 3 to Year 5, with growth that closely mirrors, and slightly outpaces at key points, the progress of students from a similar background who began with comparable starting scores, indicating that St Mary's School students are achieving at least expected growth and, in doing so, are maintaining a positive learning trajectory relative to their peers.

#### **Writing**

In writing, students at St Mary's School show strong growth from Year 3 to Year 5, with progress that exceeds that of students from a similar background who began with comparable starting scores, resulting in St Mary's School students achieving a higher average by Year 5 and demonstrating accelerated improvement over time.

### Numeracy

In numeracy, students at St Mary's School demonstrate strong and consistent growth from Year 3 to Year 5, closely aligning with the progress of students from a similar background who began with comparable starting scores, and indicating that St Mary's students are achieving solid, expected growth over time.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards					
Domain	2025 (current year)			2-Year Average	
	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	413	70%	434	76%
	Year 5	542	88%	525	82%
Numeracy	Year 3	404	62%	414	70%
	Year 5	509	79%	512	77%
Reading	Year 3	419	65%	442	79%
	Year 5	508	88%	512	84%
Spelling	Year 3	437	78%	440	84%
	Year 5	499	91%	513	93%
Writing	Year 3	436	77%	444	89%
	Year 5	506	91%	509	93%

\*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2025 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.

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## Student Wellbeing

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOAL:

To improve student engagement in behaviour norms from Foundation to Year 6.

#### INTENDED OUTCOMES:

By the end of 2025, school-based student perceptions data will indicate that 85% or above of students in every year level will feel safe and able to learn.

### Achievements

At St Mary's School, the wellbeing of students, staff and families remained a central priority throughout 2025. Our continued commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive and supportive environment guided the wellbeing initiatives implemented across the school community.

A key focus in 2025 was strengthening communication and connection with families. A dedicated Wellbeing page was introduced in the fortnightly school newsletter to keep families informed and engaged with wellbeing initiatives at St Mary's School. This space shared articles relevant to different times of the year, highlighted wellbeing practices occurring at school, and included "GEM Chats" connected to The Resilience Project to support families in continuing wellbeing conversations at home.

Digital wellbeing and online safety were also an important focus. The school recognised Safer Internet Day, promoting safe and responsible use of technology both at school and at home. Through classroom discussions and activities, students explored strategies to navigate the ever-changing digital environment safely and responsibly, helping to build awareness and positive online behaviours for the future.

St Mary's School continued its strong partnership with The Resilience Project. Staff engaged in professional learning focused on embedding the program across the school and ensuring the principles of Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness (GEM) were consistently integrated into everyday classroom practice. In addition, The Resilience Project hosted a parent and carer information session that provided strategies to support children's wellbeing at home, while also highlighting ways families can prioritise their own wellbeing. This whole-school approach strengthened the shared language of wellbeing between school and home.

Students in Foundation and Grade 1/2 participated in Ditto's Keep Safe Adventure Show, a personal safety education program delivered by Bravehearts. Through engaging storytelling, music and the use of the lion cub mascot, Ditto, students explored important safety

messages in an age-appropriate and interactive way. The program focused on key themes such as body ownership, recognising safe and unsafe feelings, and identifying trusted adults who can help if a child feels unsafe. Students learned the core messages that everyone has the right to feel safe, that it is okay to say no, and that it is important to tell a trusted adult if something does not feel right. Programs such as Ditto's Adventure Show empower younger students with the knowledge and confidence to keep themselves safe both at school and in the wider community.

Student wellbeing was further supported through a number of engaging programs and visits. The school welcomed the Sri Chinmoy Oneness-Home Peace Run, where students learned about the global message "Peace Begins with Me". The visit encouraged students to reflect on their role in creating a peaceful and respectful community while connecting the message of wellbeing to a broader global perspective.

Students also participated in The NED Show, a school-wide character education program centred on the values of Never Give Up, Encourage Others, and Do Your Best. Through an engaging assembly and follow-up classroom resources, the program reinforced positive mindset, perseverance and kindness, encouraging students to apply these traits across their learning and daily interactions, as well as allowing students to work on yo-yo skills.

Online safety and respectful relationships continued to be promoted through school initiatives such as Bullying No Way Week, where students participated in a national Kids Helpline online forum to discuss strategies for addressing bullying and supporting respectful behaviour within school communities.

Professional learning remained a strong component of staff wellbeing and student support. During a school closure day, staff participated in targeted professional development with Strength Psychology focusing on whole-classroom adjustments, cognitive processing domains, communication strategies, social conflict resolution and understanding the needs that underpin behaviour. These sessions provided staff with practical tools to support diverse learners and strengthen inclusive classroom practices.

Student voice and leadership continued to play an important role in promoting wellbeing and community engagement. Student leaders worked within committees to organise activities such as skipping clubs, colouring competitions and fundraising initiatives for charitable causes. In partnership with the Parents and Friends group, student leaders also successfully applied for a Barwon Water grant, which resulted in the installation of a new water fountain featuring an Indigenous design representing connection and community. This initiative highlighted the power of student voice and collaboration in improving school facilities and supporting a positive school environment.

Overall, the wellbeing initiatives implemented throughout 2025 continued to strengthen the connection between students, staff and families. Through partnerships with external organisations, professional learning for staff, and opportunities for student voice and

leadership, St Mary's School maintained a positive and supportive school culture where wellbeing remains at the heart of learning.

## Value Added

St Mary's School has worked collaboratively to enhance student wellbeing and meet the diverse learning and social-emotional needs of all students through:

- Ongoing implementation of a Provisional Psychologist (3 days a fortnight) in partnership with Strength Psychology, and a trained Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader as part of the Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHIPS) initiative.
- Continued partnership with The Resilience Project, including professional learning for staff and a parent information session to strengthen the connection between school wellbeing programs and home practices.
- Integration of Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness (GEM) strategies across classrooms to support student emotional development and resilience.
- Professional development for staff with Strength Psychology focusing on whole-classroom adjustments, cognitive processing domains, communication strategies, social conflict resolution and understanding behaviour as communication.
- School participation in national initiatives such as Safer Internet Day and Bullying No Way Week, promoting respectful relationships and responsible use of technology.
- A dedicated Wellbeing section in the school newsletter, supporting ongoing communication with families and sharing strategies to encourage wellbeing conversations at home.
- Student participation in wellbeing and character education programs such as The NED Show and the Sri Chinmoy Oneness-Home Peace Run, promoting perseverance, kindness, and global citizenship.
- Ongoing implementation of the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) curriculum to support consistent social-emotional learning and behaviour expectations.
- Student leadership opportunities through committees that organised community activities, fundraising events and wellbeing initiatives across the school.
- Collaboration between student leaders, families and community organisations to secure a Barwon Water grant, resulting in the installation of a new water fountain with an Indigenous design representing connection and community.
- Individualised wellbeing and learning support for students and families, fostering strong partnerships and a culture of care and inclusion.

- Ongoing efforts to maintain a safe, welcoming, and inclusive school culture, reflected in positive student and family MACSSIS feedback and whole-school wellbeing practices.

## Student Satisfaction

The 2025 MACSSIS data indicated that students feel safe, valued and supported at St Mary's School and overall results across all domains were pleasing, scoring a higher average than MACS in five domains and very close to the MACS average in the other five domains.

In the Rigorous Expectations Domain, St Mary's School scored 79% compared to MACS 76%. Students feel that teachers have rigorous and high expectations of them and encourage students to do and achieve their best.

In the School Engagement Domain, St Mary's School scored 43% compared to MACS 50%. Students indicated that they are excited about going to their class and that they were focused on activities and interested in their classes.

In the School Climate Domain, St Mary's School scored 55% compared to MACS 59%. Behaviour expectations at St Mary's School were again high and there was energy around learning from both teachers and students.

In the Teacher / Student Relationships Domain, St Mary's School scored 66% compared to MACS 71%. This indicated that students feel cared for, respected by their teachers and would like to have their teachers again if the opportunity was offered.

In the School Belonging Domain, St Mary's School scored 71% compared to MACS 69%. Students value their learning community and feel they are valued members. Students indicated that they feel they belong and are included at St Mary's School.

In the Learning Disposition Domain, St Mary's School scored 77% compared to MACS 73%. Students identify themselves as learners. Students reported that they try hard at school and that they like to do well. Learning tasks and activities were created with the students at the forefront. Teachers check in regularly with students to ensure positive wellbeing and offer timely feedback on work submitted.

In the Student Safety Domain, St Mary's School scored 61% compared to MACS 57%. Students consider themselves safe both physically and psychologically. Students communicated that they were well cared for by their teachers.

In the Enabling Safety Domain, St Mary's School scored 59% compared to MACS 57%. Overall the students believe they have access to quality staff support in order to feel connected, safe and respected while at school.

In the Student Voice Domain, St Mary's School scored 55% compared to MACS 57%. The nature of the learning at St Mary's School limits the student voice in designing curriculum. However, students feel they have opportunities to have an impact on St Mary's School, particularly through leadership opportunities.

In the Catholic Identity Domain, St Mary's School scored 59% compared to MACS 65%. Students believe St Mary's School is a school of faith, where Catholic Identity is valued.

Overall, the 2025 Student MACSSIS data was pleasing and is a reflection of the opportunities provided by St Mary's School and the gratitude expressed by students.

## **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.

School attendance rolls are legal documents and are marked twice daily: 8:55am (morning period) and 1:35pm (afternoon period). Students arriving at school after 8:50am must be signed in by a parent/guardian using the school's VPASS system, located at the front office.

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 8:50am 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 an email or 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.

<b>Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level</b>	
Y01	87.23
Y02	92.11
Y03	90.12
Y04	90.47
Y05	90.13
Y06	87.3
Overall average attendance	89.56

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## Leadership

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOAL:

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

#### INTENDED OUTCOMES:

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

St Mary's School continues to flourish as a Catholic primary school committed to fostering a safe, inclusive and welcoming community, where student learning, wellbeing and a strong sense of belonging are prioritised, and all are respected and valued.

Throughout 2025, the Leadership Team has effectively overseen the implementation of the School Improvement and Annual Action Plans, ensuring that strategic goals across the spheres have been met. Policies, procedures and documentation have been regularly reviewed and refined in alignment with VRQA standards, maintaining compliance and supporting best practice.

The religious dimension of school life remains central, expressed through the celebration of the Sacraments, participation in liturgies and Masses, and engagement with Catholic traditions, symbols and practices. Students actively contribute to social justice initiatives, deepening their understanding of faith in action. Ongoing staff professional learning and accreditation continue to strengthen both curriculum delivery and the Catholic identity of the school.

A strong commitment to evidence-based practice underpins decision-making across the school. A shared vision, supported by explicit teaching practices, promotes a culture of high expectations, engagement and purposeful learning. Students are supported to progress from guided practice to mastery, with NAPLAN and other data sources informing targeted interventions, personalised learning and whole-cohort strategies. Student achievement data indicates continued growth across core learning areas.

Student wellbeing remains a central priority, with leadership and staff dedicated to supporting each child to flourish. A whole-school approach to social and emotional learning is embedded, incorporating explicit weekly SEL lessons alongside daily practices such as meditation, mindfulness, circle time and brain breaks. Comprehensive programs, ongoing evaluation and strong alignment between wellbeing and learning highlight the importance placed on nurturing the whole child. Students report feeling heard, supported and empowered as active participants in school life.

Leadership at St Mary's School is intentional, visible and collaborative, modelling consistent expectations and practices. The Learning Leaders continue to strengthen instructional leadership and enhanced team cohesion. Staff work collegially with a shared focus on continuous improvement and student success.

St Mary's School continues to be a highly regarded learning community, built on strong relationships characterised by trust, open communication and collaboration. These foundations sustain a positive and inclusive culture, uniting students, families and staff in a shared commitment to faith, wellbeing and lifelong learning.

In 2025, St Mary's School continued to build on its successes. Ongoing development of teacher expertise has supported further gains in student learning, reflecting a sustained commitment to school improvement. This focus has strengthened a dynamic and engaging Catholic learning environment, enriched by the active involvement of the broader school community.

Through the continual review of teaching practices, policies and strategies, the school remains focused on improving student outcomes. Explicit teaching and differentiated learning are embedded across all year levels, supported by collaborative planning and data-informed practice.

We extend our sincere gratitude to our dedicated staff, whose professionalism and commitment underpin the success of our school. We also acknowledge the vital role of our students and families, whose engagement and support contribute so positively to our shared achievements.

Progress in leadership and management is evident in the strong sense of purpose, collaboration and optimism across the school. Together, we continue to build a community where every individual is supported to belong, to thrive and to contribute meaningfully to the future.

## Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

### List Professional Learning undertaken in 2025

Some professional learning that St Mary's School staff participated in in 2025 included;

GCPPN- Geelong Catholic Primary Principals' Network

GCDPN - Geelong Catholic Deputy Principals' Network

MACS - Western Region Primary Religious Education Leaders' Network

MACS - Primary Learning Diversity Leaders Connect

MACS - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Online Funding Application

MACS - Student Wellbeing Leaders' Network Days

MACS - Western Region Admin Meetings - Online

MACS - Principal Forums

MACS - Flourishing Learners Principal and Teacher Reference Group

MACS - Western Region Flourishing Learners' Network

MACS - Teaching With Impact in Mathematics

MACS - Flourishing Learner's Conference

DET - Respectful Relationships in Catholic School Communities

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

Teaching Matters - Science of Learning Conference

Learning Diversity Australia - Science of Reading

Learning Diversity Australia - Webinars

<b>Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning</b>	
Science of Learning - Various providers	
La Trobe University - Science of Language and Reading Lab	
Mental Health in Primary Schools Community of Practice	
Resilience Project	
First Aid - Level II Training	
First Aid - CPR Training	
First Aid - Asthma Training	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2025	20
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$2000.00

### Teacher Satisfaction

Staff at St Mary's School recognise leadership as a key factor in the quality of education provided. The Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Improvement Survey (MACSSIS) staff data highlights the strength of staff–leadership relationships, with results significantly above the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) average. Staff demonstrate a shared commitment to continuous improvement, supported by a culture where contributions are acknowledged, valued and influential. Inclusiveness and effective communication continue to underpin a positive and supportive staff climate.

Annual Review Meetings and regular check-ins were conducted, providing opportunities for reflection, feedback and recognition of staff contributions. It was also affirming that leadership received positive feedback and appreciation from staff across all areas. The school climate remains safe, inclusive, cohesive and positive, with staff working collaboratively and supporting one another through a strong team approach. A highly collegial culture is evident, with teacher satisfaction and morale continuing to remain high.

In 2025, staff frequently expressed their gratitude for working in a well-regarded school where all contributions are valued and respected. MACSSIS staff survey results in the School Leadership Domain were once again above the MACS average across all fourteen measures. Staff consistently identify St Mary's School as a safe and supportive workplace, characterised by clear direction, strong communication, and a positive and purposeful culture.

In the Student Safety Domain, St Mary's School scored 84% compared to MACS 69%. Staff believe that all students are safe and well cared for. They acknowledge that student safety and wellbeing are a priority at St Mary's School and everyone's responsibility.

In the School Climate Domain, St Mary's School scored 87% compared to MACS 75%. This data indicates that staff are enthusiastic and positive about the work they undertake. They feel supported in their roles and enjoy positive, professional relationships in a positive working environment.

In the Staff-Leadership Relationships Domain, St Mary's School scored 90% compared to MACS 81%. In each of the ten categories relating to Staff-Leadership Relationships, a score of 88% or above was achieved. This indicates that all staff consider leadership trustworthy, friendly, approachable, supportive, fair, respectful and understanding. They acknowledge that leadership always work in the best interests of the school and create professional relationships and a working environment which meets the needs of all staff.

In the Instructional Leadership Domain, St Mary's School scored 72% compared to MACS 59%. This data indicates that leadership are knowledgeable about best learning and teaching practices and communicate a vision for learning and teaching at St Mary's School. Leadership are instructional leaders who listen to staff and assist them to address instructional issues in their classrooms.

In the Feedback Domain, St Mary's School scored 49% compared to MACS 43%.The implementation of a feedback strategy in 2022 and continued in 2023, in which all staff engage in a termly check in, where many aspects of their work and performance is discussed and feedback given has ensured that staff feel heard and timely feedback is given.

In the School Leadership Domain, St Mary's School scored 80% compared to MACS 61%. This is a result of the ongoing positive and productive school culture that has been created and maintained at St Mary's School.

In the Staff Safety Domain, St Mary's School scored 90% compared to MACS 69%. This indicates that staff feel that their workload is manageable, they are successful in their role and occupational health and safety concerns are managed thoroughly and in a timely manner.

In the Psychological Safety Domain, St Mary's School scored 78% compared to MACS 66%. This data reinforces the staff perception that they are safe to speak up about what is on their mind, make and learn from their mistakes and experiment with new approaches with support from leadership.

In the Professional Learning Domain, St Mary's School scored 87% compared to MACS 64%. Professional learning is a priority and staff were very satisfied with the professional learning opportunities afforded to them. A financial commitment to this endeavour, again saw

all staff undertake extensive professional learning. A commitment to professional learning ensured that skill levels were of a standard to facilitate improvements in student learning.

In the Collaboration Around an Improvement Strategy Domain, St Mary's School scored 98% compared to MACS 71%. All staff at St Mary's School are aware of our school's improvement plan and annual action plan. All aspects are clear and achievable. Our school's resources, processes and procedures are all aligned with our improvement plan and programs and initiatives are implemented to achieve our goals.

In the Collaboration in Teams Domain, St Mary's School scored 90% compared to MACS 73%. Staff value the opportunity to work in a supportive team, accessing data to assist in planning for learning. Professional dialogue is encouraged and student assessment is used as a springboard for discussions about teaching.

In the Support for Teams Domain, St Mary's School again scored 88% compared to MACS 70%. Leadership protects each team's meeting times and it is supportive of decisions made at a team level. This contributes to each team's efficacy and productivity.

In the Collective Efficacy Teams Domain, St Mary's School scored 94% compared to MACS 77%. Teachers are confident that they can motivate their students and progress their learning.

In the Catholic Identity Domain, St Mary's School scored 80% compared to MACS 77%. Catholic identity and faith celebrations were valued by students, staff and families who acknowledged that staff give witness to Gospel Values in their interactions with and care for each other, the students and families. Overall, staff believe that St Mary's School is a school of faith, where Catholic Identity is valued.

<b>Teacher Qualifications</b>	
Doctorate	0
Masters	5
Graduate	4
Graduate Certificate	2
Bachelor Degree	17
Advanced Diploma	6
No Qualifications Listed	3

<b>Staff Composition</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	22
Teaching Staff (FTE)	19.5
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	14
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	9.4
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	1

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## Community Engagement

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### GOAL:

To empower families as partners of learning.

To seek, develop and sustain authentic community partnerships.

#### INTENDED OUTCOMES:

Families are engaged as genuine partners in learning, demonstrated through strong home–school relationships, effective communication and meaningful opportunities for involvement.

Authentic and sustained community partnerships enhance learning and wellbeing by providing relevant, real-world connections for our students and families.

### Achievements

At St Mary's School, we believe that education is a shared journey, and we remain deeply dedicated to engaging families as active partners in their children's learning. Our school thrives when we work in partnership, and we take great pride in cultivating a welcoming environment where every family feels a true sense of belonging. By thoughtfully planning and delivering opportunities for collaboration, our leadership team ensures that the our community are welcome and invited to journey alongside one another and celebrate achievements together.

Central to our success in 2025, is our focus on communicating effectively and valuing the feedback we receive from our families. We understand that open, transparent dialogue is valued, and we prioritise a variety of communication platforms to keep our community informed and engaged. We view every interaction as an opportunity to listen and grow, ensuring that our policies and practices reflect the needs and aspirations of our students and their families. By fostering these positive and respectful relationships, we create a supportive network that enhance the educational experience for our students.

This spirit of connection always begins with our Term 1 events, which serve as vital touchpoints for our community to gather and grow together each year. We began the 2025 school year with a "Meet and Greet" on the first day, followed by the Whole School Welcome Picnic, Year 6 leaders assembly, Foundation Morning Tea, and Foundation Parent Night. These milestones provided an inclusive space for families to connect with staff and one another, setting a collaborative tone for the year ahead. Whether through these formal

gatherings or informal daily interactions, we remain committed to making families feel heard and valued.

As the year progresses, we continue to honor the vital role families play through cherished traditions and shared experiences. Standout events such as the annual Mother's Day and Father's Day Liturgies and Breakfasts allow our staff to show their appreciation directly, actively participating in the preparation and hosting of these special mornings. Beyond these traditions, we offer opportunities for families to share in the joy of student life at the popular Colour Run, Cross Country, Athletics Day, and our various swimming and sporting programs, along with invites to attend webinars offered by outside agencies. These moments, grounded in liturgical and community spirit, reinforce our belief that we are at our best when we are working together.

A major highlight of 2025 was the school-hosted School Concert, an event that celebrated the incredible performing arts and stage presence of our students. Expertly coordinated by our dedicated staff the production was a resounding success, drawing large, enthusiastic audiences for both the matinee and evening performances. A huge thank you goes to our Music teacher, Ruth McGurk, for her vision in writing and directing the show and mentoring our talented stars through showcasing the diverse dancing, singing, and acting skills of so many students. It created an unforgettable experience for the entire school community.

St. Mary's School continued to foster a well-informed community in 2025 through regular newsletters, social media, and Operoo communication. Our Parents and Friends' Association again successfully balanced fundraising with community-building events like the popular Trivia Night. Simultaneously, the School Advisory Council provided guidance to the Leadership Team, with termly meetings to ensure ongoing transparency and collaboration with all families.

At St Mary's School, we deeply value families as co-educators, ensuring families are part of the partnership. Progress is shared during formal parent-teacher conversations, specialised learning plan meetings, and through open email communication year-round. Whether visiting classrooms in person or staying connected via Seesaw, newsletter and social media, families have multiple avenues to celebrate their child's growth. We particularly encourage attendance at our fortnightly assemblies, which serve as a vibrant window into the learning and achievements occurring across all year levels.

The 2025 MACSSIS Parent School Surveys revealed that our school consistently performs well above the 80% benchmark, with families highlighting a deep sense of belonging and warmth from the moment they enter each morning. Our staff are highly regarded for their approachability and clear communication, fostering an environment where a large majority of families would confidently recommend our school to others. With over 90% satisfaction regarding how we value parent opinions, it is clear that our partnership with families is pivotal to our success.

Families expressed strong confidence in our teachers' ability to meet individual learning needs and prepare students for the years ahead. Beyond academics, the survey identified the deep respect and care our leaders and staff show toward every child. While our community feels incredibly comfortable collaborating with staff, we have identified an opportunity to better support you in navigating our online portals. We are committed to making our digital policies and procedures more accessible to ensure every family feels confident and informed.

2025 celebrates a year of outstanding success, with families valuing the school's approachability and fostering of a deep, welcoming sense of belonging across the school. This achievement reinforces our commitment to a thriving partnership, as we continue to work closely with our community to ensure every student's learning needs are met to the highest satisfaction.

### **Value Added**

Strategic planning of Term 1 initiatives in welcoming new families and existing families  
Termly opportunities to meet as a school community including fortnightly assemblies  
Fortnightly communication through school newsletter via email to all families  
Updated school website including Parent Handbook to answer Frequently Asked Questions  
Termly 'open classrooms' to showcase students learning  
Compulsory parent teacher conversations along with PSG meetings for those students who have additional needs  
Communication followed up with families in a realistic timeframe either via email or face to face  
Priority in establishing and maintaining PFA & School Advisory Council meetings, including termly meetings which have an agenda and are minuted  
Showcase of the Performing Arts every second year  
Students can participate in termly social events centered around food, such as Fresh Fruit Friday and scheduled lunch order days  
Yearly MACSSIS surveys shared to families to have a voice

### **Parent Satisfaction**

Families of St Mary's School recognise the leadership team as a key contributor to the high quality of education provided for their children. The school is held in high regard by parents, carers and the wider community for its welcoming environment, intentional relationship-building and deep understanding of students and their families.

Communication is a notable strength of the school and is highly valued by families. This is reflected in the overall Family MACSSIS data, where St Mary's School continues to perform above the MACS average. Families regularly express their appreciation for the dedication of

teachers and staff, particularly in relation to their children's learning experiences and sense of belonging at school.

Families of St Mary's School consistently express their appreciation for being part of a well-organised, inclusive and successful community, where the contributions of all are recognised and valued. The Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Improvement Survey (MACSSIS) family data indicates that parents perceive the school as a strong "fit" for their child, with a positive overall climate and culture.

Families also report confidence in the school's commitment to student safety and wellbeing, noting that students are supported to feel empowered and are provided with meaningful opportunities to contribute to issues that impact their lives and the broader world.

The 2025 Family MACSSIS survey results were above the MACS average in all of the seven areas.

In the Family Engagement Domain, St Mary's School scored 64% compared to MACS 47%. This indicated that families value communication with their children's teachers, like to be involved at the school and are likely to recommend St Mary's School to prospective families.

In the Barriers to Engagement Domain, St Mary's School scored 77% compared to MACS 64%. The main barriers identified by families to engaging at St Mary's School included; child care needs, transportation and personal schedules.

In the School Fit Domain, St Mary's School scored 86% compared to MACS 76%. This indicates that families believe that their children belong, receive assistance and have their learning needs met. Families also believe the experiences offered by St Mary's School match their children's needs and they are prepared well for the next school year.

In the School Climate Domain, St Mary's School scored 95% compared to MACS 84%. Families identify that their children enjoy coming to St Mary's School, are motivated by lessons, respect staff and that the reporting system communicates efficiently, the growth and progress of their children. It also indicates that families view the leaders, teachers and staff as approachable and they feel welcome at the school.

In the Student Safety Domain, St Mary's School scored 86% compared to MACS 70%. Families view St Mary's School as a safe place for their children where respect is demonstrated between all community members. Families acknowledge that student physical and psychological safety is a priority while at school.

In the Communication Domain, St Mary's School scored 90% compared to MACS 73%. This reflects the value placed on feedback and support for families. Families understand and appreciate the school's processes and procedures. Families acknowledge that they are well informed, communication is transparent and provided in a timely manner.

In the Catholic Identity Domain, St Mary's School scored 75% compared to MACS 66%. This is an area that St Mary's School has worked diligently to improve. While participation in overall Catholic celebrations was lower than desired, those who attended appreciated the opportunity. Families acknowledged that Gospel Values are emphasised in the interactions with and care for, each other. Families believe St Mary's School is a school of faith, where Catholic Identity is valued.

The overall perception of families is that all students are safe, well cared for and are meeting their learning goals at St Mary's School. They acknowledge that student safety, learning and wellbeing are a priority at St Mary's School and is everyone's responsibility.

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## Financial Performance

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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](http://www.acnc.gov.au).

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at [www.smgeelong.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smgeelong.catholic.edu.au)