

2025 Annual Report to the School Community

Overview

St Mary's School was established in 1954 as a parish school with the Sisters' of St Joseph being invited to provide a catholic education for children living in the Rushworth area. In 2025 there was an enrolment of 40 students and the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) was 976.

In 2025 the class structure was: Foundation/One/Two, Three/Four, Five/Six.

St Mary's is inclusive of students from diverse backgrounds and needs and all students are challenged to value their learning, develop positive relationships with their teachers and peers to progressively manage their own learning.

Specialist classes were: Auslan, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, STEAM and Respectful Relationships. MyFutureAcademy (Sport) is also a specialist area.

St Mary's strives to inspire a sense of hope in each student by being a positive and caring place where children are happy, secure and engaged in their learning. Students and families are welcomed into a caring environment, and parents are encouraged and supported to become active participants in their child's learning and school life.

St Mary's has a dedicated Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHIPS) teacher who ensure a culture of inclusion, appreciation and wellbeing.

St Mary's School is a Child Safe school. We promote the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children.

Principals report

I am pleased to present the Annual Report to the School Community for 2025.

This report serves as both a celebration of the many successes achieved throughout 2025 and a thoughtful reflection for our school and wider community. At St Mary's School, we remain committed to continually enhancing our practices, policies, and outcomes for all stakeholders. With the implementation and embedding of the Magnify Sandhurst framework, we are proud of the progress and accomplishments realised this year. These achievements stand as a testament to the dedication and hard work of our students, staff, families, and the broader community.

St Mary's is committed to improving outcomes for all stakeholders through quality development for our staff and allowing students their voice and ownership over their learning and development.

In 2025, our school data, including NAPLAN results, showed significant improvement across all areas of numeracy and literacy, with average scores meeting or exceeding both state and national averages.

Fr Adi Indra from St Mel's Parish, Shepparton was our supervising priest with Fr Boniface Kamulegeya from Holy Rosary Parish, White Hills, supporting our school liturgies. During the year, the school staff participated in learning and spiritual formation, strengthening their understanding and capacity to teach the new Source of Life religious curriculum.

In 2025, several of our students received the Sacrament of Reconciliation and completed their first confession in the Church.

Throughout 2025, our whole staff undertook extensive professional learning through the Magnify Sandhurst framework. All previous learning and teaching models were superseded with the MultiLit and Ochre literacy suites and Ochre numeracy. Further to this, the Knowledge Society – Classroom Mastery behaviour curriculum and routines were introduced and the StepLab coaching platform was implemented.

In 2025, we welcomed growth in both our Parents and Friends Association and our School Advisory Board, expanding membership to encourage greater involvement. I am deeply grateful to both groups for their unwavering dedication to our school and commitment to our students. Your insights, planning, organisation, and tireless fundraising efforts have made a significant difference, and I truly appreciate all that you do.

I conclude my time as principal at the conclusion of 2025 and wish my successor, Mrs Angela Fiske-Kealy all the best as she becomes the next custodian of St Mary's school.

Vincent Ryan

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals and Intended outcomes

To support and build staff capacity in delivering quality units of work using the Source of Life curriculum.

To continue to strengthen school and parish connections, increase school reputation and enrolments.

Mr Vin Ryan to commence as Leader of Religious Education for the school.

To continue to build awareness and participation in Social justice activities through Caritas, Catholic Missions and Mini Vinnies for staff and students.

Achievements

Throughout the year, our staff participated in quality professional learning opportunities focusing on their understanding of scripture, prayer, historical context and delivering high quality curriculum materials based on the Source of Life.

Our staff undertook professional learning that was facilitated by CESL through the Blessed, Broken and Shared series of professional learning. The principal engaged with our Supervising priest for a school dialogue day and all staff also undertook the CESL spirituality professional learning.

Vin Ryan commenced as REL leader, facilitating and coordinating our RE program, Masses and liturgies and connecting with the Parish. Fr Adi Indra commenced as a member on the School Advisory Council.

On August 8th, we celebrated St Mary of the Cross MacKillop feast day with a full day of charism-related activities. St Joseph's in Nagambie hosted this day with our whole staff and student cohort travelling to them. This celebration of Saint Mary MacKillop was further solidified with part of our whole school excursion travelling to Melbourne to visit the Mary MacKillop Museum. Further to this, St Joseph's Nagambie and Holy Rosary Heathcote visited St Mary's for a charism day that was facilitated by renowned singer and songwriter, Gen Bryant.

Throughout the year, our school participated in social justice aligned initiatives including Caritas and St Vinnies.

Value added

Leader of Religious Education attended the Religious Education Network meetings each term and provided feedback to relevant staff.

School staff facilitated our Year 6 student retreat.

Mini Vinnie's in the senior classes continued to organise the small fundraisers.

School staff took part in ATSI professional learning, including forming a partnership with 'Together for Humanity'

FIRE carriers were commissioned.

School erected new flag poles with the introduction of a Torres Strait Islander flag.

Our whole-school excursion to Bendigo was a wonderful success, featuring a visit to Bendigo Cinemas to watch The Star—an animated retelling of the Christmas story—and a guided tour of the magnificent Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Learning and Teaching

Goals and intended outcomes

Build a data culture by collecting, analysing and monitoring student data and responding accordingly.

Embed and deliver the Low Variance, Knowledge-rich Curriculum with fidelity throughout the school.

Achievements

Throughout 2025, St Mary's implemented and embedded the Magnify Sandhurst Framework into all classes. School staff worked very closely with CESL learning leaders and experts from the MultiLit and Ochre Education companies to ensure all processes, programs and procedures were embedded with fidelity and to suit the context of the school (the F/1/2 composite in particular).

Intervention for literacy, using the MultiLit suites of MiniLit Sage and Macqulit were planned and coordinated by VIT registered staff leaders and was facilitated by Education Support Officers.

Students offered weekly Visual Arts, Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships, Performing Arts, Science & Auslan programs.

All staff were engaged in AUSLAN in the 'Teachers as Co-learners' program during 2025 and this was complemented by a VIT registered member of the deaf community, Mr Tim Pitts teaching each class on a fortnightly basis.

My Future Academy staff visited the school fortnightly to facilitate specialist sport sessions for each class.

Catholic Education Week and St Mary's Open day were successful days with local Kinder students attending the school for transition days.

Learning conversations were held in Term's 1 and 3 and written reports were provided during Term 2 and 4 per the reporting guidelines.

Book Week 2025 was once again a vibrant celebration of reading and writing. Students enjoyed countless opportunities to showcase their learning, with families joining in for our lively Book Week Parade and activities.

Foundation transition days were well received with the school opening its classrooms for 9 new 2026 enrolled Foundation students.

A whole school excursion to Bendigo was very successful with a visit to the Bendigo Cinemas to watch 'The Star' - an animated film about the Christmas story and birth of Jesus as well as a visit and tour to the Sacred Heart Cathedral.

3/4 students attended camp to Billabong Ranch alongside St Joseph's Nagambie and our 5/6 students attended a 2-day camp to Sovereign Hill alongside Holy Rosary Heathcote and St Joseph's Nagambie.

All students attended our swimming program at Aquamoves in Shepperton

Student Learning Outcomes

Throughout 2025, staff collected assessment evidence as directed by the schools' data plan and assessment schedule.

NAPLAN was conducted online during Term 1. Analysis of student data indicated that students made far greater growth than like schools, the state and the nation. In 8/10 learning areas, St Mary's students equalled or exceeded state and national averages. This is an amazing achievement and the first year that the school have witnessed such academic growth and achievement.

School attitudes toward school indicated that students were happy and felt that their teachers respected them. Students felt that their work was generally pitched at their level.

Student wellbeing

Goals and intended outcomes

Continue to embed a culture of child safety within the school and community.

Ensure cultural safety and awareness of ATSI students and communities.

Promote positive behavioural choices and dispositions toward learning and social interactions.

Promote positive relationships and wellbeing.

Achievements

Several external facilitators from Catholic Education Sandhurst; John Mitchell (Pastoral Wellbeing) Katherine Kerr (People Leader Team) and Megan Gerrish (Child Safeguarding lead) attended the school to upskill staff in further understanding Child Safeguarding, the Child Safe Standards, legislation, policy and general wellbeing themes.

The school introduced the Behaviour Curriculum and 6 whole-school routines, in partnership with the Knowledge Society and Classroom Mastery. These routines were explicitly taught and embedded, with staff conducting peer-observations and feedback sessions.

In 2025, the school continued the Student Representative Council to gain the voice of the students. Fortnightly, Year 6 led updates were shared with classes and all students were provided the opportunity to feed back to the staff and principal.

A VIT registered teacher (Mrs Bianca Brook) was delegated to the role of Mental Health in Primary Schools facilitator. In the role, Bianca facilitated learning and reflective experiences for the promotion of positive wellbeing for staff, students and families.

Value added

Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships was explicitly taught weekly in conjunction with the arts.

All Year 5 students were commissioned at FIRE (Friends Igniting Reconciliation in Education) by Michael Chisholm of CESL. This was further developed through learning activities and experiences throughout Reconciliation and NAIDOC weeks.

The school participated in and celebrated with the community; Harmony Day, RUOK day, Sandhurst Switches Off and various other wellbeing-related opportunities.

Student satisfaction

In 2025, students completed the ORIMA survey which documents students' attitudes towards school. Overall, students' attitudes towards the 10 domains evidenced significant positivity. Notably, students identified that their teachers and leaders care about them.

Student perceptions of access to and quality of staff support in order to feel connected, safe and respected while at school continued to exceed that of the CES average as did their perception of Catholic Identity within the school.

Student attendance

Student attendance is non-attendance is managed by: Parents are encouraged through the newsletter and on PAM to record their child's absence on PAM (Parent Access Module) or via phone call to the office. A phone call is made by office staff to parents by 9.10am, if the school has not been notified about a student absence. The emergency is contacted if the listed parent / carer is unavailable.

Regular reminders and articles are included in the newsletter about the importance of school attendance. Attendance posters are displayed physically and are monitored during assembly and SRC. If absences are ongoing, the principal phones the parent to negotiate a solution.

The overall average attendance for 2025 was 90% (up 1% from the previous year).

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Review and develop the school Annual Action Plan

School leaders to build capacity through attendance of network meetings and professional learning.

Form executive leadership team who meet regularly

Ensure regular consultative committee meeting are held

Achievements

In 2025, St Mary's staff collaborated with personnel from CESL, school staff, School Advisory Council (SAC) and students to develop their 2025 Annual Action Plan in conjunction with the School Improvement Plan. The 2026 AAP has also been developed during 2025.

Mrs Angela Fiske-Kealy – Senior Leader: Learning and Teaching; Katherine Jamieson – Learner Diversity Leader; Vincent Ryan – Religious Education Leader; Bianca Brook – Indigenous perspectives and MHIPS; and Vincent Ryan – Pastoral Wellbeing leader. All leaders attended their respective leadership networks.

During 2025, the school executive leadership team met weekly to plan for school improvement. This team also met for a weekly school safeguarding meeting. The principal and Finance officer met fortnightly to discuss financial matters.

The school advisory council met termly to discuss matters of school improvement. Sharon Gleeson was elected to continue as SAC chair. New member joined; Shannon Jarrett.

Consultative meetings were held each term.

Description of PL teachers participated in

- Stitches First Aid
- Anaphylaxis and CPR
- Liturgy and scripture professional learning
- Designated Teacher and Child Link training
- Warden training, 1st attack and staff awareness
- Dibels training
- Pastoral Wellbeing Network

- REL network
- Leader network
- Deputy Principal/Senior Leader network
- Learner Diversity Leader network
- Ochre Education professional learning
- MultiLit training
- SIMON administration conference

Number of teachers who participated in PL

13

Average expenditure per teacher for PL (\$)

\$900

Teacher Satisfaction

St Mary's School is a happy and positive place for staff. Morale and collegiality is high with all staff working toward the common goal of improving outcomes for students and families.

The ORIMA survey overall positivity highlighted the positive environment with 82% overall endorsement. The staff perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school was 91% and their perceptions of the quality of relationships between staff and members of the leadership team was 94%.

All 14 of the domains within the survey exceeded the CES averages for 2025 and this was within significant in some of the domains.

Teachers have very good collective efficacy and believe that they are able to take risks and feel safe while at school.

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Promote student attendance through parent channels

Invite community members, families and the parish community into the school

Enhance the reputation of the school and increase enrolments

Achievements

The School Advisory Board reconvened in 2025 with 1 new members joining the existing 9 members and met termly to discuss matters pertaining to school improvement. The SAC endorsed and added their voice to the schools' Annual Action Plan.

The St Mary's Parents and Friends committee continued their active role within the school, planning various opportunities to invite the community into the school and help raise funds that went fully to assisting with providing the students with quality camps and excursions.

Many families attended school events throughout the year which included school assemblies, Masses and Liturgies, and the Fete. Highlights of the school year included when students represented St Mary's at the Sandhurst Awards – Mason Jarrett and Alia Spence were student award recipients and Mrs Angela Fiske-Kealy received the award for curriculum teaching.

Throughout the year, the school invited parishioners and families to Masses, liturgies and Open Days.

Regular communications through local newspapers, social media and newsletters highlighted learning and teaching at St Mary's.

Parent Satisfaction

Parent responses on the ORIMA engagement survey demonstrate that families are very happy with St Mary's which was evidenced through the 84% overall school positive endorsement – This survey was sent to every family within the school. Communication, the social and learning environment, student safety and the schools' fit for their child all showed 89-93% positive endorsement for the school. In 2025, it was great to see more of the males within the community contribute to the engagement survey.

Families interacted with all school communication platforms with a preference for social media content and SIMON everywhere.

