

# ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School**  
Warragul

2019

REGISTERED SCHOOL NUMBER: 0841



## Contents

Contact Details .....	2
Minimum Standards Attestation .....	2
Governing Authority Report .....	2
Our School Vision .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
School Overview .....	5
Principal's Report .....	6
Catholic Identity and Religious Education .....	7
Learning & Teaching .....	9
School Community & Student Wellbeing .....	10
Child Safe Standards .....	12
Leadership .....	144
School Performance Data Summary .....	166

## Contact Details

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## Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Ronan O'Mahony, attest that St Joseph's School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2019 school year under *the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

1 May 2020

## Governing Authority Report

2019 was a year of growth and consolidation for Catholic Education in the Diocese of Sale. A year where we truly embodied our commitment to solidarity and subsidiarity.

As the first Diocese in Victoria to adopt a contemporary governance model, we are both leading and learning.

In its second year of operation, Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL), continued to provide outstanding service and direction to Catholic primary and secondary schools across the Diocese, from Cranbourne and Narre Warren in the west, to Cowes and Wonthaggi in the south, right through to Orbost in the east.

Together with our schools, we faced a number of challenges in 2019. Unprecedented levels of population growth continued to increase the demand for high quality Catholic education in parts of our Diocese. Bushfires near Bunyip and Churchill damaged properties, threatened lives and caused short-term school closures, while a fire at St Catherine's Primary School in Berwick seriously damaged 12 learning areas, displacing hundreds of students. Each of these challenges was met with integrity and solidarity.

Under DOSCEL's guidance, rigorous reporting and accountability structures have been implemented and maintained, to comply with our regulatory requirements. With pastoral support from our Parish Priests and expert advice from within the Catholic Education Office Sale, our highly-committed school leadership teams are able to maintain their focus on creating safe and welcoming learning environments where children can thrive.

We continue to prioritise the creation of educational opportunities for every student, to nurture them, and allow them to encounter God and to develop a knowledge of the Catholic faith and tradition. We invest in leadership and support for school communities, to promote expert learning and teaching practices. We collaborate with and involve each member of our school communities in our pursuit of the best spiritual, social, emotional, physical and academic outcomes for students in our Diocese.

We aspire to see our students thrive in the world; to be confident, competent and connected. I am thankful for the contributions of everyone involved in Catholic education in our Diocese in 2019. It has been an honour to work alongside you as we bring life to our vocation of Inspiring Faith, Inspiring Learning.



**Maria Kirkwood**

*Chief Executive Officer*

*Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Ltd*

## Our School Vision

### School Vision and Mission

- Our students will be active learners who are motivated and challenged to experience success in a stimulating learning environment that caters for individual needs.
- The Good News of the Gospels will be lived in the everyday lives and actions of our school community.
- Through the quality of their interactions at St. Joseph's, students will realise and actively use their unique talents as a gift from God.

### At St Joseph's Our Mission is:

- Inspired by St. Joseph we will endeavour to facilitate learning in which our Catholic identity permeates all areas of the school, living a message of love, acceptance and value.
- We will encourage and support individuals as they take responsibility for making positive contributions in a global community throughout their life.

### At St Joseph's we believe that:

- We live the values of the Catholic faith in our everyday lives.
- We promote a learning culture which is motivating and engages the individual, supporting them to achieve success.
- Every individual has the right to learn in a stimulating and happy environment, where calculated risk taking facilitates learning development.
- We value and encourage positive relationships and working in partnership with the wider community.
- We value positive relationships where we accept differences and show empathy and compassion for others.
- We are preparing students to engage and participate in a global society.

### Our Strategic Intent

- We are committed to 100% of the students, 100% of the time.
- We are committed to our faith community, fostering an environment where all teachers and students reach their potential.
- We are committed to developing expert teachers to ensure students achieve targeted progress.
- We are committed to using high quality data to personalise learning.
- We ensure our own and others' professional growth by planning, designing and teaching in teams.
- We are committed to planning a curriculum which has entitlement for all and promotes high expectations for every student.

## School Overview

Saint Joseph's Warragul is a Catholic primary school situated one hundred and ten kilometres from Melbourne in the rolling hills of West Gippsland. We believe that developing caring and nurturing relationships is at the centre of all we do, underpinned by a strong awareness of Christian values. The staff at Saint Joseph's are focussed on meeting the needs of all children at our school. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in the life of the school and there are many opportunities for parents to be involved.



We believe that children learn best when they are in an encouraging, stimulating and supportive learning environment. Our classrooms are modern and appealing and we have resources that are inclusive of Information Communication Technologies (ICT) strategies across the school. We also have trained literacy and numeracy intervention teachers and teacher aides to assist children who struggle in these important areas. We offer Reading Intervention, Levelled Literacy Intervention in Grades Two to Six, extension activities in class and Enhanced Mathematical Understanding (EMU mathematics intervention) across all grade levels. Situated next to Marist-Sion Catholic Secondary College, P-12 Catholic education is offered to families on the same site.

Saint Joseph's school had an enrolment a little over 380 by the end of the 2019 school year. We have 40 staff, consisting of the principal, deputy principal, classroom teachers, school support staff (classroom) and school support staff (administration). Specialist subjects offered at Saint Joseph's are Physical Education, Library, Language Other Than English (Italian) and The Arts.

We are proud of the comprehensive curriculum offered at Saint Joseph's. We have spent considerable time embracing the New Victorian Curriculum, exploring content, achievement standards and progression of learning to support student learning. We also continued our work towards the implementation of the New Religious Education Curriculum for the 2019 school year. Our assessment schedule helps us to identify learning needs and teachers work hard to develop learning programs that meet the needs of individual children.

Our school continues to work towards developing an approach to positive behaviour as an effective way to build a safe, supportive and engaging learning culture and environment across our school. Intertwined within our work is the development of the Child Safety standards and strategies to build effective relationships.

## Principal's Report

The following report is a summary of the many developments that have been undertaken during the 2019 year and it is presented to the community as a way of both informing and educating about the work that happens at the school.

At St Joseph's School we believe that the student is at the heart of all learning and teaching and that the promotion of their wellbeing is necessary to achieve success. All programs aim to create a strong culture of wellbeing within the classroom and across the school to maximise learning and teaching.

The belief that relationships are central to the effectiveness of a Catholic School underpins what we do and who we are at St Joseph's. We work hard to strengthen relationships between staff, parents and students within our school community, with our Parish and the broader community.

We believe effective schools have high levels of parental and community engagement and that this engagement is strongly related to improved student learning, attendance and behaviour. Therefore, family members are always welcomed at St Joseph's and are encouraged to play an integral role in their children's education.

St Joseph's always aims to be a welcoming school. The spirit of the school is warm and inviting. We strive to foster the Catholic Faith and celebrate the Catholic traditions regularly as we encourage all in our community to live the values of the Gospel.

A culture of high expectations continues to permeate the school and the staff operate as a collaborative and increasingly dynamic community of learners with a shared commitment to improving student outcomes and to ensuring that teaching reflects best practice.

At St Joseph's we strive for the implementation of a curriculum that is student centred and personalised using a variety of contemporary learning and teaching approaches. We are embracing the challenges that are obvious in the ever-changing curriculum demands that seem to emerge. The Victorian Curriculum and ongoing change and improvement in approaches to learning and teaching can only serve to continue to improve the outcomes of students.

Our work in journeying together, as a learning community, places us in a good position to continue to move forward in embracing the challenges of the future with excitement and enthusiasm.

We remain very confident that St Joseph's will continue to be a place of great learning, ready to meet the changing needs of our students and the families that are our community.

I hope the 2019 annual report provides a snapshot of life at St Joseph's and gives you a sense of the supportive culture that characterises our community.

Yours in Catholic Education

Ronan O'Mahony  
Principal (Acting)

## Catholic Identity and Religious Education

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

1. To implement the Religious Education curriculum 'To Live in Christ Jesus' in a recontextualised, dialogical way.
2. To develop in children a post-critical belief stance.

### Achievements

Under a dedicated Religious Education Leader and a supportive leadership and teaching team the Catholic Identity of St Joseph's has continued to thrive. This identity is clearly visible in the Religious icons and displays which adorn our school buildings, but more deeply in the curriculum and in our day-to-day interactions with each other.

Recontextualisation continues to colour the way staff present the curriculum to our students. This teaching lens brings Faith to life in a modern context. Prayer happens daily in each classroom and as a whole school at assemblies, liturgies and Masses. Invitations to these events, as well as weekly updates, are included in the school newsletter.

The Parish Sacramental Coordinator plays an important role in the children's Sacramental preparation. The move to a Parish based program has forged stronger links with our wider parish community. Staff are actively involved in this partnership by volunteering to be a part of family meetings, weekend masses and of course, the celebration of the Sacraments themselves. Whilst the Sacraments are being prepared for and celebrated in the Parish, the school is also focusing on the same Sacraments. This creates an authentic and supportive celebration of our Faith.

Our staff pray together prior to each meeting and are personally equipped to teach the revised Diocese of Sale Religious Education Curriculum. They continue to build their knowledge through professional learning opportunities, including formal study. In 2019, all staff participated in Marg Carswell's PD about AWES, A Way of Encountering the Scriptures, with teachers from across the Sale Diocese and in doing so we strengthened our relationships with other Catholic Schools in our community.

We have continued to build our strong connection with our neighbour, Marist Sion College. Our staff share Masses together and the older students continue to support our younger students with their Sacramental preparation. We are grateful for this friendship and look forward to the building of the new chapel later this year, where we hope to participate in joint celebrations.

We have also followed a whole school approach to scripture by focussing on one passage throughout the school at both a staff and class level. At a staff level, we used this passage to model both the AWES approach to scripture and we engaged in dialogue about the passage. We had a display in the school, and each class was invited to contribute to it.

**VALUE ADDED**

- Whole school and Class Masses, celebrated by our Parish priest, Father Peter Slater.
- The enthusiastic participation of our student leaders in the Liturgy team.
- Special occasion liturgies e.g. ANZAC Day, Mother's Day, Grandparents Day etc. These continue to be highlights on our calendar and are always well attended.
- Opportunities for Families to pray together e.g. "Prayers in Pyjamas".
- Fund Raising via a range of activities - for Caritas during Lent, Mission Day and St Vincent De Paul etc.
- Active participation at Parish Masses e.g. taking part in the Offertory procession or our older students reading.
- Opportunities to link with our wider Catholic community, e.g. student leadership says at the Catholic Education Office; Diocesan Masses and gatherings, etc.

## Learning & Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

1. To build a contemporary learning community to raise student achievement across the curriculum, particularly in English and Mathematics.
2. To implement a whole school plan for learning entitlement.

### Achievements

During the 2019 school year, we continued to work on improving Literacy and Numeracy results with a continued focus on developing Expert Teacher practices. Middle Leaders worked with four other schools on implementation of DOSCEL's revised Collectives initiative. The focus was implementing the Teaching and Learning Cycle when planning for learning to address student variability ensuring an accelerated rate of progress for every student in Literacy and Numeracy.

Moreover, Middle Leaders worked with Professional Learning Teams (PLT) to identify effective teaching and learning strategies for differentiation of tasks in Literacy and Numeracy. Teams looked at assessment data such as PAT to determine common misconceptions students had in Literacy and Numeracy, and to target specific needs and improve student learning. Teams continued to utilise the VCAA Learning Progressions to provide differentiated learning tasks for students.

Intervention programs continue to support classroom learning in Literacy and Numeracy. Levelled Literacy Intervention and EMU (Extending Mathematical Understanding) were delivered alongside usual classroom teaching to provide students an opportunity to achieve an accelerated rate of progress. A Speech Therapist attended the school twice a term to provide further support to students to assist with literacy skill acquisition

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The data collected through the NAPLAN testing program is compared to state and national outcomes and used to evaluate our teaching and learning programs each year to gauge their effectiveness, and to make goals for improvement of student learning. No child was withdrawn from testing in 2019.

Staff continue to meet in Professional Learning Teams (PLT) and Planning Meetings to analyse data and address student learning needs in Literacy and Numeracy. Data continues to drive our planning for learning, provide focus for coaching and mentoring, and informs our Learning Adjustment Strategy.

23 Year 1 students participated in the Levelled Literacy Intervention program, which resulted in an average improvement of 4.7 reading levels.

Year 1 students participated in Extending Mathematical Understanding.

## School Community & Student Wellbeing

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

1. To build a school community that is safe, supportive and inclusive for children, staff and parents.

### Achievements

We continued to recognise and respond to the needs of our community. We believe that wellbeing underpins a positive school environment and promotes learning. The community remained connected through weekly assemblies, newsletters and special events such as Mothers Day, Fathers Day, an Art Show and our concert. Extra-curricular activities such as camps, sports events, incursions and excursions added a sense of excitement for our students.

By half way through the year, we had engaged the services of a counsellor through Catholic Care. This proved to be a very helpful support for some of our students who were managing challenging situations.

Seasons for Growth was again offered to students who were experiencing grief, loss or change in their lives. Two more teachers were trained in this highly effective program and added to the three already on staff.

Four teachers also undertook the basic training in Choice Theory. Whilst Choice Theory remained in place, the Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour Support was also a key reference for the management of behaviour. The initiation of the Peer Activity Leader Program (PAL) built the capacity of our grade 5 and 6 students to lead playground games for younger students. In doing so, they demonstrated our four universal expectations of Inclusion, Respect, Safety and Positivity. This group of students also became involved in a knitting club and knitted scarves which were donated to the work of Sister Rose Duffy from DOSCEL.

The progression of all students is our core priority. As such our work with students with disability or additional needs is a key focus. In 2019, all teaching staff and Learning Support Officers completed the NCCD Disability Standards for Education e-learning modules. This assisted staff to further develop their ability to identify student learning needs enabling them to develop learning pathways for all students, and expand their ability to impute a disability according to the Disability Discrimination Act (1992).

### VALUE ADDED

- A Counsellor from Catholic Care was funded by the Parents and Friends one day each week.
- The Whole School Approaches to Positive Behaviour Support (WSAPBS) continued to be a key approach.
- Seasons for Growth offered to students who require support with grief, loss and change.
- The Peer Activity Leaders (PAL) program was introduced.
- Program Support Group (PSG) Meetings held each term to facilitate communication and planning for students with additional needs.

### STUDENT SATISFACTION

Student Satisfaction, as reflected in the results of the 2018 School Improvement Surveys showed a similar trend in many indicators when compared to the 2018 results.

Pleasingly, most indicators have shown increases when compared to the 2018 data.

Generally, the results signal that there is a presence of positive emotions in the lives of the students, where they feel emotionally connected to the school. Furthermore, the results acknowledge that the students continue to feel understood by their teachers that they feel safe at school, and behaviour in the classrooms is still needs improving.

### STUDENT ATTENDANCE

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that they notify the school to explain the absence of their children on any particular school day. Notification may be provided via email or by telephoning the school and should be made prior to the start of school.
- All absences are recorded using Nforma roll, along with the reason for absence.
- Unexplained absences: at 10am approx. an admin officer will check Nforma for unexplained absences and will make contact with parents.
- Regular absentees: the school continues to make contact and encourage parents to ensure child attends school. If unreasonable absenteeism continues, the principal will make a report to the Attendance Officer at the Department of Education.
- Unexplained absences greater than 3 days:
  - The teacher contacts parents and notifies principal.

### PARENT SATISFACTION

The Insight SRC survey data results in 2019 have shown a slight downward trend compared to 2018 data set.

Parents are acknowledging an improvement in students' safety and classroom behaviour.

## Child Safe Standards

### Goals

- At St Joseph's, we acknowledge and understand that child safety is the responsibility of every person and is an integral aspect of student wellbeing. We aim to work collaboratively with parents, students and other community members to ensure a safe school environment.
- Our commitment to the protection of students is based in our belief that each person is made in the image of God, and our ethos is to provide a safe and supportive environment. All students have the right to expect that the school will always act to protect them from any kind of harm.
- To continue to implement and embed Child Safe Standards as directed by Ministerial Order 870.

### Intended Outcomes

- Refine a child friendly Code of Conduct.
- That the seven Child Safe Standards will be evident across the school community.
- Build a culture of Child safety and adherence to practices for Child safety.
- Provide a minimum standard of child safety across the school.
- Highlight that we have a role to keep children safe from abuse.
- That all persons involved in situations where harm is suspected or disclosed will be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.
- Develop strategies to fully immerse understanding of the standards.

### Achievements

St Joseph's staff and school community are deeply committed to ensuring child safety in our school. During 2019 we undertook the following actions to ensure we met the minimum standards:

- Reviewed our Child Safe policies based on the Diocesan templates and our local context.
- The new school website has a dedicated Child Safety and Wellbeing tab with links to a range of Child Safety documents.
- Continued refinement of a children friendly Child Safe Policy.
- Consulted with staff and key stakeholders with in the school community regarding Child Safe practices.
- Review mandatory reporting guidelines.
- Ensured that all staff complete an annual external Mandatory Reporting course and were aware of their obligations to report suspected child abuse.
- Included Child Safe risk assessment in all off site planning documents.
- Reviewed our Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Updated visitor/volunteer sign in and out procedures and resources.
- Attendance at systematic information sessions run through DOSCEL
- Strengthened procedures around collection and review of Working with Children Checks.

- Communicated implications for the Child Safe Standards to both the School Advisory Committee and Parents and Friends Committee.
- Raised the school community's awareness of the Child Safe Standards in newsletters.
- Volunteer's details are recorded on the school's Administration Software.
- Inclusion of Child safety items on Staff meeting agendas and weekly memos.
- Discussed and implemented Child Safe Standards for all camps and overnight activities.
- Updated all notes requesting parent assistance for school based activities.
- Continued review of the school Risk Management in regard to Child Safety.
- Continued to building an understanding with staff of effective ways to empower children.
- Continued to build a culture of Child safety at leadership team level.
- Continued work embedding the Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour Support program.
- Approval given to construct perimeter fencing around school, commencing early 2020.

## Leadership

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To develop leadership which builds and supports learning structures and practices across the school.

### Achievements

In 2019, a new leadership team was formed under the direction of the Principal, including the appointment of a new Deputy Principal. The team included the Literacy and Numeracy Leader, the Learning Adjustment Leader, the Religious Education Coordinator and three Middle Leaders. The Middle Leaders were part of a Diocesan Learning and Teaching initiative known as Collectives. This involved them working with other schools to develop specific literacy and numeracy goals which were then enacted in our school. In 2019 these were about Place Value and Finding meaning at the word level. This work resulted in a greater focus on the Victorian Curriculum and the Learning Progressions. All members of the Leadership Team drew inspiration from the Diocesan Learning and Teaching Networks which were held each term. With a focus on clarity and cohesion, the team achieved an improvement across all 4 leadership pillars on the Insight SRC survey

#### EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

##### DESCRIPTION OF PL UNDERTAKEN IN 2019

A variety of professional learning opportunities, including intensive course work, was undertaken by staff, including but not limited to:

- Learning and Teaching – Collective Inquiry
- Teaching and Learning Network meetings
- First aid training including CPR, diabetes and anaphylaxis refresher
- Religious Education accreditation
- NCCD
- Principal Cluster Meetings and Diocesan Principal meetings
- Leadership development
- New Religious Education Curriculum development
- Mandatory Reporting Online Module - all staff

##### NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN PL in 2019

26

##### AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER TEACHER FOR PL

\$ 715

**TEACHER SATISFACTION**

Based on School Improvement Survey Staff data compiled by Insight SRC and discussions with, and informal feedback from staff, the level of individual morale has shown a similar trend to 2019 data.

Staff have a strong sense of the pastoral needs of the students and continue to work towards improvements in overall student behaviour.

Quality teaching shows improvement compared with the 2018 Insight SRC data. Our work in the Collective area has shown an increase from the 2018 area which highlights the staffs' awareness and importance of the Collective initiative.

Work in the Organisational Climate area continues to be a focus area for the school's Leadership team.

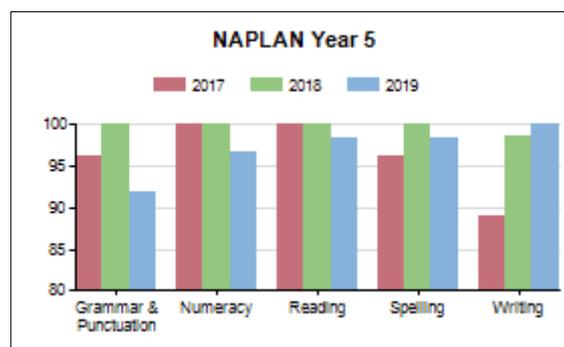
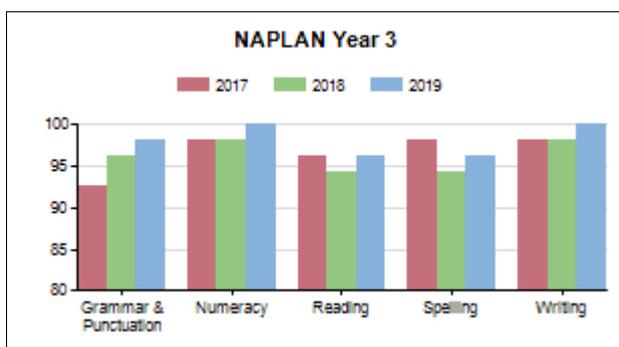
## School Performance Data Summary

E4007

St Joseph's School, Warragul

### PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS

NAPLAN TESTS	2017 %	2018 %	2017 - 2018 Changes %	2019 %	2018 - 2019 Changes %
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	92.5	96.2	3.7	98.1	1.9
YR 03 Numeracy	98.1	98.1	0.0	100.0	1.9
YR 03 Reading	96.2	94.3	-1.9	96.2	1.9
YR 03 Spelling	98.1	94.2	-3.9	96.2	2.0
YR 03 Writing	98.0	98.1	0.1	100.0	1.9
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	96.3	100.0	3.7	91.8	-8.2
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0	96.7	-3.3
YR 05 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0	98.4	-1.6
YR 05 Spelling	96.3	100.0	3.7	98.4	-1.6
YR 05 Writing	88.9	98.5	9.6	100.0	1.5



AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL		%
Y01		92.5
Y02		93.7
Y03		93.2
Y04		92.7
Y05		92.9
Y06		92.1
Overall average attendance		92.8

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE	
Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	91.0%

ALLSTAFF RETENTION RATE	
Staff Retention Rate	87.2%

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	7.4%
Graduate	11.1%
Graduate Certificate	7.4%
Bachelor Degree	70.4%
Advanced Diploma	29.6%
No Qualifications Listed	3.7%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	27
Teaching Staff (FTE)	22.1
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	12
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	7.9
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

**NOTE:** The School's financial performance information has been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au).