



St Mary's School Thornbury

2020 Annual Report to the School Community



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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Chris Ray, attest that St Mary's School is working in consultation with the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd towards being fully compliant with:

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

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

Our School Vision

Our School Vision

St. Mary's Parish Primary School Thornbury, as a sign of the presence of God, proclaims Gospel values centred on Jesus Christ as the model for life.

We are a welcoming, spirit filled community that views the future with optimism.

By respecting the diversity and uniqueness of each person, we promote the self-worth of individuals.

We value shared leadership that creates the structures for a broad, inclusive and innovative curriculum within a safe, supportive and well-resourced environment.

Together with parents, we strive to provide life-long learners with the strategies and skills that instill confidence, equip them to journey towards their future and positively contribute to a changing world.

School Overview

"Learners Inspired To Learn"

- In 2020, St Mary's School had an enrolment of approximately 240 students.
- The students were organised into 11 class groupings: 2 x prep; 3 x Yr 1/2; 3 x 3/4; 3 x 5/6.
- The school had 35 staff made up of 13 full time teaching staff (including the Principal and other leaders), 17 part-time teaching staff, 1 full time Administration Officer and 11 other part-time learning support staff.
- Our staff Leadership roles included 2 Deputy Principals; Learning & Teaching Leader; Learning Diversity Leader; Literacy Leader; Mathematics Leader; Faith Development Leader; Student Wellbeing Leader; ICT Leader.
- Weekly specialist lessons were offered in Performing Arts, Library, Physical Education/Sport, Italian/Chinese and Visual Arts.
- Our families have a wide selection of excellent Secondary Schools from which to choose to further their children's learning. We are a priority Parish for Santa Maria College, Academy of Mary Immaculate College and Parade College, with children also having access to other Catholic Schools in our region. Local Government Secondary Schools include the highly regarded Thornbury High School, Northcote High School and Preston High School.
- In 2017, St Mary's School underwent our School Review as part of the School Improvement Cycle. This Review highlighted strengths and challenges for our School which informed our School Improvement Plan for 2018 - 2021. We look forward to our next School Review in 2021, which will guide School Improvement for the following 4-year period.
- A significant focus for the school has been to develop ourselves as an 'Evidence Based Learning School'. We plan for learning based on the evidence of what children have demonstrated they already know and can do. Learning is student centred. Children are supported to learn at their point of need.
- We work closely with our Parish to promote Faith and to build links with our broader Parish Community.
- Our historic building houses modern learning spaces.
- ICT is used across the school to enhance learning and engage learners. Children have the opportunity to develop their ICT skills appropriate to their age and ability.
- Before & After School Care is provided on-site by OSHClub, who also run a holiday program on-site.
- St Mary's is an inclusive community. We warmly welcome all who want to join us.

Principal's Report

I began as Principal of St Mary's at the start of 2021, and I have been welcomed into a wonderful School. I am grateful of this opportunity to share some of my early observations of the outstanding things that are established in our School.

Having met with the staff before I met with any students or parents, I couldn't help but be impressed by their dedication to the children, their eagerness to prepare for the term and year ahead, and their willingness to support each other to meet the needs of the children. I felt fortunate to become a part of this team.

And then the children arrived! I was eagerly greeted by the children as they arrived on their first day of term one, and their friendliness continued as I slowly got to know them all. There is something special about the children at St Mary's, and it took me a little while to come to the understanding that they were clearly displaying their genuine gratitude, not just to me, but to each other and to all they came into contact with.

And despite the COVID restrictions which have been waxing and waning since last year, I have also been very impressed by our Parent Community and their desire to act in the best interests of all the children. Though I haven't been here long as I write this Principal's Report, I really believe the community at St Mary's epitomises the concept of "It takes a village to raise a child".

And as I have learnt more about the school, I am still being impressed by the focus on genuine learning and on the wellbeing of our students. These things are easily seen and heard constantly around the school. We can see the focus on Learning Dispositions and the children are able to articulate the importance of each of the dispositions. The children are able to talk about their learning in such a way that clearly demonstrates they understand how they learn best. The children support each other in their learning and in making good behaviour choices. These things haven't come about by accident. There is an emphasis by the staff on developing these dispositions, these positive, growth mindsets with the children. And our parents are a wonderfully positive support for the children and staff.

I am very happy that I was appointed as Principal of St Mary's and I am very much looking forward to building upon the wonderful things in place here.

Education in Faith

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal - To strengthen the identity and mission of the school as a learning community that is authentically Catholic in a contemporary environment.

Intended Outcomes

- That all learners are engaged in learning RE and make connections to life and faith within and beyond the community.
- That staff capacity to design and implement rich RE curriculum that helps learners make sense of life and faith is built.

Achievements

In working towards our intended outcomes we continued to develop an environment that:

- *Provided authentic learning opportunities remotely as well as on-site in Religious Education, allowing staff and students to take part in all areas of the Religious Education curriculum*
- *Enhanced the prayer life of the school community by providing and modelling various forms of prayer*
- *Enhanced teaching and learning in the Religious Education Curriculum, particularly with linking Religious Education to other curriculum areas*
- *Further developed the understanding of Social Justice with community members being involved in activities outside of our school community*

Our 2020 theme for the year was, '**Be**', which provided us with a wonderful platform to connect with ourselves, others, our parish and the local community. We celebrated the fact that at St. Mary's we are a place where all are welcome. Here, we strived that all stake-holders be hope-filled agents of change who are outward looking and brave as we work together to make our school community and the world a better place. This is our calling in Jesus's mission to share the light of the world today.

We had very little opportunity to include our parish and the wider world in a physical way due to Covid 19, however we ensured that school prayer life centred around praying together and social action. We communicated with our parish and school community to look within ourselves and act with justice to ensure that we were a community that looked after each other. In 2020, we made every effort to reach out to our community by actively raising funds, giving food and toiletry donations.

As this year called all communities to work very differently to what anyone had ever experienced before we focused as a small community to 'Being an agent of change' in the way we treated others, the living world, the wider community and ourselves. As a leadership team we discussed the importance of having a designated student 'Social Justice Team' to view the world with a 'lens' of justice at all times as a separate group to our Student Representative Committee. This group would look at Catholic and secular initiatives across a year, not only to raise money but to educate all stake-holders of the call to act with justice and humility.

We continued exploring the concept of 'change for the better' in many authentic ways:-

- Religious Education sessions spoke to the heart via a platform when on-line learning occurred and rich gospel values sessions occurred when we returned to full on-site teaching.
- Sacramental learning occurred across prep-grade 6
- There was a very strong Well-Being connection and the Religious Education Leader and the Student Wellbeing Leader worked together to ensure that well-being and spiritual nurturing was a priority during lockdown and when re-entering normal day to day school life.

Our school-based Sacramental Program for the three Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation were all taught across the year, however due to Covid only the Sacrament of Reconciliation, for our year 3s, was celebrated and this was in a very different format than ever before. The Sacrament of Confirmation was also offered late in the school year, with 3 guests per candidate and half of our grade 6 students took up this offer. Unfortunately, there was no opportunity to conduct our First Eucharist celebrations in 2020.

The only parent formation opportunity offered was for the Sacrament of Reconciliation students. This allowed time for the parents to reflect and talk about the importance of journeying with their child at this time of preparation.

Praying together was a major focus for us and as a staff we prayed together with thought and consideration weekly. We also reflected weekly as a leadership team. All parent meetings started with prayer and various methods of entering into prayer have been modelled and used in homerooms. There is evidence that the time and thought being placed on this has made prayer a visible element in our staff room, leadership team and meetings, which has enhanced the classroom prayer experience for our students.

We continued to focus our attention in the area of Religious Education on the integration of faith and life within the curriculum. The Learning and Teaching Leader and Religious Education Leader planned big picture ideas that incorporated the learning outcomes of the 'To Know, Worship and Love', the Religious Education Curriculum frameworks, and the Victorian Curriculum into the classes by generating units of work. These sources help the staff to develop units that blend 'Life' - 'Faith' experiences authentically, where possible.

We prioritised our professional learning in Religious Education and targeted specific professional learning for teachers on site.

The learning for staff has been in -:

- creating Learning Intentions and Success Criteria related to the learning, allowing students the opportunity to know how they can be successful.
- using IT skills, new platforms for learning
- filming 'story telling' and 'godly play'
- generating interactive google slides

VALUE ADDED

- Rich dialogue around how to use the new Religious Education Framework and the progression levels in real units of work

- Working closely with classroom teachers to ensure the development of relevant units of work to enhance students' capacity on-line or on-site
- A student Social Justice Team established, with a staff member to lead it, creating opportunities for fundraising, resourcing and awareness-raising for local and global community charities
- Family education sessions for the Sacraments Reconciliation
- Opportunities to pray together has become the norm.
- The writing of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria make Religious Education align with every subject that is taught within the curriculum

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To ensure that students are engaged, empowered and connected to school and the global community.

- That all learning is focused on student growth and success.
- That learning in Literacy and Numeracy is maximised for all students.
- That students are authentically engaged, have a voice and are encouraged to take ownership of their learning.

Achievements

In working towards our intended outcomes we continued to develop an environment that:

- *Provided authentic learning opportunities remotely as well as on-site in all areas of curriculum with a strong emphasis on out-door opportunities, physical fitness and well-being*
- *co-created the curriculum that was taught across the school in a remote model*
- *embedded quality learning for our students across the school by using the Learning Intentions, Success Criteria and Learning Dispositions*
- *Enhanced Teaching and Learning by using data to drive the learning*
- *Further developed the concept of collaborative planning with members of the Learning and Teaching committee participating in planning sessions*

St. Mary's is committed to align all initiatives within the Learning and Teaching Sphere with our philosophy of being an 'Evidence-Based Learning' school. We look towards solid research to support any new learning. We were able to create level teams of teachers who can plan together, use student data to drive the learning and learn from each other. Teachers worked together with the curriculum leaders to develop norms to guide their practice. They developed consistent documentation of and use of curriculum, this then enabled teams to develop clear, succinct and thorough learning, regardless if it was remote or on-site learning. We re-structured our planning for homeroom teachers during Covid to a day a week to assist them to plan together and support each other in developing on-line learning for our students. All meetings followed an agenda and notes were recorded.

To support our Evidence-Based Learning we have looked at what high impact strategies consistently inform the learning and highlighted the usage of assessment and how we use it to drive the learning. We investigated the difference between formative and summative assessment, we generated base-line assessments and re-arranged the schedule to match our requirements. As a school we reviewed and fine-tuned our assessment schedule ensuring that it generates enough value added data for our students. We constructed a whole school data wall and began holding 'power hour meetings' with teams focusing on data and students. We began looking at what Essential Mathematic pre-post test data looks like and how we can use it more to inform the next step to learning with an out-door expert. Our aim was to ensure an excellence in practice, and teachers developed a shared understanding of what effective teaching and learning assessment looks like in their Homeroom. This allows students to have a voice in their learning by actively setting goals for their next step of learning. Due to Covid 19, ascertaining true assessment of learning was difficult in remote learning times. Therefore, when the students

returned in term 4, all were tested in reading, writing and mathematics and we endeavoured to see growth in the last 8 weeks of the year. This data will be our bench mark for 2021 to assist students to get back on track in their learning.

Our school was one of 4 schools invited to be part of the Victorian Learning Commission program, where a small group of our students were taught how to analyse data and be part of the decision making process in the area of Learning and Teaching. This was taken very seriously and as a school we had an application procedure and an interview for student applications. For our first time the response was of a high commitment and standard - we had 14 applications for 6 positions. Due to Covid, the planned interaction with the different schools didn't occur and we had one day with Helen Butler, the facilitator, at school. The senior team, with the assistance of the Learning and Teaching Leaders and the two Homeroom teachers, kept the group working and during lock-down these students generated 'student voice' across levels and were able to assist in the review of our Learning Dispositions. Their input influenced our decision to reduce our focus dispositions from 8 to 5. The student Commissioners generated self-talk questions and designed new posters to be placed in all homerooms. Even though we were unable to carry through on our initial plan of supporting the learning of writing, we will put that on hold for the new commissioners in 2021.

We had prepared to implement a Writing Rubric as a bench mark assessment across the whole school to enable a consistent teaching approach in the area of writing. However, due to Covid 19, this was placed on hold and will be picked up in 2021, as the priorities of generating engaging learning on different types of platforms required a lot of learning for staff.

In 2020 we began planning for St Mary's students to undertake the Design and Technology curriculum with a designated teaching staff supporting the learning within our inquiry model. Design and Technology is an approach to learning which incorporates Science, Technology, Engineering and Thinking skills. This is a new initiative for our school in a formal way as classes at St Mary's will add this approach to our already robust curriculum. We have decided to use this vehicle of learning as we believe it will greatly enhance our students' learning and build engagement. We have sourced equipment and set up a hub that students will engage with to learn how to generate a design brief and use thinking tools. In remote learning we ran a small group that participated in 'Mad Science' and one of our teams won the over-all prize.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

With no NAPLAN testing conducted, St Mary's continued to make use of the data collected throughout the year to inform the next steps in student learning. Some of the initiatives we undertook as a result of the COVID restrictions include:-

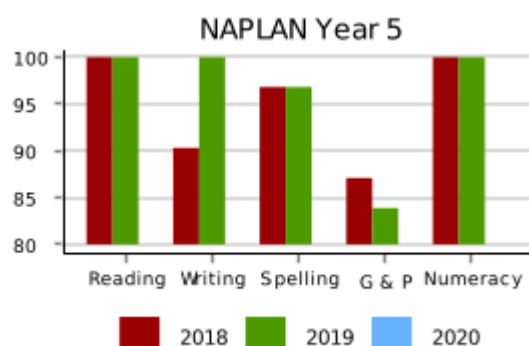
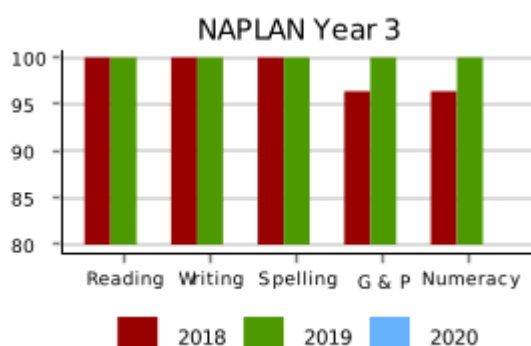
To ensure that each student at our school had value added to their learning, we saw the need to develop a whole-school assessment and data schedule that was used to frequently monitor student progress when the students were back on site. We re-trained all staff, including LSOs, to complete running records and analyse the evidence. This then gave teachers a quick and accurate record of what the next step of learning would be for their students. We did this across the whole school, every five weeks in Term 4 to ensure that students were achieving success and growth in Reading. In Writing we gathered data by using a rubric that provided evidence of what students were demonstrating in their Writing and what the next step of learning would be. In Mathematics we used our on-line program and teachers used this to pre and post test learning.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019	2020	2019 – 2020
	%	%	Changes	%	Changes
			%	*	*
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	96.4	100.0	3.6		
YR 03 Numeracy	96.4	100.0	3.6		
YR 03 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	87.1	83.9	-3.2		
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Spelling	96.8	96.8	0.0		
YR 05 Writing	90.3	100.0	9.7		

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

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

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



Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

The Goals from our School Improvement Plan has been:-

- To improve student engagement and wellbeing through Social and Emotional Learning.

Our Intended Outcomes have been:-

- That students feel safe and connected to the school.
- That students are engaged, have a voice and are empowered through their learning.

Achievements

During 2020, staff were involved in Professional learning about the 5 areas of Social Emotional learning. We now use a strategic approach in the implementation of Success Criteria to focus on the development of student capabilities and learning dispositions.

We are proud of the visual displays throughout the school which focus on Social and Emotional Learning.

A variety of new resources was purchased, especially Picture books which are used to promote wellbeing.

With regard to health & medical procedures - Operoo is the platform for parents/carers to list medical needs. Staff training in First Aid, CPR and Anaphylaxis is all current. Epipens are now centrally recorded via the Epiclub portal and the school receives notification when these are due to expire.

Student voice is continually developing with a greater focus to come in 2021. Students have voice through leadership roles/committees such as the Student Representative Council, Learning Commissioners, Captain roles. At the end of 2020 our leadership roles were evaluated and a new role was implemented as Social Justice Captain. The Social justice captain is supported by a staff leader and a team of students to develop Social Justice initiatives across the school. Student Voice was further enhanced during 2020 by our involvement in the Victorian Learning Commission, with a group of student Commissioners leading our school in implementing a change in our teaching of Learning Dispositions.

A big emphasis with Student Wellbeing during 2020 was in supporting students, families and staff through the two periods of remote learning and the two periods of transition back to school. Whilst our Student Wellbeing Leader and our Learning Diversity Leader led our school in developing strategies during these periods, we were heartened by the fact that the whole community contributed to the success of these strategies. Our community rallied to support children and families who had been hardest hit by the lock-down periods and the social, emotional, financial and spiritual toll. We are, rightfully, very proud of the way our Community - staff, families and students - came together in support of each other, and especially those with heightened needs.

VALUE ADDED

In Term one, years P-6 began with a unit of work focusing on wellbeing and connectedness to school and community. A large part of this is developing relationships within our Homeroom and ways we belong to the local community & school.

Another focus in Term one was on Wellbeing and safety at school. We held a kindness day at the end of term and a beautiful display was created by students for our wall. Activities were held at lunchtime and the focus of the day was on how we should treat others.

While in remote learning the focus was on keeping our community connected even though we were physically apart. A number of initiatives were implemented to achieve this.

We connected with the larger community by creating a Gate of Joy along High street where students created posters with inspiring messages/images to give joy and hope to our local area - Thornbury.

Fr Shabin streamed Mass each Sunday so that we could pray together.

Students in Years 1-2 wrote letters to St Paul's Hostel and to our Parishioners who lived alone.

Our school captains ran assemblies both onsite and remotely throughout the year.

The house captains initiated ISO challenges to collect house points and create a sense of togetherness. These challenges included music & Art challenges, Lego masters and a cooking showcase.

Our Wellbeing Leader & Deputy Principal created a Wellbeing specific newsletter with handy hints, community photos and research based articles for families.

We participated in Active April while in remote learning in 2020 - Our school Team was made up of parents, teachers and students. The challenge was to participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity daily.

A 'Virtual School Camp' was conducted for our Gr 5 & 6 students due to campsites being forced to close due to COVID restrictions

Upon our return from lockdown the focus was on the wellbeing of students embedded in the curriculum. Opening up the corridor in the junior area as a learning space - initially this began after our return from lockdown as a way to have smaller groups and more hands-on learning happening. We continued to run our Prep-Grade 6 buddy program

Our onsite Psychologist was available to our school community throughout the year either face to face or remotely.

We continued to focus on the importance of nurturing authentic partnerships and engagement with families to enhance social, emotional and cognitive development. Parent partnerships have continued to be enhanced by encouraging parent voice particularly in relation to conducting Parent Support Group Meetings and the writing of Personalised Learning Plans.

Our Parents and Friends Group maintained a strong presence and initiated many of the actions to support families in need.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

Due to the COVID restrictions, Catholic Education Melbourne decided that the CEMSIS surveys, introduced in 2019, would not be conducted in 2020. However, the student data from the 2019 surveys indicates incredibly high student engagement and connection with their peers and staff. This data indicates that our school has great success in promoting Student Wellbeing. Despite this high success, we will continue to seek opportunities for improvement in this area.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student attendance/absence is recorded twice daily by classroom teachers using the Nforma online platform. This platform maintains a permanent record of student attendances and absences.

Parents are expected to inform the school, via letter, email or phone call, when their child is absent from school.

During 2020 there was no set procedure in place for parents to be contacted when their child is absent without explanation. This procedure has been implemented during 2021 and parents are contacted via sms by 11.00am if their child is absent from school without explanation.

During the remote learning periods in 2020, children were recorded as attending 'offsite' unless their parents had informed us that they were unwell or for some other reason had not engaged in their learning. Children attending onsite during these periods were recorded as present at school.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Y01	97.0%
Y02	97.2%
Y03	97.2%
Y04	97.4%
Y05	97.7%
Y06	97.6%
Overall average attendance	97.4%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

The goal was to maintain a focus on Child Safety and the steps staff and other adults need to take to ensure the safety of our children.

Achievements

During 2020, staff participated in regular Professional Learning related to the safety and wellbeing of our students. These included:-

- First Aid/CPR updates including Anaphylaxis & Asthma management.
- Mandatory reporting update
- Risk management

During the remote learning periods, extra steps were taken to monitor safety and promote wellbeing including:-

- Regular well-being checks by staff
- Support for vulnerable and at-risk children to attend on-site
- Reinforcing of protocols when on-line - using learning tools, communication channels and on-line meeting platforms
- The school ran a transition program focused on supporting the well-being of students in returning to on-site learning

The school continued to develop partnerships and sought assistance from outside agencies to support students. Agencies included:-

- Berry Street
- The Brotherhood of Saint Laurence
- St Vincent de Paul Society
- DHS

Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

The Goals from our School Improvement Plan have been:-

- To continue to foster a professional learning community focused on success and growth in student learning.
- To effectively manage resources focused on improving student outcomes and school improvement plan priorities.

Our Intended Outcomes have been:-

- That quality teaching and curriculum processes will remain a focus to ensure staff are empowered, have ownership and contribute to learning success and growth.
- That staff professional development is ongoing, meaningful and reflects the school improvement plan priority.

Achievements

We underwent significant change in the Leadership & Management of our School during 2020, when Dino De Propertis, our Principal since 2012, retired mid-year, and Amanda Gill, one of our two Deputy Principals, took on the role of Acting-Principal for the remainder of the year. This change took place as we were embarking on the second, extended, period of remote learning early in term 3.

Despite this significant change, the Leadership Team continued to strive to promote school life and learning with Christ as its foundation and model. We sought strategic avenues and opportunities that were forward-looking.

We actively promoted our Catholic identity by holding clearly the Christian vision of integrating life and faith in all our dealings. We ensured that educational programs and celebrations were valued, with particular emphasis on these during the periods of remote learning.

We sought ways to respond to social justice and needs in our society, which evolved over the course of 2020.

We encouraged, supported and promoted a culture in the school that sought evidence to inform action. We sought and critically evaluated new ideas and practices in teaching, learning and assessment. We shared responsibility for monitoring and maintaining a positive school climate of fairness, respect and tolerance. We supported learners of wide-ranging capacities and encouraged the pursuit of excellence.

All staff have valued professional learning and development. We ensured that the directions outlined in the School Improvement Plan and Annual Action Plan were followed, whilst offering opportunities for all staff to be professionally supported and challenged. The emphasis of professional learning changed to support all staff in implementing a remote learning curriculum and we endeavoured to be responsive to the needs of all staff.

At every leadership meeting our major focus is the ongoing review of our Annual Action Plan to ensure strategies are fully implemented. This has guided our planning meetings and Professional Learning Team (PLT) meetings. Regular reviews have been conducted to ensure that outcomes and targets are monitored and addressed.

We have also focused on building student voice through broadening student leadership roles and increasing the profile of the SRC. School and House Captains are involved in decision-making in many areas in the life of the school. In 2020, our school became an active participant in the Victorian Learning Commission with student Commissioners guiding us to change the learning dispositions we promote in our school, to make them more student -friendly.

Weekly team planning and level meetings are embedded in our culture and as such provide for accurate planning to meet children's needs, professional learning and reflection on our practice.

PLT meetings occurred in all learning areas. The focus for PLT meetings is based on the evidence we see in student learning so that we can make informed decisions about the next steps in learning.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

The school showed its commitment to the ongoing Professional Learning of staff by providing opportunities for staff to engage in the following learning:-

- Self Regulated Learners with Helen Butler
- Victorian Learning Commission
- GRIN (Numeracy) training
- Learning Diversity - ABLES
- Writing development
- Oral Language development
- Visual Literacy
- NCCD Modules
- Working with Children with Autism - Sue Larkey
- Primary English Teaching Association of Australia Conference
- Protocols for online platforms and expectations in online meetings
- Team collaboration
- First Aid Training - CPR, Anaphylaxis management, Asthma management, Injury management
- ICT skill development
- Staff participated in online Professional Learning programs in:- Spelling, Maths, Literacy and Wellbeing
- Leaders participated in the following Catholic Education Melbourne Network Professional Learning programs:- Principal; deputy Principal; Learning & Teaching; Religious Education; Student Wellbeing; Learning Diversity; Literacy; Maths.

- The school continued its participation with a cluster of Schools focused on Evidence Based Learning with Helen Butler.

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	30
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1248

TEACHER SATISFACTION

The school implemented a number of strategies during 2020 to build staff morale and job satisfaction. These included:-

- A two day Professional Learning Program early in the year to provide staff with the opportunity to learn about 'Self Regulated Learners' whilst also having time to socialise in a relaxed setting.
- There were frequent opportunities to give and receive feedback - to assist individuals and build capacity for teams.
- Staff prayed and shared reflections together on a weekly basis.
- Facilitated planning was conducted weekly to support staff to work collaboratively and learn with and from each other in preparing the children's learning.

Further strategies were implemented specifically to support staff during the periods of remote learning:-

- More planning time was provided to collaborate with peers.
- Reduced meetings after school and allowed opportunities for staff to participate in on-line professional learning programs and activities.
- Staff were consulted when preparing for on-site supervision rosters. Adjustments were made for vulnerable staff and for staff who had to support other family members.
- Learning Support Officers were trained and supported to maintain their successful interactions with children requiring extra support.
- On-line social activities were organised - trivia competition, painting class, book club.
- Regular check-ins were made with staff
- Protocols for a COVID-safe environment were maintained

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	90.3%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	79.0%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	17.4%
Graduate	26.1%
Graduate Certificate	4.3%
Bachelor Degree	60.9%
Advanced Diploma	34.8%
No Qualifications Listed	4.3%

STAFF COMPOSITION

Principal Class (Headcount)	3.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	27.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	19.8
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	6.0
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

School Community

Goals & Intended Outcomes

The Goal from our School Improvement Plan has been:-

- To strengthen family engagement in the school community.

Our Intended Outcomes have been:-

- That families are actively engaged as learners in the school community and genuine partnership is fostered.
- That there is improved engagement in the life of the Parish School and with the wider community

Achievements

St Mary's is a Catholic school where we endeavour to engage families and the community through a partnerships approach. We have promoted a shared vision and goals by:

- Leaders, staff and families working collaboratively to create and strengthen safe, child-friendly environments for learning
- Actively fostering and sustaining relationships with families to support students to thrive in learning and life
- Promoting the partnership between families and teachers in the children's learning journey
- Nurturing the complementary roles of families, teachers and other significant adults that contribute to the spiritual, emotional, social and cognitive development of the whole child
- Valuing parents and carers and engaging them as co-educators of their children
- Mitigating barriers to disadvantage and engagement (including social, cultural inclusion)

2020 presented challenges and new opportunities for the Community, and the school worked hard to be creative and inclusive during this period. Communication between the school, family and Parish communities was vital in continuing to establish new links and build on connections already in place.

Members of the St Mary's School community were engaged in the children's learning through participation and exposure to a wide range of opportunities which included;

- Parents and Friends Association (e.g. Community support during COVID — Identifying needs and coordinating, collecting and distributing vouchers, food, supplies etc)
- Classroom Helpers Program
- Recycled Uniform Exchange
- Excursions and Incursions
- Inter School and District sporting events
- Parent Teacher conferences
- School Learning Reports
- Personal Learning Support Group meetings

- Class and school Masses
- Sacramental celebrations
- Graduation mass celebration
- School Assemblies
- Life and Faith Sacramental meetings
- Prep Playgroup and Orientation programs
- School Fundraising (Including: Mother's / Father's Day stalls, Charity raffles, Book Fair, Special food days, Social events : Dinner dance / School Disco
- School Open Days and School Tours
- Year 6 Graduation
- Curriculum evenings
- School Fete
- Special Friends day
- Class family social opportunities (Offsite and Onsite)
- Newsletter
- St Mary's Website
- OSHClub Before & After School Care Program
- Operoo — School Communication Platform
- Adjusted student Learning Platforms during remote learning periods

PARENT SATISFACTION

A major focus during 2020 was on maintaining connections between families and school during the remote learning periods and for the broader periods when parents had limited or no physical access to the school facilities.

- See-saw and Google Classroom were used as learning platforms, which allowed for two-way communication.
- The School newsletter consistently reflected changes and building of community capacity.
- School COVID guidelines related to learning and on-site procedures were frequently shared.
- Clear protocols for use of online learning platforms were shared with parents.
- School ICT devices to support remote learning were provided to families who required them.
- A survey was conducted with parents to gather information about remote learning.
- Alternative learning platforms were developed and shared with parents in response to learning needs and concerns raised.

- Much positive feedback was received and shared with the community.
- Wellbeing videos and weekly wellbeing information/challenges were shared - these included items for adults and children.
- An on-line art show was shared with the community.
- School fee relief and adjustments were offered to families in need of such support.

Our Parent Community demonstrated its commitment to the School, to the children's learning and wellbeing and to those in need.

- Parents made donations of food, vouchers and other items to help those in need. Staff also made many donations to support families in need.
- Social media was used to maintain connections and to open communication. This included supporting families through their businesses.
- Parents ran online sporting group activities for community members.

Future Directions

Having been appointed as Principal from the start of 2021, I was looking forward to the School Improvement Review process which would be conducted during the year. The Review will provide an indication of how the School has progressed over the preceding 4 years and will provide guidance for decision-making over the next 4 years of the School Improvement Cycle.

I am excited by the wonderful learning and teaching that I see in action at St Mary's with children able to articulate their learning strengths and challenges and participating in goal setting to give voice to their own learning. I am excited every time I go into a classroom or head out onto the playground and see how well our children interact with each other and support each other. I am excited about the opportunities presented by our involvement in the Victorian Learning Commission project and how this empowers students to grow as self regulated learners. I am excited to see how our staff work closely together, making the most of their range of skills and knowledge to plan for the children's learning. And I am grateful that those elements of our School culture are so strongly embedded. I know that we will be able to build on those wonderful strengths as we move forward.

I am looking forward to establishing a School Advisory Council in the second half of 2021 to provide greater parent voice in the governance of our school. I am also looking forward to re-establishing our Parents & Friends Association after COVID restrictions put a stop to most activities since early 2020. This has been an incredibly strong body for many years and I have great confidence that this group will continue to be a wonderful support for the School Community in the years ahead.

Chris Ray