



Diocese of Sale
Catholic Education Ltd

2023

Annual Report to the School Community



St Joseph's School

4-8 Raymond Street, ORBOST 3888

Principal: Kirsten Daly

Web: www.stjorbost.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 1177, E Number: E4013

Principal's Attestation

I, Kirsten Daly, attest that St Joseph'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 2023 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 03 May 2024

About this report

St Joseph'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](#).

Governing Authority Report

The 2023 school year marked my first year as Director of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Sale following the retirement of previous Director, Ms Maria Kirkwood who served in the role for ten years.

Throughout the year, I had the pleasure of visiting each of our 38 Catholic primary schools and five Catholic secondary schools. It was inspiring to witness the dedication of staff and the wonderful work taking place to provide a high-quality Catholic education for our students in a faith-filled environment.

Working with the Bishop, the Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL) Board, DOSCEL Secretariat, schools and parishes, the mission to offer every student the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God while achieving their personal best, remained at the forefront of our work.

Investing in school staff and leadership teams to promote expert learning and teaching practices was a top priority. The nation-wide shortage of teachers presented challenges, but we were committed to finding new and innovative ways to attract and retain high quality, committed Catholic educators.

Reflecting on the 2023 year, we have much to be proud of. Ongoing significant investment in new learning facilities and refurbishments through the Capital Grants Program and school community funding continued across our schools to enhance learning spaces and amenities to benefit students and staff.

During 2023, 13 blessing and opening ceremonies were held to celebrate school projects completed over the past three years, while the commencement of three new major projects were recognised with sod-turning ceremonies.

We were particularly excited to begin construction on the new St Josephine Bakhita Catholic Primary School at the newly established Five Farms estate in Clyde North. This will be the 44th school within the network of primary and secondary schools operated by DOSCEL.

The care, safety, and wellbeing of children and young people remain a central focus and fundamental responsibility. During Child Safety Week 2023, schools and parishes were invited by DOSCEL to showcase their innovative projects and activities to keep young people safe. Many of the projects were developed by young people themselves. A video and education resource were created from the submissions to share the work and promote awareness of child safety.

Our Catholic schools continue to be places of learning and enrichment, nurturing students in their spiritual, academic, physical, and emotional development.

I extend my deep appreciation to everyone involved in Catholic education within the Diocese of Sale for their commitment to our vocation of Inspiring Faith, Inspiring Learning.

Paul Velten

Director of Catholic Education - Diocese of Sale

Chief Executive Officer - Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited

Vision and Mission

Our School Vision

United, as a school community,

we walk in the light of faith,

guiding our students in learning with compassion towards a purposeful future.

School Overview

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School provides primary education for children from the communities in and around Orbost, drawing pupils from all outlying areas. Our school was founded by the Sisters of St Joseph in 1923 and has developed a strong tradition in the local community guided by the Gospel values of peace, justice, love and hope. We are a school for the whole community, warmly inviting enrolments from all families, including those with other faith traditions.

The multi-age grouping of children reflects life experience, provides valuable social education and enables children to recognise their own responsibility in developing an atmosphere informed by the values of Jesus Christ.

The school culture of inclusion and acceptance enriches us all and helps us to develop a strong sense of self-worth and independence. The school grounds create a safe, stimulating environment where the students can appreciate and enjoy outdoor learning and recreation. Having modern facilities and being technologically well-resourced, St Joseph's Primary School has the tools to support innovative teaching and personalised learning. The focus of Learning and Teaching is clearly on collegial, strategic planning and evidence-based practice, to support targeted teaching and enable appropriate learning adjustments so that outcomes are improved for all, particularly in the key learning areas of English and Mathematics. Participating in Religious Education and specialist programs affords students opportunities for holistic growth. To achieve this goal, we offer specialist subjects such as Music, Dance, LOTE (Auslan), Design & Technology, Kitchen/Garden, and Visual Arts. These subjects provide students with opportunities to recognise and appreciate their own talents, as well as those of their peers.

Staff, students and parents work together to create an excellent educational experience and provide effective pastoral care. The wellbeing of students is well supported by all staff members, who assist students in understanding and managing their emotions and developing positive relationships.

Our multifaceted educational environment enables children to reach their full potential in a rapidly changing world. In this way, the religious, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and physical development of each child is nurtured and developed.

Principal's Report

In 2023, St Joseph's Primary School celebrated a remarkable milestone, its 100-year anniversary. The commemoration took place on 25 March and was attended by distinguished guests, including Bishop Greg Bennett, the Honourable Darren Chester (Federal Member for Gippsland), Mr Paul Velten (Chief Executive Officer/Director of Catholic Education) and representatives of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart. The event united current and former students, staff, families, and community members, fostering a profound sense of community and deepening connections to the school's enduring history and values. The centenary celebration served as a poignant reminder of St Joseph's Primary School's resilience, spirit, and unity. It not only showcased the school's rich history but also highlighted its bright and promising future.

To support the implementation of the newly developed Strategic Improvement Plan, staff invested time in reviewing the school's vision, mission and pedagogy to ensure alignment for the future. Through the engagement of all staff in this work, leadership has been able to unite and empower staff. The school has refocused attention on our motto 'To Walk in the Light' in an effort to make explicit the connection between our Catholic Identity and daily actions. These connections are made explicit through the teaching Religious Education, Catholic Social Justice initiatives and the school wide expectations.

At St Joseph's, we understand the importance of creating a safe and supportive environment for student learning. The Whole School Approach to Positive Behavior Support is a central part of our practice, focusing on three core expectations: Caring for Self, Caring for Others, and Caring for our Environment. Staff professional learning, in partnership with DOSCEL, is developing the implementation of the concurrent universals of effective communication, active supervision, space utilisation, routine implementation, and visual support. These initiatives are designed to establish consistent and predictable learning environments across the school.

At St Joseph's, we remain committed to equipping our teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide exceptional learning experiences for our students. To this end, we have continued to prioritise targeted professional development opportunities aimed at enhancing our teachers knowledge and expertise in the Victorian curriculum (common misconceptions in Maths and Reading), high-impact teaching strategies and data analysis.

During the centenary celebrations, we all felt a sense of community that hadn't been felt since before Covid. As a result, we initiated new traditions like Christmas in July celebrations and revived cherished old ones in fresh iterations, such as hosting a Mother's Day high tea and a Father's Day bacon and egg breakfast. Unfortunately we still do not have a Parents and Friends Committee but efforts continue to be made to encourage family involvement.

Once again, thank you for your support and trust in our school community. We look forward to working together to achieve our goals and provide the best education for our students.

Kirsten Daly

Principal

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To invite a deeper understanding of a recontextualised Catholic faith through a focus on Catholic particularity.

Intended Outcomes:

- That a dialogical relationship is developed with an increasingly diverse community through *To Live in Christ Jesus/Sexuality Education in the Catholic School (SECS)*.
- That there is a clear and consistent articulation of Catholic Identity at St Joseph's.
- That there is a promotion of Catholic Social Teaching across the community.

Achievements

St Joseph's Primary School fosters a culture where staff actively collaborate with the Catholic Identity and Religious Education (CI RE) team of DOSCEL to deepen their knowledge of the curriculum. This collaborative effort is facilitated through Religious Education closure days and scheduled planning afternoons, which maintain a steadfast focus on the inquiry-based approach to teaching RE.

Our school's Religious Education closure day specifically aimed to enhance teachers' understanding of the Inquiry approach for teaching Religious Education. This focus was further reinforced through termly professional learning meetings. As a result, teachers have continued to implement the *To Live in Christ Jesus* curriculum, planning engaging learning experiences for our students.

We continued to focus on Catholic Social Justice through curriculum units and initiatives guided by student input. This effort was reflected in our Insight SRC data, which indicated a growing recognition of the importance of teaching social justice.

During 2023 we implemented a range of actions to address the identified goals and outcomes of the implementation plan.

They included:

- Staff professional learning with the support of the DOSCEL RE Learning Advisor
Facilitated planning with the Religious Education Leader (REL) to develop teach knowledge of the curriculum and promote collaborative practice
- REL attendance at RE Network meetings

- Staff planned and lead prayer for staff and the whole school
- Catholic Social Justice initiatives such as Crazy Sock day and Project Compassion
- Purchase of targeted resources

Value Added

St Joseph's Primary School celebrated a range of events that not only brought the school community together but also enriched the student connection with the Catholic identity of the school and the wider community. including:

- Centenary celebrations
- Holy Week, with whole school prayer and Stations of the Cross rotational activities
- St Joseph's Day, featuring reflection, shared lunch, and hands on building activities for students
- Catholic Education Week, marked by two Open Days
- St Mary MacKillop's celebration with St Brendan's Primary School, Lakes Entrance, including a whole school Mass, lunch, and activities with the junior class
- Christmas concert with dance performances and a shared dinner with families
- End of Year Mass incorporating Year 6 Graduation
- Ash Wednesday prayer and blessing from Father Hiep
- Conducting daily morning prayers in classes

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To build an expert teaching team to enhance the learning outcomes and well-being of all students.

Intended Outcomes:

- That school leaders create the conditions in which expert teacher practice is developed to enact the curriculum and students have access to learning entitlement.
- That teachers encourage and assist students to monitor their own learning and to set goals for future learning.
- That leaders and teachers have the capacity to read; interpret and action data and evidence for school and student performance.
- Whole School Approach to positive behaviour support is known and implemented throughout the school

Achievements

The staff of St Joseph's continued to maintain a strong focus on the learning of each child. This was reflected through the priority placed on developing teacher knowledge of the Victorian Curriculum, use of evidence of student learning to inform planning and use of evidence based strategies to target teaching for all students. As a small school we are well placed to track closely the learning (and wellbeing) of all students through the use of a range of data sets including; NAPLAN, PAT, Maths Assessment Interview and Benchmark Assessments in Reading.

To build the knowledge of staff of student disability, and how this impacts on learning and behaviour, we prioritised professional learning in inclusive practices and learning adjustments. Additionally, we continued to integrate the new Child Safety Standards into all our school policies and procedures.

During 2023 we implemented a range of actions to address the identified goals and outcomes of the implementation plan. They included:

- Four-week cycle of inquiry by the teaching team in Maths and Reading
- Facilitated planning with Leaders in Maths, Reading, Religious Education and Inquiry
- Developing teacher knowledge of the High Impact Teaching Strategies of Explicit Teaching and Structured Lessons.

- Introduction of STEM specialist teacher to plan, teach and assess Digital Technologies and Science
- Use of Essential Assessments in Years 1-6
- Unpacking student MAI (Maths Assessment Interview) results with teachers to inform planning and monitor student learning
- A tutoring program with a focus on Literacy was established for 13 Year F - 6 students
- Continued use of BeeBots & Spheros to engage students in learning about robotics
- 1:1 Chromebook use from Year F-6
- A change of Second Language learning from Spanish to Auslan
- Student and staff access to a Speech Pathologist to provide support to students and teachers in Oral language
- Establishment and use of a dedicated planning and professional learning space for staff
- Personalised Learning Plans for students with diverse wellbeing and learning needs.
- Partnerships with Allied Health services to support students with additional needs
- Regular meetings with our Learning Adjustment Adviser from DOSCEL

Student Learning Outcomes

In 2023 only four students completed NAPLAN, due to low student numbers in the targeted year levels. Teachers at St Joseph's use a range of assessments to track student growth, in particular in English and Mathematics. ACER Maths and Reading PAT testing data were used to analyse and highlight growth or gaps in student learning in the key learning areas of maths and reading. Teachers use the Mathematics Assessment Interview (MAI) and Fountas and Pinnell Reading Benchmark Assessment System to look closely at growth in numeracy and reading for each individual student and use this as the plan to teach students to their point of need.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	[ASR_Naplan.meanscalescore.Y3.Grammar]	[ASR_Naplan.proficient.Y3.Grammar]
	Year 5	*	*
Numeracy	Year 3	[ASR_Naplan.meanscalescore.Y3.Numeracy]	[ASR_Naplan.proficient.Y3.Numeracy]
	Year 5	*	*
Reading	Year 3	[ASR_Naplan.meanscalescore.Y3.Reading]	[ASR_Naplan.proficient.Y3.Reading]
	Year 5	*	*
Spelling	Year 3	[ASR_Naplan.meanscalescore.Y3.Spelling]	[ASR_Naplan.proficient.Y3.Spelling]
	Year 5	*	*
Writing	Year 3	[ASR_Naplan.meanscalescore.Y3.Writing]	[ASR_Naplan.proficient.Y3.Writing]
	Year 5	*	*

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2023 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.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal: To build an expert teaching team to enhance the learning outcomes and wellbeing of all students.

Intended Outcomes: That student agency is evident through student voice and ownership of learning.

Achievements

The staff of St Joseph's recognise the importance of creating a safe and predictable environment for students to support their learning and wellbeing. To this end we have continued to work diligently to implement the Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour and Support, with a specific focus on the universals of Positive Relationships and Routines. This work has been supported through professional learning of staff supported by the learning advisor from DOSCEL.

The government-funded initiative to introduce Mental Health and Wellbeing Leaders (MHWL) in schools allowed us to appoint a new Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader in 2023. This appointment represents a significant step forward in strengthening our commitment to prioritising student mental health. As we embark on this journey, we are dedicated to ensuring that our students' mental health and wellbeing are prioritised in every aspect of school life.

Student leadership remained a priority in 2023 and most year 6 students submitted a leadership application demonstrating a high level of motivation from students to lead. Our student leader groups met formally twice a term with a staff member to discuss and plan for initiatives/changes that they would like to see take place at a local school level.

In term one all classes completed the Friendology program and pre-assessment survey. This program is designed to help students establish and maintain healthy relationships, manage conflict with kindness and increase their overall resilience. Data from the post assessment showed that students felt they were able to identify what a healthy friendship looked like and were more confident in knowing how to solve friendship problems themselves.

During 2023 we implemented a range of actions to address the identified goals and outcomes of the implementation plan. They included:

- Introduction of staff roster to run Breaky club
- The appointment and training of a MHWL

- Staff meetings were allocated to Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Student wellbeing each term
- Social skills sessions ran each term focusing on developing friendships, problem solving skills, getting along with others
- Celebrating National days such as 'No Bullying', Harmony Day and R U Ok?
- Yard behaviour tracking to decrease negative behaviours and increase positive acknowledgment
- Continued implementation of Resilience Project practises Prep to 6

Value Added

A range of initiatives and extra curricular activities were staged in 2023 to support student wellbeing. They included:

- Parent information sessions with Inform & Empower on Cyber Safety
- Sensory play items installed into the playground
- An intervention room adjacent to the library has been established to facilitate small group sessions, including Language Lift and tutoring. This space also serves as a quiet area, which is essential for the success of these programs
- Merit certificates are awarded based on students' self-assessment of their learning and areas of improvement.
- Wellbeing Information for families incorporated into school media, ie. Newsletter/ Website/ Facebook
- Growing use of the language of the Zones of Regulation throughout the whole school
- The Art teacher has undergone professional learning in Art Therapy, providing an additional approach to Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) within the school.
- Continued upgrade of playgrounds passive play/learning area
- Introduction of 'Student Commendations' called each day over the PA system, aligned to our 3C's: Caring for Self, Caring for Others and Caring for our Environment.

Student Satisfaction

Each year, schools are required to conduct an annual survey, Insight SRC survey, of the student, staff and parent community. Insight SRC survey data demonstrates an increase in student satisfaction of classroom behaviour and the opportunities they have to collaborate with their peers. Pleasingly, our incident tracking data for the yard showed a decrease in negative behaviours during recess and lunch in the second half of the year.

Student Attendance

Parents are encouraged to notify expected absences in advance via PAM- SIMON Everywhere App or to ring the school office on the morning of an unexpected absence. Class teachers mark the roll each morning and afternoon on SIMON. Parents of students who are

absent, without explanation, are contacted by telephone each morning and an explanation is requested. Voice messages are left requesting a call back if calls are unanswered. An additional call is made later in the morning if no response is received. If contact is still not made, a text message is sent advising the parent of the child's absence and requesting an explanation. In the case of prolonged or regular absences, the principal requests a meeting with the parents to explain the importance of regular attendance and seeks advice from relevant staff at DOSCEL Secretariat.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	84.4%
Y02	91.3%
Y03	*
Y04	86.3%
Y05	57.6%
Y06	68.5%
Overall average attendance	77.6%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To provide a child safe, well-resourced primary school that reflects Catholic identity in the local community.

Intended Outcomes:

- That we meet all mandatory compliance benchmarks under all relevant State and Federal legislation.
- That employment induction and professional development practices reflect a focus on the expert teacher in a Catholic school.
- That student outcomes drive the allocation of school resources

Achievements

St Joseph's Primary School operates as a close-knit community where collaborative leadership is embraced to foster effective learning and teaching practices. Despite our small size, we strive to work together as a team to drive educational excellence and achieve our shared goals.

During 2023 we implemented a range of actions to address the identified goals and outcomes of the implementation plan. They included:

- Attendance at DOSCEL leadership development opportunities, including the Learning and Teaching Network and Learning Adjustment days.
- Leader facilitation of teacher inquiry into a range of curriculum areas.
- Reorganisation of timetable structures to enable teachers to meet in teams to work to analyse data, evaluate and plan programs that meet all children's needs.
- Monday briefings to discuss weekly for improved communication and clarity.
- Successful recipient of a State Government grant for development of outside learning area.
- Strategic allocation of funds and resources to address identified needs of students, with specific focus on Reading and Mathematics.
- Staff Annual Review Meeting (ARM) as an opportunity to reflect on work practices and set goals for ongoing professional learning and growth.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning and Teaching Network meetings • Collective meetings focusing on English and Mathematics • Principal conferences, briefings and meetings • Learning Adjustment, Nationally Consistent Collection of Data and Inclusive Education • Individual Learning Plans • Religious Education Leaders Conference • Principal Formation • Staff planning using <i>To Live in Christ Jesus</i> • First Aid, Mandatory Reporting and Reportable Conduct, Anaphylaxis Training • Emergency Management • Website management, SIMON administration training • NAPLAN online administrator and supervisor training 	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	11
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$800.00

Teacher Satisfaction

Insight SRC data for 2023 demonstrated a lift in the Organisational Climate for staff, with staff reporting improvements in supportive leadership, empowerment and ownership. Teacher confidence showed a small lift while appraisal and recognition and professional growth continued to grow.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	8.3%
Masters	25.0%
Graduate	25.0%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	33.3%
Advanced Diploma	0.0%
No Qualifications Listed	8.3%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	7
Teaching Staff (FTE)	5.2
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	6
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	4.0
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	1

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

As a school our focus continued to be on building engagement with the parent and wider Orbost community to support the learning and wellbeing of the students.

Achievements

At the start of the school year, we honoured and celebrated the cultural traditions of the Indigenous peoples by holding a welcome to country ceremony. This included a smoking ceremony and leaf cleansing ritual in the Indigenous garden/yarning circle, acknowledging the importance of the land and its history. By beginning the year in this way, we aimed to foster a deeper understanding and respect for Indigenous culture among our students and staff.

Achievements in our school community included:

- Sports in Schools went ahead from Term 2 with school Athletics, Cross Country, Winter and Summer Team Sports, coaching incursions with AFL skills and soccer, ending the year with our indoor swimming program, Lakes Aquadome, to prepare students for the summer break.
- Community support of the school breaky club, including donations from local business East Gippsland Roasters.
- Outside agencies / specialists were utilised to support students: Speech Therapists, Onpsych services, Occupational Therapy Services.
- Attendance of staff and students at the ANZAC Day ceremony in Orbost.
- Fortnightly parenting newsletters published to keep parents connected and informed.
- Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter Bonnet, Christmas in July & family BBQ.
- Social Media Presence - Facebook and Website.
- Local Library Storytime.
- Personal Development lessons for years 5 & 6 with local nurse.
- Sorry Day recognition activities with neighbouring Catholic School, St Brendan's Primary School.
- Participated in NAIDOC week celebration in Orbost.

Parent Satisfaction

School improvement surveys show that parents feel staff are approachable, engaged and that there is a clear focus on school improvement. Anecdotally, families were appreciative of

the school's response to remote learning and the efforts made by staff to support students and families.

Financial Performance

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.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at www.stjorbost.catholic.edu.au