



Melbourne Archdiocese  
**Catholic Schools**

# 2024

## Annual Report to the School Community



### **Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception School**

32 Station Place, SUNSHINE 3020

Principal: Patrizia Bertani

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

Registration: 1101, E Number: E1096

---

## Principal's Attestation

---

I, Patrizia Bertani, attest that Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception 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 19 Mar 2025

---

## About this report

---

Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception 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

---

When Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) launched our inaugural strategic plan MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World just over a year ago, I spoke about the need for our whole organisation to reflect on the biggest challenges that confront us, and to work at speed to find practical, ambitious, student-centred solutions.

As a relatively new governing authority, 2023 set us on the path to achieving our first goals, as we focussed our efforts on building strong foundations for success. The four pillars of MACS2030 – Inspired by Faith; Flourishing Learners; Enabled Leaders; and Enriched Communities - serve to guide our work on how we achieve our strategic intent.

When we surveyed our teachers in late 2022, over 80 per cent told us that they want access to quality teaching and assessment resources. So in January 2023, we secured a system-wide licence for MACS primary and secondary schools to access the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) assessment suite. The inclusion of the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Survey allows schools to monitor the wellbeing of their students and target resourcing to specific areas of need. Together, these tools provide a coherent and systematic approach to student assessment.

In partnership with Ochre Education, we began work on F-6 Mathematics curriculum resources, being developed in a phased approach over three years, and delivered the first tranche for F-2. A key consideration in developing the materials is ensuring teachers retain autonomy to tailor curriculum implementation to meet the individual and local needs of students.

This is an exciting development for our MACS community, clearly demonstrating the commitment we all share to delivering the best possible education opportunities for our 120,000 students and supporting our 10,000 classroom teachers to be the very best that they can be.

Archbishop Peter commissioned a comprehensive review of Religious Education curriculum, the first in over a decade. It offers us some challenges, but fundamentally is a hope-filled report that invites a path of ongoing work to develop a new RE curriculum for all Catholic schools. We continued Working Together in Mission with Parish Priests throughout the Archdiocese, including through regular roundtable discussions.

Across greater Melbourne, one in five students attend a Catholic school and 2023 saw steady growth in enrolments across our system, demonstrating the value families place on a Catholic education and the high quality, holistic education MACS schools provide.

As a system of schools, we can be better together, reducing the administrative load on our schools and freeing our teachers and principals to focus on what they do best.

I would like to pay tribute to our MACS school and office colleagues who have worked so hard to achieve our goals. We look forward to further strengthening those partnerships as we work together to deliver an education that inspires young people to enrich the world.

Yours sincerely

Dr Edward Simons

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

---

## Vision and Mission

---

### VISION

In a spirit of unity and harmony, we strive to develop the whole person; providing an excellent education for all and inspiring our community members to live a Christian way of life.

### GOSPEL VALUES

With Faith and Love we are people of:

Justice, Peace, Respect, Service, Courage and Compassion.

### MISSION

Our Lady of the Immaculate Catholic Primary School is committed to:

- an inclusive learning community that is animated by our Catholic faith to provide deeper engagement with high quality learning
- a collegial performance development culture which nurtures the full flourishing of all
- engaging with current evidence-based research and data to innovate for improvement in learning outcomes
- strengthening positive relationships with families, students, staff and the broader community as active partners in realising the vision of the school.

---

## School Overview

---

Our Lady's School has been providing a Catholic education in Sunshine for the last 105 years, opening in 1919 to service the educational needs of children of Sunshine Post-World War One. The school continues to emphasise the charism of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop fostered by the Sisters of St Joseph who served at the school from 1928 until 2001.

The school has a long history of having a collaborative and harmonious relationship with the parish, encouraged by the current parish priest, Father Peter Damien McKinley. 2024 was Father Peter's ninth year as our Parish Priest. Father Peter has been very supportive of the school and very actively involved in the life of the school, The school thanks Father Peter for his ongoing spiritual guidance and his pastoral leadership of our school.

Situated in the heart of Sunshine, the school enjoys a highly positive reputation in the local community. Many parents and grandparents identify strongly with the school as ex-students. The demographics of the area are continuing to show that the school and its surrounding environment will be experiencing significant growth in the coming years due to the influx of new families buying into the Sunshine area and many new developments in the local community, including high-rise apartments and town-houses becoming more increasingly part of the landscape.

The school is proud of its cultural and linguistic diversity. 71% of students who attended Our Lady's School in 2024 have a background other than English. Whilst the area has been characterised in the past as a highly industrialised suburb of Melbourne with a large migrant population, there has been a sharp decline in industry and the suburb of Sunshine is continuing to undergo rapid change with high rise buildings and apartments now becoming a familiar part of the landscape.

The backgrounds of the students reflect a wide diversity of cultures and nationalities. Families are drawn from Australia, New Zealand, South-East Asia, including Myanmar (Burma), Singapore and India, from South Sudan in Africa and from Europe. The school structures its curriculum to ensure that the needs of students who are learning English as a second language are addressed. Predominately our students who come from backgrounds other than English are fluent in English. In 2024 there were 2 students who were classified as

students with a refugee background this represents a decline from 2023 when there were 9 and is a reflection of the changing demographics of the area.

Our Lady's School is continuing to operate at full capacity with younger families continuing to move into the area. This has renewed the community and impacted on the socio-economic data; which has been rising over the last years. Increasingly, parents are predominantly working professionals, small business owners, trades people and those at home rearing their children. Enrolments are from a range of religious and non-religious backgrounds with a slight decline from 60% (2023) to 57% (2024) of families identifying as Catholics.

In 2024 we proudly completed a major building project which consisted of constructing a double storey building with 10 new flexible learning areas with outdoor learning areas, student and staff amenities, staff planning rooms, two STEM focused wet areas with provision for cooking, outdoor learning spaces, a large verandah on the first floor as well as a nature playground incorporating sandpits, a bridge and a gathering space. This ensures that our school will be able to provide excellent facilities for both our students, staff and parents.

In 2024 out of a total enrolment of 320 students 33% NCCD students funded for additional learning needs. The school has continued to strengthen its strategic and differentiated approach to catering for the wide range of learning, behavioural and social and emotional needs of its students. This was reflected by the provision of a Learning Diversity Leader and a Learning Diversity team, employment of 10 Education Support Officers, a school psychologist (two days per week) and a Speech Pathologist(one day per week).

In 2024, we continued to make links with outside organisations to strengthen and enrich the learning experiences we provided for our students. This was mostly done via our Family Schools Partnerships Convenor Greg Woolford, who liaised with external organisations to enhance our inclusivity by providing support such as translators for our Burmese parents and enhancing our school sustainability focus by connecting our staff and students with the Jawbone project and local Brimbank council initiatives with a focus on sustainability in our local environment.

The four-year school improvement goals established by the school review in 2021 continued to be the focus of our work in 2024 within the following three overarching priorities:



#### Priority 1 Goal

To develop, implement and evaluate documented plans, structures, practice and processes to support a high quality curriculum which is inspired by our Catholic faith.

#### Intended Outcomes

That a collective responsibility for improving practice, professional knowledge and application of learning will increase the capacity for student learning.

That role clarity will improve.

That an ongoing process of religious formation and personal and professional growth will lead to innovation for improvement in professional practice.

#### Priority 2 Goal

To develop, implement and evaluate documented plans, structures, practice and processes to support a high quality curriculum which is inspired by our Catholic faith.

#### Intended Outcomes

That there is a collective responsibility for the delivery of a high quality curriculum reflective of the documented plans, processes and structure

That our Catholic faith is expressed throughout the whole curriculum.

That student agency will increase outcomes, engagement and connectedness in the school.

#### Priority 3 Goal

To deepen our family school partnerships so that all families can be actively involved in the life of our school.

#### Intended Outcomes

That partnerships will be strengthened by enhanced collaboration between parents, staff, students and the broader community.

That opportunities for families to engage in the life of the school will be diversified to be more inclusive and connected to learning.

That families will have opportunities to have a deeper involvement in the direction of the school.

We continued to sustain and strengthen our focus on embedding education in faith across the curriculum using a Hermeneutical approach to teaching and learning in Religious Education.

In 2024 there was a major focus on the familiarization and implementation of The Vision for Instruction document released by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) and designed to support schools to implement instructional best practice. Our Lady's School conducted an audit against these recommendations and it was pleasing to see that we had many strategies in place. We will use this document as a guide to further improve and refine our approach to learning and teaching in order to provide our students with the best possible learning opportunities.

We continued to provide opportunities to personalize learning for our students via Discovery Learning in the Junior classrooms and the Inquiry approach which is used across the school. In 2024 we continued to strengthen differentiating the curriculum according to student needs by using the 3 Tier Intervention Framework and by providing targeted intervention.

In 2024, we continued to implement strategically selected curriculum initiatives aligned to our School Improvement Plan and our 2024 Annual Action Plan. This ongoing and focused approach has been effective in the formation of a learning community which is inclusive, student-centred and focused on developing an excellent model of Contemporary learning within a Catholic school context, inspired by the MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World document.

---

## Principal's Report

---

2024 was the year when we finally completed a major capital works project that had taken over two years to build. The completion of our new double store building which included: 10 new flexible learning areas, student and staff amenities, staff planning rooms, two STEM focused wet areas with provision for cooking, outdoor learning spaces, a large verandah on the first floor as well as a nature playground incorporating sandpits, a bridge and a gathering space, was a dream come true.

The completion of the building brought much joy and happiness to our school community. We were proud that together with the support of MACS, the Our Lady's families capital levy contribution and a \$3 million grant from the State Government we had created a building which offered excellent facilities for our students and staff. It was a building which would provide for the needs of our school community well into the future. The total cost of the St Joseph of the Sacred Heart Learning Centre was \$7,236,000.

The building was officially opened on the 11th of November and named the St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart Learning Centre. The name is a link to the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart who served our school for 71 years and whose founder was St. Mary MacKillop of the Cross.

The design of the new building reflects the school's spiritual and historical roots and is based on the following design elements:

1. The first element is derived from the emblem of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart, representing the school's Catholic heritage.
2. The second element is derived from the sawtooth roof tops of the H.V. MacKay Harvester Works, which operated in Sunshine during its industrial era, and was the largest manufacturing plant in Australia; employing thousands of people.

We were very fortunate that it was a fine and sunny day for our opening ceremony which was held outdoors with many people attending. There were representatives from the: MACS Capital Works Team and the Western Region Office, Sisters of St. Joseph. Principals from

the Western Zone, many past staff members, parents, families and friends, the Our Lady's School staff and students.

The opening ceremony was conducted by our Parish Priest Father Peter Damien McKinley as well as Father Peter Zin and Father Peter Hoang. The Master of Ceremony was Mrs Christine Carabott (Deputy Principal and Student Wellbeing Leader). The Our Lady's choir sang beautifully throughout the ceremony with much joy.

The speech made by the school principal, Patrizia Bertani during the opening ceremony is included below:

I'd like to welcome the following guests:

The Member for Laverton Sarah Connolly, Father Peter Damien McKinley, Father Peter Hoang and Father Peter Zin, Sister Marea Cox and Sister Angus Nunn who are representing Sister Sue McGuinness the Provincial Leader of the Sisters of St. Joseph

Anthony O'Shannessy Director, Finance , Infrastructure and Digital who is here on behalf of the Executive Director of MACS- Dr Edward Simons

Friends from MACS Infrastructure

Denise Mugavin -MACS Senior Manager for the Western Region

Principal Colleagues, past teachers and students, families and friends and the wonderful students and staff of Our Lady's School community.

Can I begin by saying what a beautiful day it is to gather together and to finally celebrate the opening and blessing of the St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart Learning Centre.

Just like anything that is truly worthwhile it has been quite a journey to realize this building, years in fact but together we have overcome all obstacles and created a building which will serve this school community well into the future. A building that we can all be proud of. A building where the students will feel valued, included and immersed in an environment which has been designed to enable them to learn, grow and flourish to their full potential.

I would also like to say how wonderful it is to have a former principal of Our Lady's School Mr Peter Moore here with us today. During his principalship at Our Lady's Mr Moore always strived to provide the very best for this school as can be seen with the Mary MacKillop Library which he built while he was principal at Our Lady's. We here at Our Lady's today continue to strive to provide our students with the best learning facilities possible.

Before Mr Moore we were blessed to have the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart who served in our school community for 73 years. The Sisters transmitted the spirit of St Mary MacKillop. Today that spirit lives on at Our Lady's School in the hearts, minds and actions of the staff and students who are each day keeping alive the spirituality that was gifted to our school community by the Sisters.

Today we are very fortunate to have Sister Angus and Sister Marea here with us. I have such fond memories of Sister Marea working calmly and diligently in the school Library making sure all the books were in order for the students to enjoy. She warmly welcomed me when I first came to Our Lady's. I also have such fond memories of Sister Bernadine a past principal of Our Lady's who sadly passed away this year and had a great love and passion for Our Lady's school. Each year on the day of the Melbourne Cup she would stand outside what was the TAB in Sunshine, shaking a can at the punters and getting what donations she could for our school.

We are proud to be part of a faith filled charism that transcends us, just like many schools in the Western Region of Melbourne who were blessed to have had the Sisters at their schools. This faith and charism began with a young woman in a make shift school in Penola all those years ago and even before that in a stable in Bethlehem. This inspirational message of faith, hope and love lives on in our schools.

As a tribute to the Sisters we have named our new building after their order, the order created by St. Mary MacKillop of the Cross.

Our exceptionally talented architects from Clarke Hopkins Clarke were able to capture both the spiritual and historical aspects of the school. The emblem of the Sisters of St. Joseph is represented in the external design of the building which also acts as a tribute to the sawtooth roof of the world-famous H.V MacKay Harvester works which in its heyday employed 5000 people and which is part of the great history of Sunshine.

It is very exciting to be here today and to have Sarah Conolly, the member for Laverton officially open the St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart Learning Centre. I am deeply grateful to the Victorian State Government for the \$3 million dollar grant we received towards the building of this exceptional learning centre.

I would also like to acknowledge the MACS infrastructure team and in particular Col Mackin and Fergus Chisholm who supported myself and the school during this extremely difficult time when the original builder unexpectedly liquidated their company and we had to then find another builder to take up the project. The fact that we were able to find another builder in a relative short amount of time is a tribute to their hard work.

Melbcon were appointed as our new builders and they have proven to be exceptionally professional and collaborative. They have worked with the school for over a year to achieve the wonderful building we have today.

This new building has been without a doubt the largest and most complex infrastructure project this school has ever undertaken. This build not only involved the building of 10 new learning spaces specialist areas for STEM, a new nature-based playground, as well as brand new staff and student facilities it also involved the consolidation of the entire site.

Let me explain what I mean by this. Over the school's 105-year history Our Lady's School expanded thanks to the very generous and kind parish priests, the Sisters of St. Joseph and parishioners of the time who bought up neighboring properties as they went up for sale to provide more land for the school's use.

This happened all along Station Place as well as also purchasing a lane way which ran right down the middle of the school from the council. As a result, the school had many different meters for power, gas and water all of these were consolidated during this building project. This in itself is a great achievement.

Today we have an exceptional learning centre for our students and staff.

None of this could have been possible without a passionate and dedicated team of people who met regularly over the past 14 months and collaborated to build this state-of-the-art learning facility. Every single detail of the building was carefully planned. It is with heartfelt gratitude that I thank:

- Father Peter MacKinley our parish priest, who recommended our exceptional architects and enthusiastically supported us throughout the whole project.
- Christine Carabott and Mary-Anne Meilak for their valuable input, incredible work and support throughout the whole project
- Simon Le Nepvue, Stephanie Wan, Kevin Ung and Emily Thompson the architects from Clarke Hopkins Clarke who's outstanding design, passion and dedication to completing this build through all the ups and downs is to be commended
- Qamil Redzeqi, Eddie Horton, Shannon Synott and Brandon Williams from Melbcon Building Company for their collaboration and for completing such quality work within a timely manner.
- Tim Buhagiar and John Buttigieg for installing all the new technologies into the building.
- Yvonne Karniej MACS Infrastructure Program Manager for her advice and expertise throughout the build.
- Our maintenance men Dean Frahm and John Payne and our cleaners Nubia and Salvador Barrera for getting the building ready for today's opening

I am delighted that today we are able to open and bless the St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart Learning Centre. This building has been inspired by our desire to provide a better education for our students just as Saint Mary MacKillop of the Cross did when she opened her new school in Penola. We have followed in her footsteps and today we can celebrate our collective achievement with pride.

Another immense achievement for 2024 was moving the Year 4 and Year 3 classes into the new building. They moved out of the school hall and the Mary MacKillop Library which meant that these two important facilities were now free to be used by the rest of the school. The move involved moving all furniture and resources. The teachers and students were very excited to experience the new learning centre for the first time. We then continued to work very hard to prepare the learning spaces in the new building so that the Foundation, Years 1 and 2 classes could move straight in from the beginning of 2025. This mammoth task was accomplished due to the efforts of many staff members who collaborated and worked hard to set the learning spaces up so that they were well organised and welcoming.

In 2024 we continued to strengthen school and family connections and continued to work towards maintaining a welcoming and inclusive school environment for our students, staff and parents. We invited parents and families to events throughout the year both onsite and sometimes online. We continued with the community classrooms where families were invited to come to their child/children's classroom and participate in classroom learning together with their child. These were very well attended and occurred two times during 2024 across all classes.. We ran the Parent Helpers workshops where parents had the opportunity to train as classroom helpers. The Parents and Friends Committee and the Parent Advisory Board continued to play a very important part in the life of the school by bringing the parent voice into the school and by doing so enriching and improving our school community.

2024 was a year where we had the opportunity to strengthen parish and school connections. The school hall was used each Sunday by the Burmese community with Father Peter Zin and his helpers organising Sunday school lessons for hundreds of children from Burma. It was because of the high number of Burmese children attending the Sunday school classes that the school helped out with Father Peter McKinley our Parish Priest coordinating between the Burmese community and the school. This arrangement worked very well and we hope to continue in 2025.

In 2024 we received funding for the Tutor Program which enabled the school to provide targeted intervention for those students who were 1 year below standard in Reading and would benefit from small group support at point of need. We were able to provide this provision for students across all year levels in the area of Reading and hope that the funding will be available in 2025.

We also received funding for a Mental Health teacher to work in collaboration with our Student Wellbeing Leader in order to improve wellbeing across our school community. The Mental Health teacher together with the Student Wellbeing leader facilitated both parent information evenings and professional learning opportunities for staff in this critical area of our curriculum.

We continued to place a strong focus on student and staff well-being to aid with strengthening a positive school culture for all members of our community. This continued throughout the whole of 2024. We focused on building and strengthening positive and collaborative relationships amongst the students, parents and staff. We feel that this has strengthened and promoted a sense of community and belonging at our school.



We continued to implement our school improvement plan with the Implementation of the Our Lady's Professional Development policy. Staff create their own improvement goals and worked through a process with their mentor leader to record their progress and their achievements. All staff had professional learning opportunities with Pauline Zappulla a GROWTH coach specialist who also provided GROWTH coaching for the Leadership team and middle leaders. This innovation for improvement with a focus on building staff capacity has been successfully established in our school since 2022 and continued in 2023 and 2024.

The Our Lady's School Art Show combined with the Picnic in the Yard and the Our Lady's Choir singing Christmas carols was a spectacular way to end what has been a very successful year for the Our Lady's School community. The school was filled with families and friends who enjoyed the Christmas carols, festive atmosphere but most of all delighted in viewing the beautiful artwork created by the students of Our Lady's School and which was proudly displayed in the school hall.

I can conclude that 2024 was a very successful year for Our Lady's School and I congratulate the students, staff and parents for their ongoing commitment and support of our lovely school community. This support has enabled much innovation and improvement which in turn supports our students' faith journey improved their engagement to school, improved learning outcomes and love of learning and a deep sense of belonging to the Our Lady's School community.

---

## Catholic Identity and Mission

---

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

To develop, implement and evaluate documented plans, structures, practices and processes to support a high quality curriculum which is inspired by our Catholic faith.

#### Intended Outcomes

That an ongoing process of religious formation and personal and professional growth will lead to innovation for improvement in professional practice.

That our Catholic faith is expressed throughout the whole curriculum.

### Achievements

We started the academic year with an Aboriginal smoking ceremony, led by Wurundjeri Elder Uncle Perry, a respected First Nations elder. This meaningful cultural event allowed us to recognize and honor the traditional custodians of the land. Parents and grandparents who attended shared their thoughts on the significance of offering these experiences to our children. Two weeks later, we gathered for a whole-school mass led by Father Peter-Damien, where our students took part in various roles throughout the ceremony.

To mark the beginning of Lent, the Years 4-6 classes attended the Our Lady's Parish Ash Wednesday mass, while the Foundation to Year 3 students prepared and led a liturgy outside their classrooms. It was uplifting to see so many members of our community attend the mass and other prayer services. In addition, the Year 6 Social Justice Committee took the initiative to organize and promote the Project Compassion fundraiser within the school. They engaged with each grade, put up posters, and managed the delivery and collection of the Project Compassion boxes. To further support the fundraiser, they organized a 'Guess the Lollies in the Jar' competition during break times, boosting the donations gathered in classrooms. The committee also invited students to participate in a dress-up day, encouraging them to wear cultural attire or colours representing their family background. During Holy Week, each class prepared and presented a prayer reflection for the Stations of the Cross which was held in the church over two days.

Classes were also invited to plan and participate in various masses, assemblies, and prayer services in line with the MACS calendar of events, which follows the liturgical calendar. The Religious Education Leader created a roster for masses and assemblies, and teachers worked together with the REL to plan the masses. Families were always encouraged to attend the masses in the church and to join the assemblies online.

During Mission Week, the Year 6 Social Justice Committee helped each grade organize a fundraising stall to raise money for the St. Vincent de Paul community, in response to the Feast of the Sacred Heart. The stalls were part of the students' Faith Life Inquiry Learning and were also connected to Socktober. Teachers provided support to ensure the students could run the stalls with confidence and success. The school raised over \$1,100 and was recognized by the Mini Vinnies group for their outstanding efforts. The students were invited to participate in the Mini Vinnies conference, though they were unfortunately unable to attend due to other commitments.

The sacramental program continued for students in Years 3, 4, and 6. Class teachers of the sacrament grades worked together with the Religious Education Leader to plan the sacrament information nights. The Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion were celebrated by Parish Priest Fr. Peter-Damien McKinley, while Confirmation was celebrated by Bishop Martin Ashe. Year 4 students attended the Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre and St. Patrick's Cathedral in East Melbourne, while Year 6 students participated in retreat days at St. Joseph's By the Sea in Williamstown, in preparation for their sacraments. These sacred places hold a strong connection to Our Lady's, as they are significant to the Sisters of St. Joseph, and we prioritize these retreat days to keep the charism of St. Joseph alive within our school community. After receiving their sacraments, students from all sacrament grades gathered for a celebration party to mark the occasion with their peers.

The Religious Education Leader continued to demonstrate Godly Play in Foundation to Year 2 and Bibliodrama in Years 3-6, allowing all students to engage with scripture in a meaningful way, fostering curiosity and a sense of wonder.

The Religious Education Leader (REL) continued to contribute Religious Education school-based professional learning to the TAPS MACS portal for Teacher Accreditation in Religious Education, playing a key role in our ongoing professional development and ensuring accountability. To support this, the school purchased online subscriptions to Australian Catholics +, Butterfly House by Andrew Chinn, and ICON Ministry Encounter Courses by Fr. Rob Galea. Additionally, staff were invited to attend the Maria Forde Parent Sacrament

evening and the Professional Learning Community session for staff, which was facilitated by Fr. Rob Galea.

Staff continued to lead prayer before staff meetings using the IWAS structure, a model also implemented in the classroom to guide students in planning their own class prayers. The IWAS model follows a clear process: Introduction, Word, Action, and Sending. Staff were encouraged to use the digital portal Liturgy and Prayer ReSource, provided by MACS, to connect their prayers to the liturgical calendar and access scripture readings that align with the themes they have chosen.

In 2024, the Religious Education Leader trialled a new planning model and so facilitated Religious Education planning in Foundation, Year 1/2, Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 level teams for one hour a week. Based on the hermeneutical approach to teaching Religious Education, teachers used the Victorian Curriculum, Religious Education Framework and the Coming To Know, Worship and Love units to plan meaningful, relevant and contemporary units of work.

To introduce the rosary across the school, the Religious Education Leader (REL) worked closely with the parish community and the Legion of Mary, who generously donated over 300 rosary beads for students to use in their classrooms. The REL also purchased additional posters, rosary beads, and pamphlets for each classroom to help students build their confidence in praying the rosary. The REL modeled how to pray the rosary, guiding students through the sequence of prayers. Students engaged in this prayer regularly, offering prayers for personal, communal, and global needs.

At the close of the year, we were honored to welcome Sarah Connelly, the State Member for Laverton, along with several dignitaries and friends of Our Lady's to help celebrate the opening of our new school building. The building was blessed by Fr. Peter-Damien McKinley, with assistance from Fr. Peter Zinh and Fr. Peter Hoang. Named the St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart Learning Centre, the building acknowledges the legacy and contributions of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart and honors the enduring Josephite tradition that continues to thrive within our school community.

### Value Added

The RE/Learning and Teaching Leader position is a 0.8 position with a POL3

- The Sacramental program including parent information evening focused on Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.
- Professional Learning for whole staff with Father Rob Galea
- Regular attendance to parish masses and school organised feast day masses.
- Classes F-6 begin the day with prayer. • Beginning all meetings with prayer and scripture reflection.
- Focus continued on implementing the RE Framework, weekly facilitated planning with RE/ Learning and Teaching Leader with level teams.
- Whole school F-6 implementing a Hermeneutical approach to learning and teaching in Religious Education.
- Embedding the Catholic Social Justice teachings F-6 in to the Faith Life Inquiry learning.
- Professional Learning Community and staff meetings regularly facilitated each term by the RE/Learning and Teaching Leader. The focus was on Scripture, RE moderation and embedding the Dialogue of Encounter approach and Inquiry Learning strategies into the delivery of the RE Curriculum
- Regular and varied communication focused on RE to parents via the weekly newsletter, Seesaw and Skoolbag apps and Google Meets.

---

## Learning and Teaching

---

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

To develop, implement and evaluate documented plans, structures, practices and processes to support a high quality curriculum which is inspired by our Catholic faith.

#### Intended Outcomes

That an ongoing process of religious formation and personal and professional growth will lead to innovation for improvement in professional practice.

That our Catholic faith is expressed throughout the whole curriculum.

### Achievements

2024 was a significant year for all MACS schools with the introduction of the Flourishing Learners MACS 2030 strategy. With the launch of the Vision for Instruction focusing on Literacy and Numeracy, it was the perfect time to assess what was working well at Our Lady's School and identify areas for improvement. After reflecting on each component of the Explicit Instruction Sequence, the teaching staff decided to focus on refining the Regular Review component, starting with Literacy and making adjustments in Numeracy. A group of leadership members attended professional learning days led by MACS, with support from Dr. Simon Breakspear, and then returned to lead professional learning community sessions with the teaching staff. It was also an ideal time for the school to revamp the curriculum map for Faith-Life Inquiry. After gathering data from parents, students, and staff, a two-day offsite school closure was planned to develop the new curriculum, aligning it with the Victorian Curriculum 2.0, the Religious Education Framework, the vision for the school, and the collected data. All staff participated in the closure days, contributing to the conceptual mapping of the new Our Lady's curriculum. Concepts were selected and agreed upon by staff based on the data to shape the curriculum map. The Learning & Teaching Leader then continued the process through several meetings to compile the data and add detail, ultimately creating a two-year cycle document that can be used from Foundation to Year 6.

The Art Show was a vibrant event that showcased the incredible work being done in the Visual Arts department. It highlighted the personalized approach of the Studio Art learning

and teaching model, where students engage in ongoing art projects that they plan, execute, and reflect upon all within the same class, with guidance from the specialized art teacher. The pieces selected for the Art Show were all chosen by the students, emphasizing the importance of Student Voice and Student Agency within the school. The event was further enhanced by a Christmas Carol concert, complete with a live DJ, as the Art Show took place. The school community came together for a picnic dinner in the yard, followed by dancing and celebrating, making it a memorable highlight of the year for both students and their families.

As the school continued to thrive with over 71% of students and families from an EAL background, the school community was fortunate to be selected by Foundation House and the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) to participate in the Refugee Education Support Program (RESP) over a two-year cycle. A RESP action team was formed, including the Principal, Family School Partnerships Convenor, Learning & Teaching Leader, and Learning Diversity Leader. The team used the Schools In For Refugees audit tool to reflect on the school's current practices and plan ways to become more culturally inclusive. Goals were set to improve the enrolment and transition process, as well as to develop an anti-racism and learning diversity policy. A group of students were interviewed to gather insights on how culturally inclusive the school environment is. Additionally, the Action Team collaborated with CMY to plan for the Western Bulldogs Leaders of the Pack RESP project for the 2025 Year 5 cohort, supporting their learning about racism and how to respond positively to differences in others.

Kath Murdoch, an Inquiry Educational Consultant, continued to support the professional development of teaching staff from Foundation to Year 6, deepening their understanding of shared inquiry. A new Faith-Life Inquiry planner was trialled and implemented, designed to reflect the inquiry process as a narrative. Teachers were encouraged to use an Inquiry Learning Wall to document the inquiry process, which proved to be an invaluable teaching tool, revisited throughout the inquiry cycle. Kath also played a key role in supporting the development of Discovery for Foundation to Year 2, working alongside the Learning & Teaching Leader and Junior Learning Leader to demonstrate ways to cultivate curiosity and foster critical and creative thinking. To further enhance professional growth, Kath created personalized Padlets for the teachers, helping them continue their development in Discovery and Shared Inquiry.

Students took part in a variety of incursions and excursions throughout the school year, which provided valuable opportunities to connect more deeply with their learning. These experiences allowed students to actively engage in the learning opportunities offered through their shared inquiry, enhancing their understanding and involvement.

A NAIDOC Day committee was established to organize a cultural infusion day at the school, celebrating the contributions of First Nations people in our community. A variety of activities, including storytelling, art, music, and games, were planned for F-6 students to participate across age groups. The day concluded with a reflection and song led by Aunty Mon. In the lead-up to the event, Mitch Tambo performed for the whole school community, with students engaging actively and confidently in the performance.

## LITERACY

In 2024, Our Lady's implemented a school-wide Spelling Program. Deborah Sukarna, who has worked with our school for several years to establish Writers Workshop and explicit grammar instruction, led a whole-school closure day focused on English orthography.

Following this initial professional development, Deb continued to collaborate with teachers and students, modeling effective spelling instruction and supporting its implementation in classrooms. To sustain this learning, the school provided release time once per term for teachers to plan with Deb for approximately two hours. During these sessions, teachers deepened their understanding of phonological, graphophonic, morphophonemic, and etymological spelling strategies.

Deb also modeled the application of these strategies across different year levels and worked alongside teachers to develop their own lesson sequences. Throughout the year, teachers strengthened their knowledge of spelling strategies, using feedback to refine their practice and enhance student learning.

Writers Workshop continues to be implemented from Foundation to Year 6, with teachers guiding students to shape their thinking into purposeful writing. Thinking routines are used to encourage deeper exploration of 'seeds' for writing, while structured writing routines ensure lessons are differentiated to meet students' individual needs.

In 2024, the Reading Program remained a key focus at Our Lady's. In Foundation and Year 1, teachers used data from the EOI, PATR and ALPHA ASSESS to guide their instruction and monitor student progress. Differentiated lessons were planned and implemented to support literacy development for all students. For students in Foundation to Year 2 requiring additional support, a Reading Intervention teacher, provided targeted intervention. Lesson sequences were designed using data to enhance letter identification, phonemic and



phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, and comprehension skills. As a result, 18 students in Years 1 and 2 received extra reading support throughout the year.

From Years 2–6, teachers utilised PATR, ALPHA ASSESS, and BAS to track students' reading progress. This involved conducting reading conferences, listening to students read, and taking running records. The Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI) program continued to support students in Years 3–6 who were at least 12 months below the expected standard. In 2024, 19 students from Years 3–6 who were struggling with reading were identified and included in this targeted intervention program.

The online digital reading subscriptions for Sunshine Online and Storybox Library were renewed in 2024, providing students with access both at school and at home. Additionally, the Oxford Reading for Comprehension Discover Series was purchased for Foundation to Year 2 students, offering decodable texts alongside a digital library accessible from home. For more advanced readers, the Flying Start Paired Texts and Flying Start with Perspectives resources were acquired. These collections include fiction, non-fiction, and persuasive texts, broadening the range of text types and language features while incorporating more technical and specialised vocabulary.

Book Week 2024 was filled with entertainment and inspiration. The celebrations began with Zohab Zee Khan, a spoken word poet who captivated students and encouraged them to tell meaningful stories in new and creative ways. Upper school students attended a performance by Poetry In Action, a group that brings poetry to life through dynamic performances.

Junior school students were delighted by a visit from award-winning author Gus Gordon, who shared insights into his writing process and the inspirations behind his stories. They also enjoyed a performance of *Maybe a Miracle* by Perform Ed.

Book Week ended on a high note with the much-anticipated character parade. The theme, *Reading Is Magical*, inspired many to dress up as their favourite characters. Students, teachers, staff members, parents, grandparents, younger siblings, and other family members joined in the fun and celebrated.

At Our Lady's we continued to sustain and build strong reading text level growth across Foundation to Year 2. 85% of the students in Year 2 met the 28+ target, 85% met the 15+ target, and 72% in Foundation met the 5+ target.

The PAT (Progressive Achievement Test) Early Years Reading demonstrated that 85% of Foundation students met the expected benchmark, 12.5% were above the benchmark and 0.25% were below the benchmark. The PAT Early Years Reading test is conducted twice a year and includes questions on print conventions, phonics, vocabulary, listening and reading

comprehension. Reading comprehension is the area that the PAT Early Years Reading suggests we continue to work on in order to improve our reading results in the junior years.

PAT Reading assessments for Years 1 to 6 are conducted twice a year to evaluate students' reading comprehension. These tests feature a diverse range of texts, reflecting students' varied reading experiences and assessing the skills they develop on their path to becoming proficient readers.

Results indicate that 48.5% of students in Years 1-6 achieved the expected reading level, while 37.5% performed at least one year above expectations. Meanwhile, 13% of students were below the expected level and were enrolled in reading intervention programs to provide targeted support and enhance their reading progress.

In 2024, we implemented text orientations to support student engagement with high-quality, authentic mentor texts that would otherwise be too challenging to access independently. This approach ensured students could meaningfully interact with engaging, complex texts while developing their reading skills.

PAT data indicated that vocabulary, text purpose, and structure posed challenges for many students. In response, this evidence-based approach explicitly taught text purpose, structure, unfamiliar vocabulary, and contextual understanding, making complex texts more accessible.

As a result, students demonstrated increased confidence, deeper comprehension, and improved vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, they developed greater motivation to engage with challenging texts, leading to stronger literacy outcomes and a more positive reading experience.

## MATHEMATICS

The focus of the Mathematics program at Our Lady's School included:

- Implementing the new Victorian Curriculum 2.0 with the emphasis on teaching Number and Algebra through Measurement, Space, Statistics and Probability
- Modelling, coaching and mentoring facilitated by Michael Ymer, a specialist mathematics consultant, involved in many Professional Development programs in schools across Australia and Asia
- Continuing to focus on planning for the vocabulary of Mathematics to be explicitly taught and modelled to students. Mathematics has a specific language that students must understand in order to make meaning and develop their knowledge
- The use of pre and post assessment and reflecting tools to inform planning and teaching, enabling teachers to reflect on the growth of students and impact of teachers.

Forward planned to drive the learning and teaching of Mathematics to meet the needs of all students to experience success in Mathematics

- Planning and implementing moderating tasks across year levels to provide opportunities for teachers to engage in conversation with colleagues and gain a deeper understanding of how the tool of assessment can help make more of an impact on the learning growth of our students
- Diverse, open ended learning experiences that allow children to explore, extend, articulate, investigate and reinforce learning
- Facilitated planning for all year levels
- Sustaining, continuing and growing our Number Intervention in the Early Years. By upskilling our Educational Support Officers we were able to support children from Foundation - Year 4.

Monday - Thursday 10 min sessions (8:45 - 8:55) and in daily Maths sessions to target at risk children

Areas targeted:

- Conceptual Place Value,
- Number Words & Numerals,
- Counting Strategies and
- Structuring Numbers 1-20
- Mathematics to support home and school learning through interactive activities, games and challenges
- Professional Learning Community meetings for all teaching staff, including the opportunity to use moderating

## Student Learning Outcomes

The Year 3 NAPLAN Performance data for 2024 indicated that for:

Grammar and Punctuation Our Lady's School (407) performed just below the State mean (417) but above the National mean of 409.

Numeracy Our Lady's School (421) performed well above the State mean (413) and well above the National mean of 404.

Reading Our Lady's School (426) performed well above the State mean (418) and well above the National mean of 404.

Spelling Our Lady's School (404) performed just below the State mean (408) and above the National mean of 401.

Writing Our Lady's School (412) performed below the State mean (423) and below the National mean of 416.

The Year 5 NAPLAN Performance data for 2024 indicated that for:

Grammar and Punctuation Our Lady's School (524) performed well above the State mean (504) and well above the National mean of 498.

Numeracy Our Lady's School (529) performed well above the State mean (497) and well above the National mean of 489.

Reading Our Lady's School (531) performed well above the State mean (505) and well above the National mean of 492.

Spelling Our Lady's School (518) performed well above the State mean (492) and well above the National mean of 486.

Writing Our Lady's School (511) performed well above the State mean (496) and well above the National mean of 485.

<b>NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards</b>			
<b>Domain</b>	<b>Year level</b>	<b>Mean Scale score</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	407	55%
	Year 5	524	71%
Numeracy	Year 3	421	74%
	Year 5	529	88%
Reading	Year 3	426	77%
	Year 5	531	95%
Spelling	Year 3	404	55%
	Year 5	518	88%
Writing	Year 3	412	78%
	Year 5	511	95%

\*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2024 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 develop, implement and evaluate documented plans, structures, practice and processes to support a high quality curriculum which is inspired by our Catholic faith.

#### Intended Outcomes

That student agency will increase outcomes, engagement and connectedness in the school.

### Achievements

One of our essential goals is to continually develop and enhance the area of wellbeing at our school. Therefore, student wellbeing is a constant and consistent priority at Our Lady's. "The wellbeing of children and young people is enhanced and their learning outcomes optimised when they feel connected to others and experience safe and trusting relationships" (Australian Wellbeing Framework, p. 2). We believe building and nurturing relationships is at the core of our work, and as such, Our Lady's continues to commit time to starting the school year in the way we do. Through the 'Getting to Know You' discussions, classroom teachers, students and their families have valued time to connect with each other, get to know each other and establish a positive partnership as they commence working together with each child's educational journey at the forefront.

In the area of Social and Emotional learning (SEL) 2024 has been very similar to our last couple of years as wellbeing and SEL has continued to be a priority. The Victorian program, 'Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships' has continued to be one of the main curriculum sources across Foundation to Year 6. The RRRR program consists of eight units, however, our students are currently immersed in seven of these units throughout the school year which include:

1. Emotional Literacy
2. Personal Strengths
3. Positive Coping

4. Problem Solving
5. Stress Management
6. Help Seeking
7. Gender and Identity

In 2021 we commenced our journey in implementing The Zones of Regulation. The Zones has continued to be a whole-school approach where our F-6 students learn about the four different zones of regulation (blue zone, green zone, yellow zone and red zone). The Zones of Regulation is a program encompassing the SEL competencies of self-management, relationship skills, responsible decision making, social awareness and self-awareness. In particular, The Zones of Regulation also incorporates focusing particular attention on feelings and emotions associated with each zone, as well as triggers that can cause us to feel the way we do. Students learn about their 'triggers' and 'sparks'. Every fortnight the students are exposed to a new tool of regulation which they can add to their individual toolbox. We consistently talk about the tools of regulation as the tools we use can change over time and therefore what was once a reliable tool may not be as calming as it was. The students are taught to continually reflect on what tools work for them and refine their toolbox. We have continued to nurture a whole school approach with The Zones of Regulation so that consistency with the language and understandings are embedded across our school.

Some of the Berry Street Education Strategies continue to be implemented by teachers across the school. Brain breaks continue to occur in all classes every day to assist the students to transition from one learning experience to another allowing their brain to re-energise for the next learning area. Brain breaks can include escalation activities or de-escalation activities depending on the student needs. On many occasions, breathing practices are incorporated into this time bringing inner calm and focused energy to the classroom.

For the second year, our school was fortunate to receive some government funding to promote Mental Health within our school community. We combined these funds to create a Performing Arts position, which became a specialist area for the students. The teacher was following a program referred to as Positive Education Enhanced Curriculum (PEEC) as well as incorporating Performing Arts and Music. We called this time STARS standing for Shining Self, Teamwork and Resilient Success.

In addition, we are fortunate to have the external supports of our school counselor and speech pathologist who work at our school. Both these specialists work with students and our Learning Diversity Leader on a weekly basis. Both the Student Wellbeing Leader and Mental Health Leader completed Professional Learning facilitated by Melbourne University and Murdoch Children's Research Institute.

We continue to ensure our scope and sequence is embedded into our planning cycle where the SW leader and the classroom teachers utilise our SEL scope and sequence as a working document to ensure the SEL curriculum is delivered. In addition, we continue to use our Tools of Regulation scope and sequence to ensure all students are being taught a variety of new regulation tools each year. We have continued to find this extremely worthwhile as each year, classroom teachers are able to review the regulations strategies students were taught the year before as well as implementing a variety of new strategies. It is important that students are exposed to a variety of regulation strategies so each individual is able to decide what tools can be added to their regulation toolbox.

At the end of 2023, the SW Leader updated all classroom SEL kits ensuring they are ready for the new school year. These kits contain many hands-on resources for teachers and students.

At the end of Term 2, the students completed the ACER Wellbeing survey. Part of our planning, incorporated analysing the data to allow the teachers and SW leader to gain an insight into particular cohorts and target needs based on the results.

Results from the 2024 annual ACER Social Emotional Wellbeing Survey indicated that 87% of our students demonstrated having a developed, highly developed or very highly developed, social-emotional wellbeing.

We have continued to implement a three-tiered intervention approach allowing educators and the other professionals to target the needs of students through mainstream learning, group intervention and individual sessions is a predominant focus in student wellbeing. The Student Wellbeing Leader, the Learning Diversity Leader and the Principal work closely with our school-based psychologist, who works at our school for two days per week. Meeting with teachers and parents is often essential to allow the consistent implementation of strategies that may be useful for a particular child's needs. The learning diversity leader also works closely with our speech pathologist who worked at our school on a fortnightly basis.



The staff of Our Lady's has continued to promote and nurture our positive learning culture. One of the core components embedded in our culture is based on our school gospel values in all that we do. Our Lady's continues to implement a positive behaviour approach, together with the Restorative Practices Model which is aligned with our school values.

### Value Added

- Student Wellbeing Leader is a member of the NCCD, Leadership and Curriculum Teams
- The STARS program run by the Mental Health in schools Leader 0.6 FTE
- Implemented a whole school online approach to student wellbeing with an emphasis on cybersafety.
- Continued school-based psychologist available two days a week for one-on-one counselling with students, parents and staff and also targeted small group student SEL focused lessons.
- Circle Time strategy maintained as a universal social/emotional learning strategy
- Foundation to 6 Implemented a whole school approach to developing resilience and school-connectedness via a Foundation to 6 Camp Program
- Updated class SEL kits with additional resources
- Continued with the Student Representative Council for student voice and agency
- Continued with the Year 6 committees to promote student leadership, voice and agency
- Year 6 committees- SRC, Events, Social Justice, Art, Student Wellbeing, Sports, Green team and Digital and Design Technologies team.
- Implemented the Mental Health in schools Program three days a week for students in all classes
- Year 6 students collaborated together to plan, organise and run the annual Our Lady's Year Six Leadership Conference.
- Continued to strengthen student voice from Foundation to Year Six via: Discovery Learning in Foundation, Year One and Two and Faith Life Inquiry learning in Years 3-6.
- Continued a whole school 'Community Wellbeing Week' with a focus on fun, engaging activities that increase the wellbeing of students, staff and parents
- Continued to strengthen the implementation of the Zones of Regulation

- Continued to implement elements of the Berry Street, RRRR and Bounce Back programs in the mainstream classrooms Foundation to 6 to strengthen and develop social/emotional learning
- Continued the RRRR program to the school and joined a RRRR network of schools to support transition implementation of this program and to share practice
- The school Camp Program Foundation to Year Six

## Student Satisfaction

The MACSIS survey results for 2024 in relation to Teacher satisfaction indicate that Our Lady's School has continued to achieve above the MACSIS average for all schools in the following domains: Catholic Identity, School teacher-student relationships, Instructional Leadership, School Leadership, Staff Safety, Psychological Safety, Collaboration in Teams and Support for Teams. This is a very pleasing result and confirms that Our Lady's School is focused on developing individual efficacy and a collegial learning environment where the whole staff is focused on building their own capacity in order to improve student engagement and learning outcomes.

The MACS 2024 data which focused on how much students feel their teachers hold them to high expectations of their effort, understanding, persistence and performance showed Our Lady's achieved just below (75%) the MACS all schools average of 77%.

The school engagement data relating to how attentive and invested students are in school showed Our Lady's School (58%) achieved above the MACS average for all schools of 51%.

The school climate data which measured the students' perceptions of the social and learning climate of the school showed Our Lady's School achieved 75% which was above the MACS average for all schools of 71%.

The Catholic Identity data which relates to students' perception of the Catholic Identity of the school showed that Our Lady's School achieved 70% which is above the MACS average for all schools of 65%.

We will continue to work hard to improve all domains with a continued and improved focus on Student Wellbeing, Student engagement and Student Voice in 2025.

## Student Attendance

Student attendance data is a key measure of student engagement and belonging which are important pre-conditions for academic achievement.

The 2024 data for the Student Attendance rate which is the percentage of days attended by students out of the total student days at the school was pleasing. It showed that Our Lady's School performed just above the MACS average throughout 2024.

The attendance level which measures the percentage of students who attend on at least 90% of days. This data measures the rate of persistent absenteeism. Once again the data showed that Our Lady's performed well above the MACS average of or all schools which is a pleasing result as it indicates a below average level of absenteeism occurring at Our Lady's school.

Our Lady's School Absenteeism Procedure:

1. Classroom teachers check for any SeeSaw messages or emails from parents explaining their child's absence and then accurately (enter the reason for absence and the method the parents have communicated this to you) mark the roll between 8:35-8:40am.
2. Office staff check the Message bank on the school phone, Audiri app, SeeSaw messages and emails received as well as any telephone calls taken from parents advising of their child's absence.
3. At 9.00am the office staff view a report identifying all unexplained absences.
4. Office staff then ring the parents and if they respond ask for the reason their child is absent.
5. If the parents do not respond the office staff will ring the emergency contact numbers.
6. The office staff will continue to ring these until there is a response.

7. If by 10.00am there is no response the school will ring the police.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	91.9
Y02	93.3
Y03	93.8
Y04	93.2
Y05	93.0
Y06	93.9
Overall average attendance	93.2

---

## Leadership

---

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goals

To build a strong professional learning community by empowering staff to develop a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities as a catholic educator.

#### Intended Outcomes

That a collective responsibility for improving practice, professional knowledge and application of learning will increase the capacity for student learning.

That role clarity will improve.

### Achievements

Leaders at Our Lady's School worked consistently and strategically to implement the 2024 Annual Action Plan in close collaboration with the Our Lady's staff. The 2024 Annual Action plan was developed, discussed and shared amongst the whole staff so that every staff member understood and was informed about the key improvement strategies' and actions for 2024. Leadership and staff had analysed the 2023 MACS survey data to inform the 2024 Annual Action Plan so that it was based on the most current Student, Parent and Staff data as well as the NAPLAN 2023 results and the PAT R and PAT M standardized tests.

2024 was a year which we collectively collaboratively and successfully implemented the following school events and improvement initiatives:

#### Vison For Instruction

A whole school focus on introducing the Vision for Instruction position statement to the staff. This document has been designed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) to provide Catholic schools with clear guidelines on instructional best practice, with a

commitment to equity-The aim was that, every student regardless of background, achieves and excellence for all students.

The Principal, Deputy Principal/Wellbeing Leader, the RE/Learning and Teaching Leader and the Literacy Leader attended the professional learning provided by MACS throughout 2024 with the Western Region Catholic Schools.

We set aside four staff meetings to familiarize staff with the content, allow time for discussion and auditing of the document against our current practice thereby identifying areas that we are doing well and those that we need to improve on. This was a very affirming process which showed we had most aspects of the document in place and identified clearly through the research informed Principles of Effective Implementation, areas that specifically we needed to strengthen. The staff were highly engaged in this process and had open and honest professional dialogue throughout the process. The Leadership team then planned to organise Professional Learning Community weekly meetings to focus on the areas identified for improvement as well as during planning time.

### **Completion of the St, Joseph of the Sacred Heart Learning Centre**

This was a major accomplishment for Our Lady's school, It consisted of a double storey building with 10 flexible learning areas, a large central learning area on each level, two STEM areas, outdoor learning spaces, a large balcony on the first level, staff and student amenities and staff planning rooms. The building was fitted out with the latest technology as well as measures to reduce noise so that the acoustics supported the creation of an optimal learning environment. This was combined with much glass so that the building is filled with natural light. An important part of the project was the construction of a new nature based playground for the children to enjoy and as an alternative play area.

The completion of the building bought much joy and happiness to our school community. We were proud that together with the support of our parent community, MACS and the \$3 million grant from the State Government we had created a building which offered excellent facilities for our students and staff. It was a building which would provide for the needs of our school community well into the future.

The building was officially opened on the 11th of November and named the St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart Learning Centre. The name is a link to the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred

Heart who served our school for 71 years and whose founder was St. Mary MacKillop of the Cross.

### **Construction of a new Junior Playground and installing new synthetic turf**

The construction of a new Junior playground and the installation of synthetic turf gave the children a much-needed play area. This was achieved with the capital works fee that the parents of Our Lady's School had contributed. The generous collaboration and contribution of the parents enabled the school to add this much needed play area to the school site. The children were now able to once again play team sports such as soccer on the new synthetic turf as well as have a safe place to run on and play games.

### **Whole school Conference- Recontextualizing and Designing a New Curriculum Map**

2024 was the year that the leadership team organised a two-day conference for the whole staff with the aim of recontextualizing and designing a new curriculum map.

There had been many changes in the education sector such as the new MACS guidelines the Vision For Instruction document released for all Catholic schools and which clearly outlines the distinctive pedagogical approaches that are needed for effective teaching, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy.

Our staff had also changed over the years with new staff members joining Our Lady's School. We needed to make sure that we had alignment of understanding and alignment of practice. And that the curriculum expectations were understood by all staff and were clear and based on the latest and most current research and best practice.

Above all else, 4 years had passed since our last curriculum audit so there was a need to reflect on the current needs of our students and to make sure we provide an effective, stimulating and engaging curriculum that complies with the Victorian Curriculum, the new MACS guidelines and the VRQA compliance criteria.

### **Achievements in Our Lady's School Technologies**

There has been a huge upgrade of technologies at Our Lady's in 2024.

The upgrade took place in 2 stages.

## **STAGE 1 UPDATES**

The updates were completed to the Year 5/Year 6 classrooms and included:

103 Lenovo Chromebooks were purchased. The children in Years 5 and 6 were given a Chromebook each, enabling 1:1 devices in our senior school.

Further to this, Our Lady's School purchased 9 interactive displays that were installed during the Easter holidays. These interactive displays replaced the interactive whiteboards and they were installed in the Year 5 and 6 classrooms, the staffroom, the Mary MacKillop Library, the planning room, Art room and the ICT Lab.

The Hall was also upgraded with an Epson Large Venue Laser Projector which was installed during the Term 1 Easter holidays. The Year 4s used the new projector until they moved out of the school hall and into the new building. The new projector in the hall is a valuable resource and will be used in diverse ways and each Friday to present our weekly assemblies.

5 HP EliteOne desktops were also purchased for the office staff, including for the principal Patrizia Bertani.

The technologies upgrade also included 12 wireless points to increase internet speed at our school.

Technology for the teaching staff was also upgraded with the addition of 27 HP Probook 440 G10 notebooks.

## **STAGE 2 UPDATES**

Upon the completion of the new building, the St Joseph of the Sacred Heart Learning Centre

We began the installation of the new technologies which included:



10 interactive displays (65 inch) were installed in the ten classrooms of the new building and 2 x 75-inch interactive displays were installed into the shared spaces.

Lenovo Chromebooks were also procured via a 4 year lease agreement at the end of 2024 for the Years 3 and 4 which means that from the beginning of the new 2025 school year each child in Years 3 and 4 will be able to have their own Chromebook.

The Year 2 classrooms will also received 10 Chromebooks each for each class making the total amount of new Chromebooks available at 211. In addition to the Chromebook purchase, 60 iPads were purchased. There are 10 in each Foundation and Year 1 class and 2 iPads were distributed into each classroom from Years 2-6

10 new wi-fi points were also installed throughout the new building. Other improvements include the new phone system for which 36 new headsets were purchased.

In order to strengthen online Child Safety and empower both our students and parents to make positive and safe choices regarding online technology use we engaged Inform and Empower to present online safety sessions. Each class (Years 1-6) attended a webinar once a term. There was also a parent information evening held on 12th June and the staff had a cyber safety Professional Development meeting on March 5th, 2024.

Throughout 2024 we remained focused on:

- strengthening and improving on our school wide, performance based Professional Development culture
- strengthening a whole school approach to the teaching and learning of Spelling with a continued focus on Grammar and Writing-facilitated by Literacy consultant Deb Sukarna
- implementing Numeracy Intervention strategies in the mainstream classroom for students at risk
- strengthening parent connection to the school and their child's learning via diverse strategies such as the Seesaw app and the very popular Community Classrooms.

One major way we wanted to achieve this was by collaboratively implementing a whole school approach to a school wide, performance based Professional Development culture. We documented this journey and successfully created our Professional Learning policy. The Leadership team worked diligently and strategically throughout 2024 to continue to embed a performance and development culture amongst the Our Lady's School staff.

Our goal was to build on the work we began in 2023 by continuing to nurture and implement a high-quality Professional Development Program with the aim to provide:

- A high degree of leadership support for ongoing adult learning and risk taking
- Collective responsibility for improving practice
- Disciplined collaboration aimed at specific and relevant goals that relate to the learning needs of students
- High levels of trust, collaboration and interdependence
- Support for professional learning through school structures, explicit planning and the allocation of time
- A focus on the professional learning that is most likely to be effective in improving professional practice and student outcomes

-Focused opportunities for all teaching staff including ESOs to implement, research, record evidence, present at the Annual Review meeting their self improvement goals.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2024
<p>Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning List Professional Learning undertaken in 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional Learning Community meetings for Literacy and Numeracy (weekly)</li> </ul> <p>2 day Conference- Reconceptualising and Re-Designing the Our Lady's school Curriculum Map</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduate and new teachers to the school Induction Program</li> <li>• Principals' Network</li> <li>• Deputy Principals' Network</li> <li>• Literacy Leaders' Network</li> <li>• RE focused professional learning with Father Rob Galea</li> <li>• Learning Diversity Leaders' Network</li> <li>• Western Zone Learning and Teaching Network-Vision For Instruction focus</li> <li>• Deb Sukarna continuing with the embedding of Writer's Notebook via Workshops F-6 (throughout the year)</li> <li>• Kath Murdoch - Personalising Learning using an Inquiry Approach workshops F-6, throughout each term/Coaching, modelling, feedback and debriefing</li> <li>• Child Safety/Occupational Health and Safety - Martin Tenant facilitating</li> <li>• First Aid Training for all staff</li> <li>• NCCD Professional Learning</li> <li>• EAL-Teaching and Learning Framework</li> <li>• Online course Child Safety Standards,</li> <li>• Understanding Autism</li> <li>• Mandatory Reporting online module</li> <li>• Emergency Management Training VIT</li> </ul>

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching and Mentoring Graduate teachers (weekly)</li> <li>• Coaching for Senior and Middle Leadership (GROWTH model) with Pauline Zappulla (each term)</li> <li>• Leadership team members having individual coaching and mentoring with Pauline Zappulla each term.</li> <li>• Learning Leader (coaching and mentoring each term).</li> </ul>	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2024	27
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$6494.00

## Teacher Satisfaction

The MACSIS survey results for 2024 in relation to Teacher satisfaction indicate that Our Lady's School has continued to achieve above the MACSIS average for all schools in the following domains that were measured. This is a result to celebrate and below are the domains listed: • Catholic Identity • Collaboration in Teams • Staff-leadership-relationships • Instructional leadership • School leadership • Staff safety • Psychological safety • • Collaboration around • Collaboration in teams • Support for teams.

In 2024 the leadership team continued to work diligently and strategically to embed a performance and development culture amongst the Our Lady's School staff. This strategy was expanded to include the admin team. This strategy continued to impact positively on our teacher satisfaction MACSIS data for 2024. Throughout 2024 we were able to maintain cohesion and a positive school climate with a focus on innovating to improve learning outcomes and engagement for all students.

The 2024 MACS survey data results below provide the evidence:

Perceptions of the overall social and learning climate in the school in 2024 were 92% positive which is 19% above the MACS all schools average of 73%. This indicates that Our Lady's School has created a harmonious and collegial environment for staff.

The staff perceptions of the quality of relationships between staff and members of the leadership team were 94% positive for Our Lady's which is well above the MACS all schools average of 81%. The Our Lady's staff data for perceptions of the amount and quality of feedback staff receive in 2024 was 61% which is 20% higher than the MACS all schools average of 41%. This is truly an excellent result and largely due to the Individual Professional Development Plans and Program which have been implemented in the school and which staff have been involved in since 2022.

An area that has continued to show improvement is teachers' perceptions of how well leadership sets the conditions for teams to collaborate. The 2024 data (82%) showed an increase over the 2021 data (64%), the 2022 data (68%) and the 2023 data (81%). In 2024 we achieved well above the MACS average for all schools of 68% outperforming these by 14%.

90% of staff responded that they feel that the school's improvement strategy is cohesive and clear which is well above the MACS average for all schools of 67%.

79%% of staff agreed that school leadership is effective and sets a positive learning culture at the school which is well above the 59% average for all MACS schools.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0
Masters	8
Graduate	3
Graduate Certificate	5
Bachelor Degree	18
Advanced Diploma	5
No Qualifications Listed	5

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	33
Teaching Staff (FTE)	28.33
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	19
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	11.18
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

---

## Community Engagement

---

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

To develop and sustain reciprocal partnerships with parents, parish and the community beyond the school, to improve students' wellbeing, learning and engagement.

#### Intended Outcome

That parent partnerships will be strengthened by enhanced collaboration between parents, staff and students.

### Achievements

During 2024 our school continued to focus on increasing parent engagement and participation in Our Lady's School community. Throughout the year we built a combination of diverse events focused on curriculum and student learning and others focused on engaging community based events to build stronger connections between families and the school.

Parallel to this we sought out opportunities to connect our students to the local and broader community, to enrich their learning, through excursions and incursions that formed an additional layer of community partnerships.

This enabled our students to have engaging learning experiences and equip them for the future as they met people from a broad range of organizations and backgrounds often being exposed to learning opportunities and people in life that they may not have otherwise met. This included marine scientists, professional dancers, indigenous leaders, artists and others in a range of activities.

Reflecting on these two levels of community engagement, below is a summary of the highlights that were achieved during 2024.

Actions in 2024 to build parent engagement with their children's learning and to strengthen their engagement with Our Lady's School were:

Beginning the year with the Getting to Know you and your child meetings for all classes.

Opportunities to dialogue with Parents about the Three-way Learning conversations and the incorporation of ongoing evidence of students' progress via the Seesaw App connected parents to their children's progress and learning goals. Parents and Friends Committee -met with the Principal and Deputy Principal throughout the year with a key focus on fundraising, where they did a great job.

Parent Advisory Board met with the Principal and Deputy Principal throughout the year with a key focus on bringing the parent voice and feedback; regarding the capital works program, the school curriculum and school finance

Providing parents with an extensive range of communication strategies which includes email, text, phone calls, in person meetings, newsletter and google meetings.

The use of the Operoo App to improve incursion/excursion process for both the parents and the school and which has provision for parents to update personal information about their child which syncs with the school admin system- ICON.

Use of interpreting and translation services available for all parents who require this service when interacting with the school.

The Art Show and the Dinner in the Yard combined with the Our Lady's choir at the end of the year was a resounding success and attended by hundreds of families. The Art Show featured students' artwork from Foundation to Year 6 and was beautifully displayed in our school hall. The sound of the choir singing Christmas carols, parents and friends dancing and joining in, enjoying each other's' company while having a picnic dinner was a perfect picture of a welcoming and inclusive school community. We joined together staff and families proudly celebrating our students' creative achievements in both the performing and visual arts.



Community Classrooms continued to be a very successful way of linking parents to their child's learning and the number of parents and extended family members attending was very pleasing. Our Family School Partnership Leader facilitated a staff meeting to discuss the Purpose, research (Anne Henderson) and the why behind the Community Classrooms strategy. He shared examples of how to successfully implement Community Classrooms in schools. As a result we implemented 2 Community Classroom events at Our Lady's in 2024 and received glowing feedback from parents.

The Foundation Picnic organised in early Term 1 to connect new families with each other and with the teachers as well as providing a further opportunity the Foundation students to develop friendships and have lots of fun.

Foundation Information night was a great success with curriculum leaders and Foundation teachers sharing how learning occurs in core curriculum areas and providing time for a question and answer session in order to support parents' understanding of learning at Our Lady's.

Actions in 2024 to enrich children's learning through community engagement and partnerships:

Cyber education sessions with the Cyber Safety Project who worked with staff, children and in the evening parents.

Sharing and informing school families about our community partnerships through school newsletter articles and website e.g. River Detectives, Tree Planting are some examples.

Curriculum Assistance-throughout the year via our Family School Partnerships (FSP) leader Greg Woolford who worked with the Principal. curriculum leaders, teachers and the RE/Teaching and Learning Leader to plan partnering events that enriched the children's learning through a range of incursions and excursions.

Networking-FSP leader attended multiple external networks which create opportunities for our school to connect to relevant partnerships e.g. Brimbank Early Years Network, School Focused Youth Services Network etc.

Thirty-two punnets of seedlings were received from the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (Women's Prison) in Ravenhall. We participated in this program alongside our two partnering FSP schools who received similar donations. We could not plant these in our school garden due to building works so students took them home to plant in their own gardens.

Year 6 Leadership Conference- In 2024 the Year 6 students invited Year 6 leaders from across Brimbank to Our Lady's, and together listened to inspiring speakers. This conference was designed to empower Year 6 leaders to reflect on their leadership and be inspired to lead. The event was planned and hosted by Our Lady's Year 6 students.

Towards the end of 2024, we conducted a Foundation 2024 transition program for new families and students. Two Foundation transition meetings were held with parents while their children had opportunities to familiarise themselves with the school environment, teachers and their peers. The transition program will continue into the first 2 weeks of school in 2025 for our Foundation students.

Year 6 transition to secondary school program was very successfully implemented in Term 4 2023. The main events were the Year 7 panel conversations with Year 7s from five feeder schools, Year 6 students who were able to ask questions and clarify any concerns about attending secondary school in 2024.

The Bluearth event which combined Year 6 students from 3 local Catholic schools to provide opportunities to connect with each other, develop friendships and connect those students who were attending the same secondary school in 2024.

Our Family School Partnership leader Greg Woolford successfully applied for \$10,000 in grants from Landcare and Volunteering Vic which enabled the students to participate in a tree planting program and freshwater studies along the local creek. A huge thanks to Melbourne Water, The Friends of Kororoit Creek and The Werribee River Keeper who helped us apply for this funding and participated in these events.

We are also grateful to the range of other groups not listed for their support and in many instances monetary sponsorship of the school.

Much of this work has also been the result of our prioritising this work through the employment of a Family School Partnership leader Greg Woolford. This role exists in partnership with St Theresa's and Mother of God Primary schools and has been integral in working with staff and designing and strengthening school community connections.

A final thanks to our wonderfully diverse group of children, families and staff, as well as the support of our partners that together make Our Lady's a Christ centred, inclusive, welcoming and learning focused school community.

### **Parent Satisfaction**

The 2024 Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) survey results for families of Our Lady's School showed a need to focus on improving and diversifying further the opportunities for school engagement that we provide to our parent community.

The areas of: parent engagement, Catholic identity and communication were areas of strength. However, there is a need to continue to focus on improving parent engagement by consulting parents further about what they would like to see in 2025.

The family engagement data describes the degree to which families are partners with their child's school showed that the 2024 results (49%) were slightly higher than the results achieved in 2023 (48%) and well above the 2022 results of (38%) as well as being slightly higher than the MACS all schools average of (48%).

The Parents MACS survey data in relation to how well a school matches their child's needs indicated that Our Lady's School (80%) was higher than the MACS all schools average of 76%.

We believe the significant resourcing and improvement in teachers' capacity to identify needs and then put into practice strategies to differentiate their curriculum to target needs together with prioritising and building a school culture focused on improving individual teacher/staff efficacy has positively impacted on this data.

Families perceptions of and engagement with the overall Catholic identity of the school was pleasing. Our Lady's School achieved a positive 72% response from families which is higher than the MACS all schools average of 66%.

The 2024 school data showed a marked improvement in the perception of parents in regards to opportunities to participate in conversations with the school about their child's learning. Our Lady's School achieved 48% positive responses which was well above the MACS all schools average of 32%.

---

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

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