



St Patrick's School Stawell

2021 Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 782

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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Chris McAloon, attest that St Patrick's School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in *the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2021 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in Schools.

22/03/2022

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

Governing Authority Report

The governance of fifty-six schools in the Diocese of Ballarat was transferred to Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) on 01 January 2021. Thus, beginning an exciting and challenging first year of governance under DOBCEL and continuing the long partnership between all schools of the Diocese and Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) of continual improvement of learning outcomes for the students in the schools of the Diocese.

COVID-19 continued to cast a long shadow over the communities in the Diocese. Our students, their families and our dedicated staff are to be commended for their ability to move from one mode of learning to another with very short notice. The true impact on learners may not be known for years. We may well reflect on the 'challenging and uncertain times of COVID' in a similar way to the those reflected on the Spanish Flu a century ago. We will remember with awe the commitment of our school communities, those who lead them and their staff. We will also speak of the resilience of the children of this generation in meeting a 'new normal' and often leading our wider communities in an optimistic response.

In 2021, our school communities and CEB have maintained a strong focus on reviewing and updating policies, procedures and practices that reflect the new governance model and continuing their commitment to providing safe, learning environments for all learners.

I thank the priests of our school communities for their ongoing pastoral care and ministry, without the demands of Governance resting on their shoulders. I acknowledge and thank the Principals of our schools for their committed leadership, care and support of their school community.

I commend this Annual Report to the School Community as a summary of the many achievements in supporting the learning needs of our students.

Tom Sexton

Executive Director

Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited

Our School Vision & Mission

VISION STATEMENT

St Patrick's School is a community which reflects and celebrates Christ as its centre point. By honouring our story we value our whole community. By coming together our vision is for a loving, just, compassionate and tolerant world.

MISSION STATEMENT

In the tradition of St Patrick, we are committed to:

- Promoting and celebrating a love of God, self and community
- Recognising and enhancing the talents and uniqueness of each person through our vision of Prayer, Care and Learning:

PRAYER

We nurture and grow our relationship with God as members of a faith community.

CARE

We foster recognition of difference, compassion for others and the strength to act on our beliefs.

LEARNING

We develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills essential to reaching our full potential as life-long learners

School Overview

St Patrick's School in Stawell provides a contemporary education for students from Foundation to Grade Six and has strong links with the local parish. It is supportive of and supported by the wider community. We aim to foster a community atmosphere which is centered on the vision of Christ for a just, compassionate and tolerant world. In all aspects of school life, we care for the wellbeing of all members of our community.

We make every effort to provide a safe and supportive environment so that students feel safe and are free from harm.

Our educational endeavours promote the dignity, integrity and respect for the individual. Educators work collaboratively as part of Professional Learning Communities, because we believe EVERY student is OUR student. Our teaching teams meet weekly to discuss the evidence-based learning of our students.

There is an emphasis on inquiry learning across the curriculum which reflects twenty-first century learning. Technology is embedded throughout the school and is an integral part of the students' daily learning opportunities. In addition to this pedagogical foundation, we offer Art, Sport, Chinese and Performing Arts experiences of outreach to the local and wider community.

St Patrick's school is founded on the Josephite tradition and has modern facilities which are set in attractive, spacious grounds. Our sustainability centre, including chooks, vegie gardens and an orchard, offers exciting opportunities for all students to grow in their knowledge of sustainable living for the future. Our nurturing environment allows all students the opportunity to explore the imaginative, contemplative and playful aspects of themselves and others.

Principal's Report

2021 was unfortunately another year that was affected by the global coronavirus pandemic and the associated restrictions. Whereas in 2020, we endured long periods of lockdown and remote learning, in 2021 we faced the equally challenging situation of a constantly changing environment. Over the course of the school year, we had a number of short-term periods of lockdown and remote learning. Through all this adversity, the students, families, and school staff were able to work together to achieve some wonderful outcomes for our school community.

Despite the coronavirus situation we faced as a wider community, it was a year of stability and growth as a school. In my first full year as Principal, I was able to put in place a substantial staffing model and identify areas of development for the school. When restrictions allowed, the school was also able to reconnect to the wider community through a number of activities and events, both in-person and online.

In the area of Teaching and Learning, the school had a major focus on improving our instruction of reading. In the junior area, the school introduced the IntiaLit systematic phonics program. This evidence-based approach draws upon current research in the science of reading. In the middle and senior areas of the school, the teaching staff undertook a year-long professional development course in conjunction with Catholic Education Ballarat. The 'Reading Beyond the Early Years' course focussed on improving the teaching of reading in Grades 3 to 6.

The wellbeing of students, families, and staff was again a major focus of the school in 2021. The school employed a Wellbeing Coordinator to develop and implement a whole-school approach to wellbeing. The school further embedded the consistent use of the Resilience Project and Zones of Regulation resources across the school. Staff wellbeing was also a focus for the school with staff undertaking professional development sessions through Grow Your Mind. One of the take-out messages from these sessions was 'You can't fill from an empty cup, take care of yourself first'. This served many of our staff well through the challenges of 2021.

School Advisory Council Report

Our School Advisory Council is the leading advisory group for our school. We are an active forum of parents and provide real support and advice to our Principal. We provide advice and feedback from parents, friends, the church community and the broader community. We aim to follow the school's vision by being loving, just, compassionate and tolerant in our meetings and dealings with the school and as representatives for the school.

2021 saw the school continue the leadership change from Parish Priest to DOBCEL (Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited). Fr Andrew has remained an important part of our Advisory Council and we are grateful for his time and knowledge. This change has not affected the running of our school, but has made more work for Chris and Anna in implementing all that is required from Ballarat. The role of the SAC has also changed in reporting to Chris instead of Fr Andrew.

COVID-19 played a large role in all our lives over 2021. Our school implemented and maintained many initiatives to support our children and parents during remote learning. Chris and his staff worked hard to support each other through this challenging time. The school was able to extend its support programs for children requiring extra help in reading and maths, due to extra funding being made available.

The SAC met with Mr Ashley Wiseman (Catholic Education Ballarat) in September to discuss how we start gathering information for the school's Masterplan. This plan is an important step in deciding the direction of the school and will be worked on this year.

The school was audited by VRQA (Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority) in September. VRQA are an independent statutory authority that assures the quality of education in Victoria. This happens every 5 years.

I would like to thank all the members of this council for their input, time and support throughout the year. I'd also like to thank Jo Hemley, Charl Greyvensteyn and Marty O'Donnell for their time on the School Advisory Council.

Finally, thank you, Chris, for your leadership, care and support of our students, teachers and parents. I have enjoyed working with you over 2021.

Michelle Jess

SAC Chair

Catholic School Culture

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Recontextualise the teaching of Religious Education in the school to provide students with meaningful, engaging, and challenging learning experiences that explore the rich diversity of the Catholic faith and ways in which we live it in today's pluralistic society

Achievements

St Patrick's Religious Education (RE) program is based on the Ballarat Diocese Religious Education Curriculum, Awakenings, and aims to provide students with meaningful, engaging, and challenging learning experiences that explore the rich diversity of the Catholic faith and ways in which we live it in today's pluralistic society.

Faith formation opportunities were provided for students, staff, parents, and caregivers. COVID-19 continued to see staff working in both the education of students online and ministry to students online. The school provided daily online prayer and meditation during remote learning. Students celebrated adapted liturgies and Mass in line with COVID-19 protocols. A highlight was being able to celebrate our school Feast Day at school with our Parish Priest Father, Andrew Hayes. The school was also able to support the parish Sacrament Program, 'Live Your Christian Life'.

St Patrick's continued their support of the St Vincent De Paul Sponsor a Student Program, Mary MacKillop Day and Caritas Australia. The school also took part in the 200 Years of Catholic Education in Australia celebrations. A highlight of these celebrations was the 'Godly Play' sessions which were facilitated by Christine Bulger from Catholic Education Ballarat. These open sessions provided members of the parish and school communities with the opportunity to see the ever-evolving way in which we teach Religious Education at our school.

In 2021, we continued to explore ways to further enhance our Catholic Identity. Throughout the year we explored professional learning opportunities to continue to develop staff understanding of ensuring lessons are planned and delivered in a recontextualised way.

Learning communities met with Catholic Education Religious Leaders to plan units along with the support of unpacking Scripture with our Parish Priest, Andrew Hayes. The school took part in the Enhancing Catholic School Identity project where staff, students, and families were asked to participate in a number of surveys. The results of these surveys will provide the school with a roadmap for future development.

VALUE ADDED

- Celebrated and affirmed our faith, tradition and heritage
- Daily classroom prayer
- Morning prayers delivered electronically via ClassDojo during remote learning
- Weekly staff prayer
- Use of 'New Awakenings' curriculum and resources to deliver Religious Education lessons both during onsite and remote learning

- Teachers working with staff from the Catholic Education Office to plan our Religious Education units
- Introducing Catholic Education Ballarat's Relationships and Sexuality curriculum, 'Fullness of Life for All'
- Participated in 200 years of Catholic Education celebrations
- School Masses were held when possible, including the Grade Six Graduation ceremony
- Prayer liturgies were held when possible
- Religious feasts, activities and prayers featured in weekly school newsletter
- School supported the Parish Sacrament program, 'Live Your Christian Life'
- Families were informed about ways to access mass online
- Prayer resources shared electronically with families over the Easter period
- Parish newsletter shared electronically with families
- Continued to partner with Catholic Misson, Caritas Australia and St Vincent de Paul

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Reconnect with the school community following the COVID-related interruptions of 2020.

Achievements

Community engagement is an essential aspect of school life at St Patrick's. With students being in and out of remote learning, the school continued to engage with families via electronic platforms such as Class Dojo, Google Meet and phone calls. The school also introduced a new format for our weekly newsletter which enhanced its accessibility on mobile devices.

During periods of remote learning, the school held a virtual Book Week Dress Up Day where students (and some staff) shared pictures on ClassDojo. The school also held some challenge events on ClassDojo including the 'Trick Shot Challenge' and 'Beat an Olympian Challenge'. These events allowed our community to continue to connect during periods of lockdown and restrictions.

When COVID-19 regulations allowed, parents were highly visible as classroom helpers, volunteers, active Parents and Friends members and School Advisory Council members. The school also hosted a number of community events highlighted by Harmony Day and Mother's Day celebrations. Our students also participated in wider community events such as ANZAC Day services and interschool sporting events. The school also piloted a new form of community engagement through holding Storytime Sessions in the library for preschool-aged children.

In August this year, the school conducted an online survey of families to improve the delivery of remote learning. The school received a total of 36 responses and the feedback was overwhelmingly satisfied with the school's communication, learning plans and materials. The survey provided some great insights into where some small changes would be able to improve student learning. This is an example of how the school sought and acted on feedback from our families.

PARENT SATISFACTION

In August, the school conducted an online survey of families to improve the delivery of remote learning. The survey received 36 responses which is over 30 percent of the school community ensuring that the data is valid.

Of the families who completed the survey, 72 percent were 'Very Satisfied' with the communication from the school during remote learning. A further 27 percent of respondents were 'Satisfied' with the school's communication during this period. In terms of learning materials supplied during remote learning, 47 percent were 'Very Satisfied' and a further 50 percent were 'Satisfied'.

Leadership & Stewardship

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Determining and implementing a clear, sustainable and agreed leadership model informed by PLC approach

Achievements

The continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic and uncertainty required the school's leadership to continually reassess how to best move forward as a school and community whilst working remotely, on-site and dealing with high student absences due to the pandemic. The school's leadership was able to structure team planning opportunities for staff that enabled collaborative work opportunities to ensure optimum learning outcomes for students.

The school introduced a new leadership model which was devised to be both financially sustainable and to best serve the students and families of the school. In place of Learning Communities in the three Learning Communities of the school, a single Teaching and Learning Leader was introduced. The aim of a single role to oversee Teaching and Learning across the school was to bring out greater consistency which had been identified as a concern in the 2020 Mid-Cycle Review.

In January 2021, the school undertook a major change in governance as it came under the control of the Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL). The change in governance meant that the school undertook a major review of school policies. The school's leadership introduced a wide range of new policies to students, families and staff. The school also undertook an audit by the Victorian Regulations and Qualifications Authority (VRQA).

The school was successful in receiving a \$5000 grant from the Northern Grampians Shire Council Community Grants program. The project, 'Paddy's Paddock' saw the oval resurfaced and a sprinkler system installed. This will allow for students to have greater access to outside playing space. The school also began work on a Masterplan for the school grounds and facilities. School leadership members are currently working on the educational brief. Morton Dunn has been engaged to complete an architectural brief.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2021

The ongoing professional learning of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences and a range of programs provided by Catholic Education Ballarat. The school's professional learning this year has been focused on our Annual Improvement Plan goals.

- All staff participated in the 'Grow Your Mind' Wellbeing session.
- All staff participated in a professional development day looking at the science of reading.
- Teaching staff participated in a session with staff from the Resilience Project.

- Teachers in Grades 3-6 and support teachers completed year-long reading instruction professional development, 'Reading Beyond the Early Years' through Catholic Education Ballarat.
- Teachers in the Junior area continued ongoing professional development in regard to the 'IntiaLit' literacy program.
- Teaching staff participated in various Religious Education professional development sessions hosted by our Parish Priest and Catholic Education Ballarat consultants.
- Staff undertook annual mandatory training and updates
- Staff undertook individual and role-based professional development

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2021	16
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$750

TEACHER SATISFACTION

The school staff were surveyed in regards to the Principal's performance during the 2021 school. A total of 45 percent of respondents indicated that they were 'Very Satisfied' and a further 54 percent indicated that they were 'Satisfied' with the Principal's performance.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	84.0%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	77.3%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	8.3%
Graduate	25.0%
Graduate Certificate	16.7%
Bachelor Degree	66.7%
Advanced Diploma	16.7%
No Qualifications Listed	8.3%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	16.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	12.9
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	7.5
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Building teacher capability to improve student learning outcomes, with a focus on Reading

Achievements

The school undertook focussed professional development in the area of reading instruction in order to improve teaching practice and ultimately student learning outcomes. In the junior area the school introduced the systematic phonics-based program, IntiaLit. Staff in this area received ongoing support and professional development to ensure this approach was implemented with fidelity.

Teachers in Grades 3 to 6 along with our Boost teachers undertook a year-long course through Ballarat, 'Reading Beyond the Early Years'. This course looked at proven strategies to most effectively teach reading in middle and upper primary. All staff also participated in a professional development session looking at the Science of Reading.

The school was able to offer additional support to students through the School Tutoring program which saw additional teachers employed at the school. The school was also able to continue to deliver a range of intervention programs both during on-site and remote learning. A special mention needs to be made of the dedication of our teachers and Learning Support Officers to ensure that this happened.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The school has chosen to include results from the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) in the areas of Mathematics and Reading Comprehension as an indicator of student learning outcomes for 2021.

The percentage of students at or above standard for Reading Comprehension, Foundation: 76%; Grade One: 65%; Grade Two: 87%; Grade Three: 69%; Grade Four: 85%; Grade Five: 76%; Grade Six: 70%. The percentage of students at or above standard for Mathematics, Grade One: 90%; Grade Two: 100%; Grade Three: 73%; Grade Four: 73%; Grade Five: 90%; Grade Six: 94%.

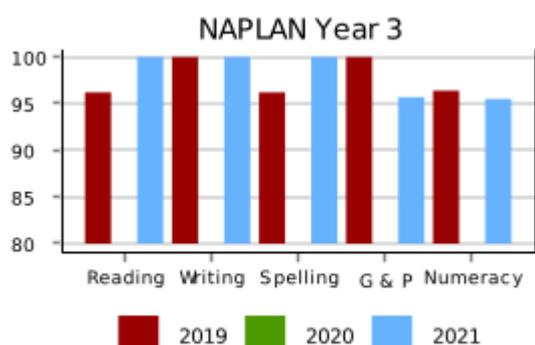
These results demonstrated great improvement on the same data set from 2020, particularly in the area of reading.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2019 %	2020 *	2019 – 2020 Changes *	2021 %	2020 – 2021 Changes *
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	-	-	95.7	-
YR 03 Numeracy	96.4	-	-	95.5	-
YR 03 Reading	96.2	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Spelling	96.2	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Writing	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	96.2	-	-	96.4	-
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Reading	92.6	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Spelling	100.0	-	-	92.9	-
YR 05 Writing	85.2	-	-	100.0	-

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

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

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



Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Enhancing the wellbeing of staff and all students

Achievements

Again in 2021 we acknowledge the importance of students' wellbeing during the unsettling and challenging times which the COVID-19 pandemic presented. The following initiatives were introduced and embedded to support the students: the employment of a Wellbeing Coordinator, continuation of the school Wellbeing Team, different supports for families during lockdown periods and a whole school focussed Wellbeing Day.

The school continued to partner with the Northern Grampians Shire to continue to utilise the Resilience Project resources in the classroom. Our teaching staff had a session with Anthony Keely from the Resilience Project looking at long-term student data. Teaching staff also completed refresher training in the use of Zones of Regulation. The school created a two-year Social and Emotional Learning plan for the whole school.

The wellbeing of staff was also a major focus for the school in 2021. All staff took part in a whole-day session led by hosts from the 'Grow Your Mind' group. The focus of this session was the importance of looking after one's own personal wellbeing. This session was followed up with a number of initiatives and activities throughout the year. The school also held a number of staff social events when restrictions allowed.

VALUE ADDED

- Use of the Resilience Project resources to inform Wellbeing lessons both during on-site and remote learning
- Additional Resilience Project resources shared with families during lockdown periods
- Regular Google Meet check-ins for students during remote learning periods
- Wellbeing strategies shared electronically for students and families during remote learning periods
- Wellbeing focussed videos created and shared with students and families
- Whole school Wellbeing day held to promote wellbeing strategies
- Wellbeing Coordinator appointed
- School Wellbeing Team meets on a regular basis
- Grade Six and Foundation Buddy program
- School Choir
- Excursions and Camps

- St Vinnies Assist a Student Program
- School and Interschool sports activities
- Social Justice Student Leaders
- Regular staff social events

STUDENT SATISFACTION

In 2020, the senior students at the school completed the Insight SRC survey which provided input on a wide range of school operations. The students who completed the survey made overwhelmingly positive responses to the school's performance in the areas of Teacher Empathy, Purposeful Teaching and Student Safety.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

- Parents of absent students are required to provide a written note, phone call, or electronic notification through the PAM detailing the reason/s for the absence.
- If the school has not received a reason for a student absence, parents are contacted via text message or phone call.
- All absences are recorded on SIMON.
- Staff members are to bring to the attention of the Principal any student/s whose attendance is irregular.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Y01	95.9%
Y02	94.4%
Y03	93.7%
Y04	95.5%
Y05	92.0%
Y06	95.2%
Overall average attendance	94.4%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

At St. Patrick's we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school.

Achievements

- Reviewing of school policies to align with relevant government legislation
- Professional learning of teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers
- Implementation of 'PROTECT, Identifying and Responding to all Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools'
- Promotion of cyber-safety during remote learning period
- Two Child Safety Officers in place at the school
- Engagement of families and the community in promoting child safety
- Human Resources practices (recruitment, supervision, performance review)
- Child safety - Risk Management practices