



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

2023

Annual Report to the School Community



St John the Baptist School

17 Forest Road, FERNTREE GULLY 3156

Principal: Kelli Johnston

Web: www.sjferntreegully.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 1406, E Number: E1141

Principal's Attestation

I, Kelli Johnston, attest that St John the Baptist 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 26 Apr 2024

About this report

St John the Baptist 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

School Vision

Reflecting on the PAST
Embracing the PRESENT
Growing towards the FUTURE
Living in the SPIRIT
Responding to GOD in all

School Mission

I have come that you may have life and have it to the full. John 10:10

We will be **Christ centred**, where all are valued since we are made in the image and likeness of God.

We will have a focus on **Whole person formation**, where each young person will be a person of competence, conscience and compassion.

We will develop **Relationships**, where we recognise that the strength of our community is in collaboration and service with and for each other and

our wider community.

We are one body of many parts. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

School Overview

School Overview

St. John the Baptist Parish Primary School is an integral part of the community it serves and supports. The staff, families and Parish community combine to provide a positive environment where, with Christ as the centre of our Catholic ideals and traditions, children learn lifelong values. Situated at the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges, St. John's is aesthetically pleasing with ample grounds and buildings. The buildings have been refurbished and up-dated continuously. Classrooms are bright and attractive with heating and cooling, carpeting and access to wet areas. St. John's has a multi-purpose hall, current technology in all classrooms and a well-resourced library. The school has three main play areas featuring a fully synthetic oval, running track, long jump pit, well protected and shaded sand pit, nature scape with playground equipment and marked netball and basketball courts.

The focus of the 2023 school year continued to be building of teacher professional knowledge and ability to interpret data to direct teaching and learning to impact the learning outcomes for each individual student in literacy and numeracy. Additionally to that focus is the school's aim to further develop the wellbeing of each child, by developing positive relationships with all staff, along with building on the social and emotional capabilities of each child.

At St John the Baptist we pride ourselves on our partnerships with our parents and families. We see ourselves in partnership with our families as we journey together through their child/ren's years at school. Each family is embraced and encouraged to St John the Baptist as part of a team collaborating in their child's spiritual, academic and social and emotional journey.

We are proud of the manner the St John the Baptist school community works together to build our school into a leading education setting in Ferntree Gully. We thank all members of our community, the school staff, parish team, parents and our students for working in partnership to provide a vibrant and connected community for our students.

Principal's Report

I am pleased to present to you the 2023 St John the Baptist's Annual Report to the School Community.

The 2023 school year presented a year of great development in all areas of school life. We were thrilled to be settling back into regular routines, structures and school life beyond COVID-19. It is wonderful to invite our community back into our school, and celebrate the learning and achievements of all.

Highlights from 2023 include:

- School enrolments forecasts are most encouraging.
- Through a focus on our School Annual Action Plan we continue to create a culture of growth and change. Our curriculum development continues to be our primary focus with staffing directed towards improving student learning outcomes.
- We continue to build a strong partnership with St John the Baptist Parish and specifically with Father Thomas and Deacon Peter.
- We look to the commencement of a building program with a Master Plan in place. This will add to the long term improvement of our school site.

Please find below a report on the 2023 school year detailing action and progress towards our goals and intended outcomes of the past year. We invite you to come to our school to experience what cannot be expressed in words or data. The real essence of a school cannot be fully encapsulated in a document, but can be more fully witnessed by being present within the welcoming community that is St John the Baptist School.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To build students' ability to recontextualise the Catholic faith in a contemporary context.

That students are able to make connections between life and Catholic faith.

Achievements

Religious Education maintains a very high profile at St John the Baptist School. Our Catholic Identity is clearly witnessed by providing an environment which nurtures and deepens our relationship with God.

There is a clear link between the Catholic Faith and Tradition with today's contemporary world. This is evident in the professional learning undertaken in the area of Recontextualisation throughout the year in school closure days and professional learning team meetings. Religious Education planning documents and lesson sequences demonstrate strong link between our Catholic Identity and Tradition with Recontextualisation, where explicit links between life, culture and the Catholic faith are evident.

St John the Baptist's data indicates a high level of satisfaction from students and families regarding the important emphasis Religious Education and our Catholic culture are evident within the school and community.

St John the Baptist School is recognised as a vibrant and supportive community where strong partnerships between the school, community and parish continue to strengthen.

Value Added

St. John the Baptist School welcomes and is inclusive of families from many backgrounds. Whilst St John the Baptist consists of families from a variety of faith denominations the Catholic Identity is strong. The community recognises and supports the fact that across the school, there are many opportunities to display, practise, and celebrate our faith.

There is a strong Catholic culture at St John the Baptist which permeates throughout the school.

This is evidenced by:

- Meaningful opportunities provided for staff and students to pray together regularly and engage in well planned liturgical experiences within the wider St John the Baptist Parish community.
- Students participate in daily prayers, attend rostered termly Parish Mass at the year level.

The school based Sacramental Program is highly valued and whole-school focused.

This is evidenced by:

- The school community supports those students who are on their preparation journey for the Sacraments. The children are highlighted to the Parish at a Commitment Mass. The Program is strongly supported by the parents and school community as indicated by the high number of parent attendance at information evenings and their feedback.
- Parents are always invited to attend any celebration. This is done via personal invitations by the students, posters, school newsletter and the school app.
- Students who are Catholic from Years 3-6 receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation

We are employing contemporary pedagogical strategies in Religious Education.

This is evidenced by:

- In Religious Education, the goal to employ contemporary pedagogical strategies to strengthen student engagement has been implemented through rigorous planning using Pedagogy of Encounter and Recontextualisation approach. This has ensured purposeful and meaningful units of work making explicit links between the Religious Education key concepts, faith, culture and life. This makes the learning deeper and more authentic.
- The emphasis when planning learning sequences ensures students have the opportunity to make connections to their own personal experiences and faith traditions and respond in their own way to Learning Intentions and Success Criteria are clearly articulated.

We pray together:

This is evidenced by:

- Prayer is an essential part of the development of our relationship with God and therefore time and space is provided daily for prayer in each classroom
- Prayer is part of our culture, and all staff gather in prayer before each staff meeting or gathering
- Prayer is also an integral part of our Catholic Identity which is instantly visible through the Catholic iconography and symbols displayed throughout our buildings, in classrooms

and the Church which stands prominently in our school grounds and can be accessed at any time by the school community.

It is also highly evident in the caring, positive and supportive interactions between staff, students and parents. This demonstrates our Mission of being Christ centred, Whole person formation and developing Relationships of strength with our community in collaboration with and for each other at work.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To build academic rigour for all.

That student learning outcomes across the curriculum are positively impacted by consistent research based teacher practice which is reflective of the schools agreed approach.

To ensure a high priority is given to the analysis and discussion of systematically collected data to support a reflective culture of improvement.

That teachers consistently use student data (academic, attendance, behavioural outcomes and student wellbeing) to reflect and improve on practice.

Achievements

St John the Baptist implements a developmental Prep – Year 6 curriculum based on the Victorian Curriculum. These documents provide a comprehensive set of skills, content and common achievement standards, which we use to plan student learning programs, assess student progress and report to our parents.

Our teaching and learning cycle enables every young person at St John the Baptist to be a successful, engaged and purposeful learner. Our programs provide our students with the essential skills and strategies to meet the challenges of our ever-changing society.

The following actions took place in 2023 to support us in achieving our goals:

- Professional Learning meetings facilitated by our Leadership Team focused on the elements of expert teaching, particularly explicit teaching.
- Learning and Teaching Leader attending Level Planning sessions each week to support our teachers
- Collaborative Learning Team professional development and dialogue relating to best practice for teaching.
- Assessment and monitoring has been implemented across the school to ascertain student learning needs
- Literacy Intervention in either 1 to 1 or small group situations depending on student data
- Reading and Writing has been linked to our Inquiry Learning
- Implementation of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria for Literacy, Numeracy &

Religious Education

- The use of contemporary learning tools to enhance learning
- Parent Helpers Program

- Regular attendance by our leadership team at cluster and network meetings to support their professional growth and leadership capacity.

Student Learning Outcomes

The 2023 St John's NAPLAN data highlights that Year 5 students are performing above the State average in all areas of literacy and numeracy. The growth in all areas is a testament to the work put invested in planning, assessing and supporting the students of St John's in the areas of Reading, Writing, the Conventions of Language and Numeracy, as assessed in NAPLAN.

St John's School referred to the school's P-6 Assessment Schedule to monitor student growth and progress. The school's Assessment Schedule consists of formative and summative assessments in Literacy and Numeracy. These assessments are gathered throughout each year to monitor student growth and progress. Where student Tier 1 data demonstrated that further assessments or Tier 2 assessments were required the school investigated further. Intervention in the forms of Literacy Intervention and the school Tutoring program further supported students in achieving growth in all learning areas, particularly those students at risk.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	409	63%
	Year 5	534	86%
Numeracy	Year 3	407	72%
	Year 5	500	75%
Reading	Year 3	406	74%
	Year 5	533	95%
Spelling	Year 3	388	47%
	Year 5	502	81%
Writing	Year 3	437	94%
	Year 5	514	85%

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2023 due to participation not meeting these criteria or no students were assessed. Participants include students who were assessed, including non-attempt, or those exempted from the test.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

St John the Baptist school will embed a school wide, reflective culture of improvement that has a student centred approach.

We will ensure that all students will be empowered to learn and achieve, engaging with high quality teaching practice and the best conditions for learning which equip them with the knowledge, skills and dispositions for lifelong learning and shaping the world around them.

That students are active participants in the conversation about their own data sets (academic, attendance, behavioural outcomes and student wellbeing).

Achievements

St John the Baptist continues to hold the care, safety and wellbeing of all students as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is drawn from an inherent belief in the teaching and the mission of the gospel. St John's recognises that creating a child-safe environment is a dynamic process that involves active participation and a shared responsibility from all within the school community.

Throughout 2023, our school has sought to further embed its child safety strategies through the ongoing review and implementation of policies and practices. Professional boundaries have been reinforced with all staff members and volunteers, as has obligations regarding the protection and reporting of allegations or disclosures of abuse.

St John the Baptist School has recognised the importance and need for a whole school approach to Positive Behaviour for Learning and will engage with experts in this field and professional learning in the future to ensure the well-being of all students is at our epi-centre.

Value Added

The following Wellbeing strategies were embedded into our school practice:

The embedding of policies and commitments into everyday practice

- Child Safety Standards continue to be a weekly agenda item at meetings where the school's child safety strategy, risk management processes and their effectiveness are reviewed.
- Staff participate in regular briefings and presentations on the school's Child Safety Strategy with a focus on classroom and student's management, duty of care, and reporting requirements.

Training of teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers

- All teaching & non-teaching staff members participate in annual Child Safety Standards 'refresher training' and are required to read and sign the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct annually.
- Staff members have completed the Victorian Department of Education and Training's on-line Mandatory Reporting module.

Consultation with the community

- The school's Child Safety Strategy is communicated to new members of the school community at enrolment, with ongoing briefings facilitated via parent information nights the school newsletter and website.
- the safety of all Human Resource Practices
- The school implements rigorous screening processes which have a child safety focus and include:
 - Position advertisements
 - Position descriptions
 - Referee Checks
- Key Performance Indicators have a Child Safety focus
- Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration (VIT)
- Working With Children Checks & National Criminal Record Checks
- Screening of Casual Relief Teachers, Contractors and Volunteers.

St John the Baptist is committed to ensuring the well-being and safety of all students under

its

care by actively implementing, reviewing and improving its child safety strategy.

Student Satisfaction

With the 2023 student MACSSIS data, we can see that over 70% of students feel accepted and

students are kind to them at school. Over 80% of students outlined that the adults at St John the Baptist School care about them and their future.

As a school community, students feel safe to come to school and feel there is a strong Catholic

identity at our school. 75% of students surveyed as part of MACSSIS, felt a strong sense of Catholic Identity and respect towards their faith.

The results show students to have a sense of belonging as part of St John the Baptist School and that the students are connected to the school and each other.

Student Attendance

The school follows the MACS Attendance Policy which states the procedures for nonattendance.

- School Attendance Roll is marked both morning and afternoon using an electronic register
- Students who have a poor attendance rates are monitored weekly. In these cases, parents are contacted by phone, email or letter.
- Absent notes are required when students are away and parents have the option to do this in

a variety of ways including via the schools app, by email or note. The Wellbeing Leader also makes contact with parents who have not presented absent notes

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	90.4%
Y02	91.8%
Y03	89.6%
Y04	91.9%
Y05	91.8%
Y06	90.8%
Overall average attendance	91.1%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To further develop leadership capacity across the school with an emphasis on strategic leadership and enhanced communications.
- To continue to improve a schoolwide culture of collaboration and teamwork

Achievements

The school has put in place a School Improvement Team incorporating the following leadership positions; Principal, Deputy Principal, Religious Education Leader, Literacy Leader, Maths Leader, Learning Diversity Leader, Wellbeing Leader and E Learning Leader. The school celebrated the following successes in the 2023 in Leadership & Management:

- Staff were led through a strategically planned professional learning program
- A number of staff participated in professional development activities in either post-graduate studies or through self-directed external professional development programs
- The school continued its effective use of external consultants to support the professional learning of staff.
- Staff participate in weekly PLT Meetings with an emphasis on developing pedagogical content knowledge.
- Staff participated in the Annual Review Meetings with the school principal.

Other significant areas of development included:

- The further expansion of excellent communication strategies to enhance understanding and improved practice, including the inclusion of Operoo and Audiri as a communication tool.
- The provision of an external support agency to meet the needs of school staff in their social and emotional wellbeing.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school staff undertook the following professional learning activities throughout 2023: • Education in Faith Professional Development • Data Analysis for Continuous School Improvement - MACS PL • Literacy Professional Learning - Partnership with MACs & Melbourne University • Digital Technologies training • Catholic Education Melbourne Regional Network meetings • School Leadership Professional Development • First Aid training incorporating CPR, Anaphylaxis & Asthma Training • Mandatory Reporting 	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	23
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1000.00

Teacher Satisfaction

The 2023 school year:

Practices we would like to sustain (staff reflections):

- Open communication and mentoring of graduate staff and those aspiring to leadership
- Positive staff wide communication is a strength, with the MACSSIS data showing that 80% or more of staff stating school leaders effectively communicate information
- Working together to plan sequence of lessons to ensure a collaborative team approach to teaching & learning
- Staff view the relationships with students at St John's as both respectful and helpful, with the MACSSIS data highlighting that 80%+ of staff believe students are respectful to staff, and responding that students help without being prompted

In terms of communicating and engaging with parents, what practices would you like to sustain:

- Communication with parents has been highlighted as an area of strength for the school, throughout both the MACSSIS data and feedback forum. We would like to continue this positive work
- Providing consistent feedback and information regarding the growth of student learning, through interim reports on the progress of students

What emerging practices occurred in collaboration & teamwork that you would like to sustain:

- Supporting each other with the varied Digital Technology platforms
- Collaborative level planning should be sustained and further developed.

- MACSSIS 2023 shows 75%+ of staff surveyed believe teachers work collaboratively in teams to improve teaching and learning
- Each year we believe it is important to continue to discuss and form meeting and planning protocols to allow all members of the team to have a voice in the planning and discussion processes

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	4.5%
Graduate	9.1%
Graduate Certificate	4.5%
Bachelor Degree	31.8%
Advanced Diploma	27.3%
No Qualifications Listed	22.7%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	24
Teaching Staff (FTE)	17.4
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	15
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	8.0
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To strengthen parent and community links in support of authentic student learning.
- That children's learning will be enhanced by way of a stronger parent connection.

Achievements

A major focus for the 2023 school year was on further developing our communication with our parent and the wider school community. Our school website was redesigned to provide an attractive and informative online resource for the community. Additionally the school introduced Operoo and Audiri platforms as a means of communicating regularly through digital platforms. This has provided families with frequent communication that is user friendly, and seamless ways to be connected and informed.

2023 allowed for the consolidation of families being physically presented on the school site, working as partners in the learning of their child/ren. It provided families with the opportunity to consolidate reconnection for parents, parish and our wider communities.

Families were able to build community and partnerships through:

Parent/teacher Meet & Greet sessions, parent/teacher interviews, parents and students were invited to meet with classroom teachers and share their learning, celebrating their success and setting goals for the future.

Some of the other events that the St John the Baptist's community enjoyed taking part in were:

- Twilight on the Green
- Easter Bonnet Parade and Raffle
- Book Week
- Sports events
- Sacramental evenings
- Mother's Day and Father's Day events
- St John the Baptist Art Show

Parent Satisfaction

Feedback from parents in 2023 indicates that the school communicates in a highly effective manner, allowing them to know what is going on in the school and with their child/ren's learning. The MACSSIS 2023 data highlights this with 78% of respondents indicating positively that the school communicates in a regular and timely way.

Another area of strength for St John the Baptist, as shared by the parent community in the MACSSIS data is the school listens to and values the opinions of the community. Almost 90% of surveyed parents shared that they had a positive perception of the school, and the learning climate.

The feedback the school receives on a daily basis, as well as in formalised setting such as the School Advisory Council, Parents and Friends and feedback forums, indicates a high level

of satisfaction amongst our parent groups. They share that they believe the school is transparent in their communication and there is always an open door if they have a concern or question.

Parents were also invited to take part in a St John's Parent feedback forum. From this forum, some of the following feedback was provided:

- the school is doing communication well, through the newsletter and the Audiri app
- staff are available for parents to communicate with them - this can be face to face or over the phone
- Parents believed that the school was "identifying and supporting students having difficulty with curriculum"- this included the tutoring program

Financial Performance

The school's financial performance information and a report of the financial activities of the school's boarding premises (if applicable) have been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at www.acnc.gov.au.

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