





St James the Apostle School

330 Derrimut Road, HOPPERS CROSSING NORTH 3029

Principal: Andrea Richards

Web: www.sjhcn.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 1829, E Number: E1322

Principal's Attestation

- I, Andrea Richards, attest that St James the Apostle 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 20 May 2024

About this report

St James the Apostle 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 Leaners; 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

Our vision:

As a Catholic learning community of hope, inspired by the Gospel, we are empowered to embrace excellence through innovation.

Our mission:

We aim to impart Catholic beliefs, values, practices and traditions within a faith-filled community.

We strive to create a love of learning while building our identity within the context of the Parish community.

We aim to be living examples of that Faith, fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of each person.

We work in partnership together striving to strengthen our communication through involvement of all in our community in collaborative and co-operative decision making, working towards common goals.

We value the gifts and talents of each member, which are shared and nurtured in an accepting and safe environment.

In striving for excellence in education at St James the Apostle School we encourage children to take pride in themselves and their achievements.

We are committed to maintaining and developing our resources and school environment.

We appreciate that we are on a journey, supporting and encouraging each other as we grow and meet new challenges. In welcoming the future we are building on our past.

Together we strive to learn with strength and in gentleness.

Our strategic intent:

Cultivate a shared vision that is student-centred, growth-focussed and leads us to reflect and act.

School Overview

St James the Apostle Primary School is a co-educational Catholic school in the western suburbs of Melbourne, situated within a growth corridor.

St James the Apostle School community is Christ-centred and encourages all to learn with strength and in gentleness.

We aim to build a community based on openness, equality, respect, trust and a sense of belonging.

The faith development, pastoral care and wellbeing of all in our community is one of our strengths in living out our vision.

Our school uses the Victorian Curriculum and the Religious Education Framework as a basis for our Learning and Teaching program.

We have seven learning spaces, in addition to an art room, multi-purpose gym and contemporary resource centre. We have two adventure playgrounds, full-sized oval and other recreation spaces for our children to enjoy.

Our school has close links with St James the Apostle Parish and the other schools in the parish. The partnership between the three Primary schools and Thomas Carr College is valued. Regular meetings are held between the schools to offer support and to learn from each other. This is all done under the guidance of our Parish Priest, Fr Jude Pirotta mssp

Principal's Report

During 2022, there was a change in leadership with the Mary Abbott, Principal retiring after 5 years and David Hurn, Deputy Principal moving schools to take up a Principal role. In 2023, Andrea Richards, the new principal began at St James the Apostle Primary School along with Melissa Evgeniadis taking up the role of Deputy Principal along side Renae Stone.

2023 saw a number of changes being implemented post 2022 Review. Along with our three goals:

- 1. To build shared beliefs and understandings to enact our vision.
- 2. To strengthen our practices in leading and teaching.
- 3. To create a community of self-directed learners.

our strategic intent was to "Cultivate a shared vision that is student-centred, growth-focussed and leads us to reflect and act."

Getting to know the school and community were the priorities for the new principal so as to best understand the needs of the school and how to best implement any changes.

Working alongside the Leadership Team and with staff, clear and effective practices were put in place to provide structures and processes that enabled all staff and learners to flourish at St James such as:

- · Agreed behaviours for staff
- Developing a Performance and Development culture unpacking AITSL standards
- Performance, Planning and Review process for staff around AITSL standards -Empower all to accept personal responsibility for their learning
- Non negotiable Learner entitlements
- Instructional Coaching for Leaders

Along with working with a number of outside facilitators to support and build the staff's understanding and knowledge of current best practice and evidence based research, St James finished the year feeling confident in the direction we going.

And	Irea	Rick	าลท	ds

Principal

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Priority 1: A student-centred culture

Goal: To build shared beliefs and understandings to enact our vision.

Intended Outcomes:

- The school embraces the spirituality of all members of the community and works to ensure that this is experienced in the deep-seated call to mission.
- Leaders and teachers animate the mission and vision, creating a community of life and worship where staff, students and parents have a strong commitment to live out the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church, and consistently enact inclusive policies and practices, ensuring the participation of all.

Priority 2: Focus on growth

Goal: To strengthen our practices in leading and teaching.

Intended Outcomes:

- Teachers create time and space in the classroom environment for conversation and dialogue, encouraging diverse views to be explored in relation to the Catholic tradition (recontextualisation).
- Teachers collaboratively design the curriculum, including adjustments to content or material, so that all students experience challenge in their learning.

Priority 3: Reflect and act

Goal: To create a community of self-directed learners.

Intended Outcomes:

- Teachers and leaders share, design and develop professional learning and faith formation opportunities for all members of the school community, through engaging in theological reflection and spiritual practice to 'experience for themselves'.
- School leaders and teachers empower students, staff and families to advocate for and lead whole-school action for justice and the common good.

Achievements

- Strengthening of curriculum planners used by teachers to plan units of work, based on the MACS Religious Education Framework, the mandated text *To Know, Worship and Love* and teacher feedback from previous units.
- Consideration of learners' diverse needs, including the plurality of religions, when developing Religious Education units in line with the school planner and system Framework.
- Facilitation of planning by the Religious Education Leader, with particular focus on how the *Pedagogy of Encounter* provided opportunities for learners to share their stories and connect them with Tradition.
- Providing time during faciliated planning for teachers to engage in discussion about their own faith and knowledge of Tradition, along with examples of how to engage in dialogue with learners.
- Provision of professional learning, both in person and online, in the areas of scripture,
 Catholic tradition and liturgy.
- Provision of family faith development workshops across the school, with families in Years Prep to 2 gathering onsite to explore Scripture and Prayer, and families in Years 3 to 6 gathering online to engage with Catholic tradition in the context of the sacraments of initiation and Catholic Social Teaching.
- School communication, including e-news and social media, included information from the parish and opportunities for families to learn more about Catholic tradition.

Value Added

- Sacraments of initiation were celebrated with Catholic learners in Years 4 and 6
- Social justice projects were planned and carried out by different year levels:
 - Year 6 running the Mission Market for Caritas Australia and Paulist Missionaries
 - Year 4 organising a special fund-raiser day for Catholic Mission during Socktober
 - Year 3 developing a fundraiser for Project Compassion
- The Year 5 learning community developed and led their own version of the Scriptural Stations of the Cross for the school community.
- Staff and learners were invited to celebrate liturgies across the year, including for the beginning of the year and end of the year.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Priority 1: A student-centred culture

Goal: To build shared beliefs and understandings to enact our vision.

Intended Outcomes:

• Teachers have high expectations of all students across all domains (religious, physical, cognitive, emotional and social) and engage with non-teaching staff to support student learning.

Priority 2: Focus on growth

Goal: To strengthen our practices in leading and teaching.

Intended Outcomes:

- Leaders give feedback on teacher performance in both formal and informal settings (e.g. through observations, coaching) and teachers regularly participate in peer mentoring by observing each other's practice to learn with and from one another.
- Teachers collaboratively consider data and evidence, and determine next steps for learning, their own teaching practices, wellbeing and positive behaviour processes.
- Teachers collaboratively design the curriculum, including adjustments to content or material, so that all students experience challenge in their learning.

Priority 3: Reflect and act

Goal: To create a community of self-directed learners.

Intended Outcomes:

- Teachers explicitly teach metacognitive and reflective strategies and use feedback approaches, as an integral part of the learning process, enabling students to self-regulate, self-assess and reflect on their own learning.
- Teachers access ongoing, targeted professional learning which is aligned with their goals and synthesise evidence (e.g. personal reflection, feedback from leaders and peers, student assessment data) to set challenging and achievable goals.
- Teachers embrace approaches which encourage student self-efficacy and agency in learning.

Achievements

As a school we have implemented and developed the following:

- Developed Student Entitlements relating to how students learn best at St James
- Engagement in moderation practices
- Employment of Languages and Literacy Leader
- · Open house days inviting parents into the learning
- Introduction of PPRs for staff (Planning, Performance Reviews), supporting and coaching staff to work on learning goals for student achievement
- Special days including Italiano Day, 100 Days of Prep, Book Week and National Simultaneous Storytime
- Engagement with MACS Literacy consultant and Flourishing Learners Professional Learning to implement evidence based approaches to Literacy
- Development of F-2 Scope and Sequence for Literacy
- Involvement in Prime Minister's Spelling Bee and Premier's Reading Challenge
- Engagement and professional learning from external consultant to develop shared understanding of multiage learning and student centred learning at St James
- Introduction of morphology instruction from Year 3.
- Engagement in Professional Learning around evidence based instruction in Mathematics - Early Number and Algebra
- · Developing networks across schools in our region, with school visits
- Collaboration with Language Assistant and MACS TCL team to strengthen practices in Italian
- Year 6 learner participation in STEM workshops at Australian Grand Prix
- Learners provided the opportunity to participate in interschool sports competitions, including swimming, athletics and general Summer and Winter Inter School sports; as well as sports clinics during Physical Education lessons
- Year 3 and 4 learners engaged in intensive swimming programs

Student Learning Outcomes

Our 2023 NAPLAN data shows the following:

Year 3:

- Strength: Writing, with 84% of learners meeting proficiency standards
- Challenge: Grammar and Punctuation: with 45% of learners meeting proficiency standards

Year 5:

• Strength: Writing, with 70% of learners meeting proficiency standards

• Challenge: Grammar and Punctuation: with 44% of learners meeting proficiency standards

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards					
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient		
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	409	45%		
	Year 5	456	44%		
Numeracy	Year 3	404	64%		
	Year 5	455	56%		
Reading	Year 3	394	67%		
	Year 5	471	64%		
Spelling	Year 3	404	62%		
	Year 5	467	66%		
Writing	Year 3	433	84%		
	Year 5	473	70%		

^{*}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

Priority 2: Focus on growth

Goal: To strengthen our practices in leading and teaching.

Intended Outcomes:

 Teachers collaboratively consider data and evidence, and determine next steps for learning, their own teaching practices, wellbeing and positive behaviour processes.

Priority 3: Reflect and act

Goal: To create a community of self-directed learners.

Intended Outcomes:

- Teachers design learning activities that use peer feedback and self-reflection as a regular part of practice to empower students.
- Students participate in a range of teacher-led committees and groups that provide feedback about learning, safety and wellbeing.

Achievements

- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) as a whole school approach continued in the language and learning experiences at school.
- The four school expectations connected to Positive Behaviour for Learning (We are safe, we are learners, we are respectful and we are responsible) reinforced through whole school messaging and learning experiences.
- Staff developed agreed definitions of behaviours, and updated the PBL flowchart, for how to respond to minor or major behaviours.
- PBL lessons, linked to the Behaviour for Learning Matrix taught during the year. In Term 1, the PBL lessons were taught to the whole school at the beginning of the school year. The lessons were then retaught throughout the year to reinforce the expected behaviours.
- Inquiry learning in Term 1 focussed on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL).
- Student behaviour data from the yard and learning spaces collected throughout the vear.
- Student Representative Council members (leaders from Years 3-6) led different aspects of school communication.

- Staff professional learning in Child Safety Standards, Mandatory Reporting including the PROTECT Protocol (Victorian Government) and Reportable Conduct.
- Communication with the school community about child safety information, and reminders about child safety issues, including the use of photography and the car park.
- Staff completed first aid training in the following areas: CPR, anaphylaxis and asthma.
- Transitions from kindergarten to Prep, and Year 6 to Year 7 supported.
- Prep transition support included kindergarten visits and three orientation sessions.

Value Added

- Positive Behaviour for Learning processes strengthened through the development of staff agreed behaviour definitions and flowchart to help with consistency of practice.
- PBL lessons connected to the Behaviour for Learning Matrix to reinforce school wide expectations for behaviour.
- Learners supported with transitions to Prep and Year 7,
- Communication with kindergartens and secondary schools to strengthen to the transition process for learners.

Student Satisfaction

The 2023 MACSSIS student data suggests the following:

- 87% of students in Years 4-6 believe that their teachers encourage them to do their best,
- 76% of students responded that it is important to them that they try again, when they at first do not succeed with their learning,
- 84% of students in Years 4-6 responded that it is important to them to do well at school.

Student Attendance

The school advises parents/guardians of unexplained absences, on the same day, as soon as practicable. This occurs via an SMS, sent out on the morning of an unexplained student absence to the parent/guardian, asking the parent or guardian to contact the school in response to the SMS to confirm the message has been received. If student absenteeism increases, or if student absenteeism remains unexplained, the school follows the Department

of Education Attendance Guidelines - Every Day Counts. Unexplained absenteeism was followed up by home group teachers, deputy principals and principal.

Based on Department of Educatoin's Attendance Guidelines (2018), parents/guardians have the responsibility to:

- Ensure their child attends school and to provide an explanation for their child's absence from school, and the principal must record in writing the reason (if any) given by the parent,
- Inform the school in advance of upcoming absences,
- Ensure a child's education and wellbeing are supported by communicating openly with the school where a child has an ongoing medical condition that may result in ongoing absences or medical appointments during school hours (p.9).

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Leve		
Y01	89.3%	
Y02	91.8%	
Y03	89.3%	
Y04	91.9%	
Y05	90.7%	
Y06	89.8%	
Overall average attendance	90.5%	

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Priority 1: A student-centred culture

Goal: To build shared beliefs and understandings to enact our vision.

Intended Outcomes:

 School leaders actively partner with teachers to measure the impact of practice on student learning outcomes and to design appropriate interventions.

Priority 2: Focus on growth

Goal: To strengthen our practices in leading and teaching.

Intended Outcomes:

- The school's leaders actively work to identify and create challenging roles, responsibilities and opportunities for all staff.
- Policies, processes and practices are aligned to evidence-informed best practice to deliver inclusive and high-quality curriculum, with a focus on student learning outcomes.

Priority 3: Reflect and act

Goal: To create a community of self-directed learners.

Intended Outcomes:

 The school supports staff to develop and facilitate professional learning, drawing on a range of learning pedagogies and collaborative models, with opportunities aligning with both the school improvement plan and identified challenges for student learning, leading to whole-school improvement.

Achievements

- New Principal began
- New Deputy Principal began alongside current Deputy Principal Renae Stone
- Development of Leadership team
- · Team commitments developed to support the Leadership Team in working together
- · Worked with Kerin Thornloe to build our capacity and understanding of leadership
- Leadership team took part in the Flourishing Learners West Professional Learning

- Worked with Vania Tiatto (CT-ed) to develop our action plan for learning at St James
- · Parent evening around Multi-age learning
- Teachers participated in various Professional Learning activities both on- and off-site or online.
- · The school has maintained its financial viability.
- The school has maintained low class sizes in 2023
- Timetable organisation enabled teams to plan together each week. This timetable also accounted for part-time staff availability to ensure they could plan with their team fortnightly.
- Staff Meetings and PLT meetings were timetable weekly and always had a professional learning focus.
- Resources are provided for each year level teaching team to engage in a day of planning for the forthcoming term, facilitated by the learning leaders.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023

Throughout 2023, Leaders participated in various Professional Learning sessions. These included:

· Working with Kerin Thorneloe around Leadership

LEARNING AND TEACHING / LEADERSHIP PL

- Early Number and Algebra Teacher and Leader days
- · Mathematics Communities of Practice sessions
- Dynamic Differentiation in Mathematics PL
- Italian TCL teacher and leader session
- · Flourishing Learners introductory sessions for Leaders
- · Student Centered Learning in multiage settings
- Dylan Wiliam Assessment PL
- · Mentoring for VIT
- · Instructional Coaching sessions
- · Colourful Semantics
- EduTech
- Leadership Network Days (Wellbeing, Religious Education, Principal, Learning Diversity and Deputy Principal)
- · Pathway to Principalship
- EAL Reporting sessions

WELLBEING & LEARNING DIVERSITY PL

- Power to Kids The Mackillop Institute
- Al and Cyber Forum
- Practices and Policies in setting up medical management plans
- CPR
- · Epilepsy Training
- ACER Social Emotional Wellbeing Assessments
- · Dan Petro setting up learners for success
- User B Assessment Training
- · Positive Behaviour for Learning PL sessions

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	51
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1200.00

Teacher Satisfaction

The annual survey of staff MACSSIS 2023 (Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools - School Improvement Survey) showed an small increase in some of these domains from the year before, however, they are still areas that require continued work at St James.

- Feedback: Perceptions of the amount and quality of feedback staff receive.
- School Leadership: Perceptions of the school leadership's effectiveness.
- Instructional Leadership: The extent to which the school leaders set the conditions for improving teaching and learning at the school.

This data also indicates the changes that are occurring at St James and the apprehension which is accompanying this.

Teacher Qualifications		
Doctorate	0.0%	
Masters	18.6%	
Graduate	7.0%	
Graduate Certificate	9.3%	
Bachelor Degree	41.9%	
Advanced Diploma	14.0%	
No Qualifications Listed	9.3%	

Staff Composition		
Principal Class (Headcount)		
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	48	
Teaching Staff (FTE)	41.3	
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	24	
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	18.1	
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	1	

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Priority 1: A student-centred culture

Goal: To build shared beliefs and understandings to enact our vision.

Intended Outcomes:

 Leaders and teachers animate the mission and vision, creating a community of life and worship where staff, students and parents have a strong commitment to live out the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church, and consistently enact inclusive policies and practices, ensuring the participation of all.

Priority 2: Focus on growth

Goal: To strengthen our practices in leading and teaching.

Intended Outcomes:

- Leaders and staff prioritise relationships and privilege the voice of parents in their planning and decision-making.
- Parents' and community partners' knowledge is regularly sought by teachers and leaders.

Priority 3: Reflect and act

Goal: To create a community of self-directed learners.

Intended Outcomes:

- School leaders and teachers empower students, staff and families to advocate for and lead whole-school action for justice and the common good.
- The school creates opportunities for teachers and support staff to share strategies that empower parents to support learning at home and beyond the classroom, including regular, structured opportunities that enable new and less-connected members to be part of the community.

Achievements

• The Parents and Friends Committee (P&F) met regularly throughout the year. The P&F meetings were made up of P&F office bearers, general members, principal and deputy principals.

- The P&F organised different fundraising activities in the school, included icy poles, donuts, pizza and Subway orders.
- The P&F organised and ran the Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day stalls and raffles, an Easter raffle and their Christmas raffle.
- School communication methods included email, school Facebook page, phone calls, Seesaw announcements, the large electronic sign in the school carpark and school newsletter.
- Family faith workshops for each year level were held onsite or online using Google Meet.
- School assemblies and celebrations, including liturgies, were held throughout the year.
- The Mothers' Day BBQ breakfast and Fathers' Day BBQ breakfast were very well attended.
- Parent information session regarding the link between multi-age and contemporary learning, facilitated by Vania Tiatto.

Parent Satisfaction

The 2023 MACSSIS family data suggests the following:

- 81% of parents respondents perceive that the social and learning climate of the school is positive,
- 90% of parent respondents believe their child's teacher meets their child's learning needs.
- 71% of parent respondents feel that feedback from the school helps them understand how their child is progressing in aspects of their school life, such as peer or social relationships, their wellbeing and communication.

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.sjhcn.catholic.edu.au