



St Michael & St John's School Horsham

2020

Annual Report to the School Community



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E NUMBER	E2023

Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Andrea Cox, attest that St Michael & St John'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 2020 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 School.

11/06/2021

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

Our School Vision & Mission

With Christ as our centre point and inspiration, our children will thrive and be empowered to positively contribute to the world.

CARING LEARNING GROWING EVERY CHILD EVERY DAY

In light of the Gospels, we commit to establishing authentic relationships and collaborative partnerships to maximise learning for ALL.

School Overview

The school was founded in 1883 when the Parish leased the Temperance Hall in Splatt St (now Roberts Ave) for use as a school. It was led by a staff of lay teachers. Since 1884, Ss Michael and John's Primary School has operated in a variety of buildings, including the parish church, but always on the current site. The Brigidine Sisters assumed responsibility for the school between 1920 and 1990.

The former Brigidine Convent was incorporated into the school facilities housing classrooms and administration until 2009 when the building was demolished.

In 2010, Ss Michael and John's completed a major building project which saw the redevelopment of the whole site into a modern educational facility.

Principal's Report

I'm not quite sure how to start with the report this year. The upheaval and unpredictable circumstances that our whole community has endured this year are unprecedented and not something any of us have experienced before.

Thank you to all our families for your unwavering support throughout the year. Our school doesn't feel the same without you being onsite with us. You have been missed and have missed out on so many milestones in your child's educational journey this year, which has been incredibly difficult for those families who have children in Prep and our graduating Grade 6 students.

Our school year began with a full complement of staff and an enrolment of 247 students. It has been pleasing to see our enrolments grow throughout the year to 252 and continue to grow into 2021.

The change to learning from home brought about the necessity to change how we met and interacted with parents and students. Zoom has become the new meeting place and opened up a whole new world of possibilities.

Teachers who never thought of themselves as being very tech-savvy have developed new skills and were regularly videoing YouTube clips, and parents developed skills to support their children's learning. Some of you found it a very enriching experience; however, we also understand that it was not a great experience for all.

Since returning to onsite learning, the staff have focussed on the wellbeing of our students. Switching from different modes of learning is difficult enough; however, to do that several times during the school year is a credit to the families and students as it requires resilience and character strength.

Upon returning to onsite learning in term 4, Mrs Wilson planned Liturgies on-line and ensured that social justice projects that would have taken place throughout the year still happen. Our Mini Vinnies collected non-perishable food for the Food Bank, and our annual Giving Tree will also went ahead.

After continually trying to reorganise and then finally cancel all camps and excursions, it was great to have the green light for them to go ahead in term 4. We lost count of the times that we rescheduled school photo's and were relieved to fit them in this term.

I take this opportunity to thank Father Peter for his continued guidance and support to me in his time as Parish Priest in Horsham. Father Peter has been tireless in his support of Catholic Education in Horsham and has supported the staff and students in their faith journey. Father Peter, your retirement at the end of this year is well deserved. **YOU WILL BE MISSED!**

Also moving on this year is Mr Rowe, who has accepted the Principal position at St Rita's Primary School, Babinda, Queensland, which is a fabulous opportunity for Michael. We wish Michael, Beck and the children all the best as they depart for this next chapter in their lives. Michael has been a great asset to our school, and his gentle and caring presence will be missed by us all.

As a Catholic School in the Diocese of Ballarat, Ss Michael and John's has a proud history of serving the Parish families. It was with a sense of sadness and the knowledge that change needed to happen that DOBCEL (Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited) was formed (DOBCEL); this has taken over the governance of Catholic Primary schools once the role of the Parish Priest. Ss Michael and John's became a member of DOBCEL this November, while both continuing and beginning a new chapter for Catholic Education in Horsham.

Schools are busy places, and our success is a direct result of your participation and the unwavering support of all staff. I am so proud of their commitment, and this year especially, their willingness to adapt and change whilst always putting the children first. In what has been a challenging year, they have ensured that the children continued to learn.

Thank you, and may you all have a blessed and holy Christmas. With the grace of God, we pray that 2021 is more settled and kinder to us than in 2020.

Andrea Cox

Principal

Parish Priest's Report

2020 will be remembered as the year Covid-19 pandemic gripped the world, and impacted the lives of us all, the young and the old, as a School, and the lives of our students, families, and the wider community.

Yet there is indisputable evidence of the strength of the human spirit to overcome great adversity. Remarkable stories of young people surviving their homeschooling, the patience and resilience of parents at home with their children, and the wonderful support, care and attention of our Teachers to the needs of all students across this difficult time for all. You have all had to endure two lockdowns, interruptions to normal school life, and to our School in providing a holistic Catholic education: spiritual, physical, emotional, psychological.

Thank you to Andrea Cox, our Principal, for guiding our School during the challenges, joys, struggles of this year, and for providing hope and support to all Staff and to families, in their various financial, emotional and practical struggles.

The same gratitude for all our Staff for remaining connected and in constant contact with students and families in all their needs. Online learning has proven a great benefit to students with the support our School has offered to students and families.

2020 brings further changes to our education sphere, and to me personally. From January 1st 2021, DOBCEL - Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited - is the company established by Bishop Paul Bird to become the governing body for schools in the Ballarat Diocese.

DOBCEL was established to fulfill the following objectives:

- To ensure consistency and professionalism of governance for parish schools.
- To ensure the continued pastoral ministry of priests in parish schools.
- To allow the ongoing engagement of parish and local communities.
- To ensure effective and transparent stewardship of education resources.
- To allow the Diocese of Ballarat to address Recommendation 16.6 of the Royal Commission (that parish priests are not the employers of principals and teachers in Catholic schools).
- To allow Catholic education authorities to meet the Victorian Government's requirement for organisations that receive government funding (including schools) to be governed by incorporated legal entities.

We pray for its success in our Diocese.

I turned 75 on June 24th, and Bishop Paul Bird has designated this as the retirement age for our Diocesan Priests. I welcome the appointment of Monsignor Glynn Murphy, currently at Warracknabeal, as our new Parish Priest. Glynn will have the added task during 2021 of merging Horsham, Nhill, Warracknabeal and Hopetoun Parishes into one Ministry District; he will have the assistance of another Priest.

As I finish my 9 years in Horsham, and in the 50th year of my priesthood, I thank Ss Michael and John School for the welcome, the support and the spirit they have shown me.

Thank you, Andrea, for your leadership and friendship, for standing firm and strong in keeping our School as a Catholic identity within our community. Special thanks to Alison McKinnon, as Sacramental Co-Ordinator for our School and Parish, for preparing our students and families for their Sacraments, and helping with class Masses, and Year level Liturgies.

Thank you to all Staff, the Office in their welcome, the SAC Board and to students for the welcome, respect and for being willing to develop your whole person around the vision and mission of our School motto: "Caring, Learning, Growing Every Child Every Day".

Our Staff have created a learning environment in which students are inspired and challenged to reach their greatest potential within a Catholic context.

I thank Michael Rowe as he leaves us for a Principal position at Babinda in far north Queensland. Michael has been at SMJ for the 9 years I have been in Horsham. Michael's faith, teaching, relationship with students, staff and families, is inspiring, God bless you, Bec and family.

All our students are valued and encouraged to strive to become independent learners, formed in the Christian faith.

God bless you all and thank you, I will pray for you all daily, in my retirement at Nazareth House Ballarat from January 2021.

School Advisory Council Report

What a challenging year we have all had in 2020.

Well done to Andrea and all the staff along with the parents at SMJ for a great job navigating our way through a couple of stints of home schooling. Also, thank you to the teachers for their efforts in fourth term to organise the athletics day, school camps and excursions at short notice to give our children the experiences that afford them in a usual school year.

We started the year with a pizza night at the school, welcoming the new family's and catch up with returning family's ready for the new school year. It was great to see so many people attend.

Due to COVID-19, the rest of the year's activities sadly were not able to run, but please get involved next year whether as a member of the SAC or a volunteer to help continue to build our school community and such a wonderful and caring school for our children to attend.

This year saw the preparation of the school transitioning to report to DOBCEL (Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited). From 1 January Andrea and the school will report to DOBCEL rather than the local parish priest.

Congratulations to Michael Rowe who is leaving our school to take a Principal role in Babinda, Queensland. I would like to thank him for his contribution to the school and students during his time with us and wish Michael, Bek and family all the best.

Farewell to Father Peter who has been an integral part of our school over the past 9 years. His guidance and teachings in our school and children's life has been invaluable and I wish him all the best in retirement. Welcome Monsignor Glynn Murphy to our school how will be taking over from Father Peter.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Rob Plazzer who finishes his term on the council this year. Thanks for all your work and the contributions you have made to our school.

I look forward to continuing my involvement and supporting the school as we induct some new members to the Council.

Heath Watson

Catholic School Culture

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Developing student understanding of the relevance of the Catholic faith story to their world today.

Achievements

Religious education units are designed around the context of our students lives each term. Our teachers begin the planning process by reflecting on their own cohort of students and what is happening in their world at the time. The students are always at the centre of our religious education program.

The students continued their religious education throughout home learning with each unit focusing on the context of the children's lives throughout the pandemic. Learning communities focused on themes such as belonging, identity, relationships and change.

When given the opportunity, the school organised whole school liturgies in the place of masses to continue to strengthen our connection with our Catholic tradition.

VALUE ADDED

Weekly prayer services as part of our online assemblies.

Ss Michael & John Feast day celebrations and whole school liturgy, live-streamed via zoom.

Daily prayer with classmates both in person at school and online during home learning.

Food drive in place of our gifting mass, families donated food items and toiletries to be donated to the Horsham Christian Emergency Food centre to help families in need in the lead up to Christmas.

Sacramental masses for students completing their Sacraments with our Parish.

Weekly Advent liturgies, held in each learning community during the lead up to Christmas.

Christmas giving tree, families donated gifts to be donated to St Vinnie's to help families in need.

End of year graduation mass celebrated with our foundation, grade five and six students and their families.

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Strengthen community connectedness as a dimension of all school programs and activities that focus on children's learning and wellbeing, faith development and practice.

Achievements

Tony Dalton, Family, School and Community Partnerships Consultancy Services, was engaged by ourselves and St Brigid's College to enhance the partnership between our two schools. Before being interrupted by COVID the schools had begun to identify the opportunities for the two school communities to interact and partner together to enhance the relationship that exists between our two school communities.

The opportunities to engage families during COVID-19 presented challenges and a different way of thinking, especially regarding the use of video conferencing, telecommunications and Apps such as SeeSaw. The transition to Google Classrooms for the Middle and Senior school were well-received and permitted the children a level of independence in planning how their work for the day.

PARENT SATISFACTION

The Insight SRC data indicates very little change in the data since the last data set in 2017. There is an area of concern around reporting which shows a significant drop from 73 to 61. There are a couple of factors that could have influenced this decline:

- Parents were not happy with the mid-year report during the COVID-19 lockdown, and the parents took the survey before another reporting period.
- Since the last data set, the school has moved from a traditional Parent/Teacher Interview model to Student-Led Conferences.

Significant improvement (64-76) in Student Safety is indicative of the work that we have done over the years in the areas of behaviour management, the employment of a Pastoral Care Worker and increasing the status of the Wellbeing Leader in the school.

Other indicators of Parent Satisfaction are:

- Regular parent helpers in the learning communities.
- A high level of involvement in excursions and at sporting events.
- High level of attendance at school assemblies, school masses and liturgies.
- Excellent parent participation in Student-Led Conferences and Get to Know You evenings.
- Outstanding parent attendance at the beginning of year Pizza Night.

Leadership & Stewardship

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Build shared vision, leadership and professional responsibility at all levels, creating conditions where individuals and teams feel empowered and are confident that they can and do make a positive impact on the life of the school.

Achievements

Staff also visited St John's Primary School in Footscray to see how they approach project-based learning in the senior years.

Tony Dalton facilitated a meeting between the leadership of both Ss Michael and John's and St Brigid's College. The outcome has seen the establishment of a commitment from both schools to explore the ways in which we can partner in providing a Prep-Year 12 Catholic Education in Horsham. Before COVID-19 intervened, the Maths teams from both schools had a get-to-know-each-other meeting and the maths coordinators of both schools met to begin reviewing the essential learnings of both schools to ensure alignment. The partnership work will continue through 2021.

Michael Rowe, Deputy Principal completed the Country Dioceses Leadership Program (CDLP) designed to develop young leaders in our diocese and support them on the path to principalship. As a result, Michael moved into the Principal role in a school far north Queensland.

Four staff began Leading for Learning, offered through CEB. Due to the interruption caused by COVID-19 they decided not to continue with the course and will pick it up at a later date.

Mrs Chesterfield and I both sit on DOCEL committees; Louise is on the Wellbeing standing committee and I sit on the Family and Community Engagement standing committee.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

Staff partook in the following Professional Learning:

- Developmental Curriculum~ The Walker Learning Approach.
- Scaffolding Literacy
- Leading for Learning
- Autism Spectrum Disorder online modules.
- 6 +1 Traits of Writing~ Literacy Solutions
- Deputy Principal participated in the Country Dioceses Leadership Program

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020

20

Average expenditure per teacher for PL

\$1020

TEACHER SATISFACTION

The Insight SRC survey undertaken in 2020 shows improvement in the overall scores, with the organisational and Teaching Aggregate Indicators showing that the school falls within the mean for all Australian schools. Particular strengths identified by the data are in the areas of School Improvement, Team-Based Practices and Work Demands.

The data also provides the opportunity to identify areas for improvement, as indicated by the lack of growth in the area of Appraisal and Recognition indicating that staff are wanting a more formal procedure that allows for observation of peers and coaching.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	85.0%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	86.5%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	14.3%
Graduate	14.3%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	92.9%
Advanced Diploma	21.4%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	20.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	18.4
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	16.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	11.1
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Identifying and implementing agreed sound pedagogical practices that lead to high-quality teaching.

- Develop agreed essential core beliefs about the teaching of writing and the instructional practices that support those beliefs.
- Continue to develop teacher capacity in the planning and teaching of writing and mathematics.

Achievements

- Pre and Post Assessment P-6 for English and Math
- Continue the journey to becoming a Professional Learning Community
- Ongoing review of the English and Mathematics Essential Learnings and proficiency scales
- Time provided for Technology, Literacy and Numeracy Leaders
- Analysis of data to inform planning that catered for the learning needs of all children
- Individual Learning Plans for all children identified as being 'at risk'.
- Provision of Learning and Teaching coaches to support teachers to develop teaching practices and skills when working as a Learning Community.
- Full-time Student Wellbeing Leader to oversee the implementation of support programs for students with special learning needs.
- Continued support in timetabling teacher non-contact time to allow for collaborative planning in learning communities.
- Weekly staff and Professional Learning Team meetings
- Opportunity for all students to participate in the school camps program
- Student participation in extra-curricular sporting activities.
- Two written student reports per year and the opportunity for parents to attend two Parent/Teacher interviews.
- Staff attendance at relevant professional development to support the direction of the school.
- Samantha Meerbach, Education Officer from the Catholic Education Office, provided support with a focus on Literacy and Numeracy.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

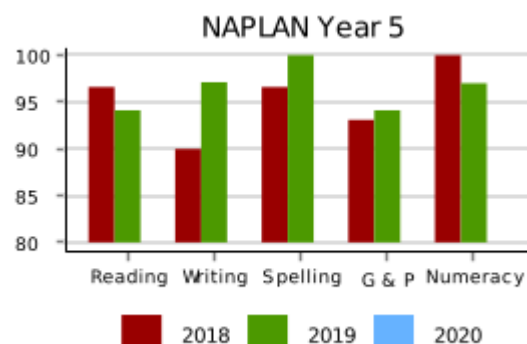
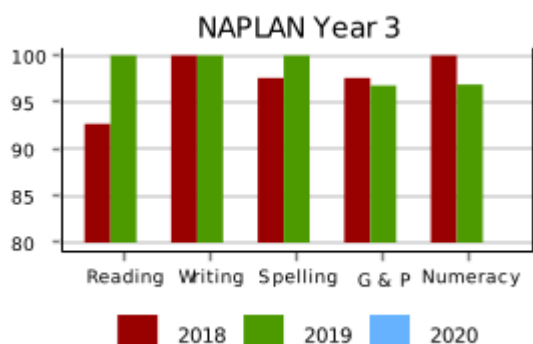
The PAT online assessments and Teacher assessments conducted in term 4 indicate that student learning continued throughout 2020 which demonstrates the time and effort staff put in to support the children during a difficult year.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019	2020	2019 – 2020
	%	%	Changes	%	Changes
			%	*	*
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	97.6	96.8	-0.8		
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	96.9	-3.1		
YR 03 Reading	92.7	100.0	7.3		
YR 03 Spelling	97.6	100.0	-0.8		
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	93.1	94.1	1.0		
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	97.0	-3.0		
YR 05 Reading	96.6	94.1	-2.5		
YR 05 Spelling	96.6	100.0	3.4		
YR 05 Writing	90.0	97.1	7.1		

* 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

Engaging in highly effective wellbeing practices that ensure all in the school community are treated with dignity and respect.

Achievements

- Weekly Zoom meetings focussing on teacher connectedness to each other during the period of COVID restrictions.
- Regular teacher check-in with students via Zoom and Google classrooms
- Continuation of wellbeing programs during remote learning
- Focus on reconnecting students to school and wellbeing programs when face-to-face learning resume.d

VALUE ADDED

- The school has continued to support the role of a full-time student Wellbeing Leader
- Continued implementation of the Resilience Project across the school
- Continued use of the Bounce Back! Social and Emotional program
- Students from Years 3-6 undertook the Six Star Wellbeing Student Survey from ACER
- All staff undertook online training in the Disability Discrimination Act
- Better Buddies program through the Alannah and Madeleine Foundation
- Senior students puberty nights
- All staff completed online modules for Mandatory Reporting
- Nationally Consistent Collection of Data for Students with Disabilities

STUDENT SATISFACTION

The student results from the Insight SRC data shows an improvement in the areas of Student Wellbeing (70-75) and Student Behaviour (54-69). This is a celebration considering the circumstances of the year.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student attendance throughout the year was maintained. Staff followed up on students not engaging in remote learning to ensure connectedness to school.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Y01	95.8%
Y02	95.9%
Y03	96.3%
Y04	95.7%
Y05	94.9%
Y06	94.9%
Overall average attendance	95.6%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- St Michael and John's Primary School continues to hold the care, safety and wellbeing of 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. We acknowledge that creating a child-safe environment is a dynamic process that involves active participation and shared responsibility from all within the school community.
- Throughout 2019-2020, 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

Achievements

Standard 1. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety including through effective leadership arrangements.

- Child Safety Standards remains a regular agenda item at School Advisory Council 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 management, duty of care, and reporting requirements.

Standard 2. A child Safe Policy or Statement to Child Safety.

- Reviewed a Child Safe Policy that outlines the school's commitment to child safety. This policy applies to all staff members and volunteers.
- The policy outlines the processes for reporting concerns and allegations.
- The school induction process ensures that all new staff are taken through our Child Safe Policy.
- The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Standard 3. A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.

- 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.
- Volunteers are provided with regular briefings on acceptable behaviours and are required to read and sign the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct every time they enter the school site.
- Staff members have completed the Victorian Department of Education and Training online Mandatory Reporting module.

Standard 4. Screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

- School Name continues to implement robust Human Resource practices ensuring the suitability of any staff member or volunteer permitted to participate in 'Child Connected Works'.
- To achieve this 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.

Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

- The school has a Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy that outlines the procedures for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse in accordance with the ministerial Order and other legal obligations, including criminal offences regarding grooming, failure to disclose and failure to report.
- The school has a designated Child Protection Officer who is able to support staff members in making a report.
- Staff members have completed the Victorian Department of Education and Training online Mandatory Reporting module.

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.

- Ss Michael and John's Primary School continues to actively engage the school community in all aspects of Child Safety. Briefing sessions have been held with members of the school community to further disseminate requirements of Child Safety Standards, the school's Code of Conduct and its expectations of those who intend to participate in 'Child Connected Work'.
- 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.

Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

- The school's Child Safety Action Plan focused primarily on the promotion and participation of student empowerment. Providing students with a voice is critical in ensuring their well-being and safety. Education about healthy and respectful relationships and the development of resilience through participation in the Bounce Back and Paths programs played a fundamental role in achieving this outcome.
- Ss Michael and John's Primary School remains committed to ensuring the well-being and safety of all students under its care by actively implementing, reviewing and improving its child safety strategy.