



# 2023

## Annual Report to the School Community



### **Ss Michael & John's Primary School**

7 McLachlan Street, HORSHAM 3400

Principal: Louise Chesterfield

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

Registration: 486, E Number: E2023

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## Principal's Attestation

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I, Louise Chesterfield, attest that Ss Michael & John's Primary 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 22 Mar 2024

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## About this report

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Ss Michael & John's Primary 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](#).

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## Governing Authority Report

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The Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) governs 52 primary schools, one F – 8 school, and five secondary Colleges, educating around 13,500 students and employing more than 2,200 teachers and staff, from Mildura in the north, Portland in the south, and west to Edenhope and Nhill.

Now in its third year of operation, DOBCEL continues to work diligently to ensure all its schools flourish fully in their mission to provide high-quality, affordable, faith-based education opportunities for students and families in safe, supportive, and secure learning environments, that value diversity and promote cooperation, care, and respect for all.

During 2023, I was fortunate to visit all of our schools as the DOBCEL Board held meetings in different venues across the diocese. The spirit of harmony and sense of community, along with cultures of care for students and staff I experienced, was extremely encouraging. These school visits were also a reminder of the calibre of young people we have in our education system.

The role of school Principal continues to grow in complexity, demanding an increasingly diverse skillset and knowledge base. I am proud and deeply grateful for the exceptional dedication and professionalism of our 58 Principals, who, along with leadership colleagues and staff, work tirelessly to deliver education services for the families and communities they serve.

Enterprise Bargaining Agreement negotiations continued this year, involving staff from schools and human resources teams giving many hours and great effort to the process. Working with the inter-Diocesan bargaining group, DOBCEL continued to support efforts to finalise the Agreement with the Independent Education Union (IEU) as expediently as possible. DOBCEL continues to recognise the extraordinary work of staff in our schools and offices, and the substantial changes to the Agreement are intended to have a positive impact on staff and their workload.

As mandated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), the development of clear policy and procedural documents continued apace, with schools required to utilise DOBCEL foundational work, yet contextualise documents to suit the specific needs of each school. I express my gratitude to the team at Catholic Education Ballarat, who are both talented and conscientious in delivering this vital work.

During the year we saw the end of an era with the closure of St Brendan's Primary School, Dunnstown. Over 160 years of schooling was celebrated through speeches, laughter, and the sharing of many memories. Pleasingly, we also saw the refurbishment and opening of several new school buildings across the diocese this year.

I continue to be extremely grateful for the ongoing dedication, professionalism, and support of our personnel at Catholic Education Ballarat. I particularly acknowledge the commitment of our school leadership teams and their staff in nurturing and empowering the students in our care, as together we work to bring to life our vision: As partners in Catholic Education and open to God's presence, we pursue the fullness of life for all.

Tom Sexton

Executive Director DOBCEL

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## Vision and Mission

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

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

*Our Vision and Mission are brought to life through our school mantra:*

CARING LEARNING GROWING

EVERY CHILD EVERY DAY

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## School Overview

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Ss Michael and John's Primary School, working in partnership with St Brigid's College, is a community devoted to Catholic Education. The school also works in close collaboration with St. Paul VI Parish Wimmera-Mallee.

The Brigidine Sisters assumed responsibility for the school between 1920 and 1990. St Brigid's College also operated here from 1920 until 1968. The Brigidine motto, "Fortier et Suaviter", Strength and Gentleness, remains part of our story and our tradition.

In 2010 the current building replaced the former Brigidine Convent as the building had become structurally unsound due to severe drought conditions.

With the redevelopment of the site, the school now offers open modern facilities catering to the diverse educational needs of our students, supported by dedicated staff, the School Advisory Council, and a supportive parent body. All promote and implement the Vision and Mission of the school.

Ss Michael and John's philosophy is to develop all children's self-esteem and provide for their educational needs. We offer a comprehensive education that will help children develop a consistent set of beliefs and values: an education committed to spiritual and moral development and providing knowledge and skills for the future.

The nature of our school community is diverse, drawing from both the urban and rural sectors of the Horsham Community. The school community's socio-economic makeup is likewise diverse, representing a wide range of situations and circumstances.

We pride ourselves on meeting individual students' diverse needs and celebrating our reputation as an inclusive school within our local community. The school, in its work, provides education in faith and life for all entrusted to our care.

In 2022 our numbers began the year at 257 and increased to 263. We made a change to our structure for 2022 to address many of the social concerns for our children in Grade 1/2 as a result of Covid and time away from school. We had three Grade 5/6 classes, three Grade 3/4 classes, two Grade 2 classes, two Grade One classes, and two Foundation classes in 2023.

We have applied for state and federal government grants to extend our learning spaces due to an increase in enrolment enquiries both at the Foundation level and across the school.

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## Principal's Report

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2023 has been a time of great reflection and growth for our school. This year we participated in our school review which was a time of celebration and forward planning. It was a very affirming process, and we would like to share that 'the panel commends the school on its positive tone, deeply embedded supportive culture and very visible openness to serving and a generosity of spirit amongst the staff.'

From the review, we were able to generate clear and specific goals to maintain our culture of growth and improvement.

Our staffing has been very stable across the year, and we consider ourselves very fortunate to have a pool of Casual Relief teachers which has meant very little disruption to learning and teaching.

It has been wonderful to see so many of our parents complete their volunteer training and attend school as classroom helpers. As we know, a high level of parental involvement in the life of a school increases student learning outcomes.

We have had very steady enrolment figures over the year and the enquiries and enrolments for Foundation for 2024 are at 54. This is both rewarding and challenging as the current school space is limited in how many enrolments we can take. As a result of this, we have applied for a grant to extend classroom learning spaces.

We have maintained our focus on Wellbeing with our ongoing work with MacKillop Family Services and ReLate. Our partnership with Uniting Wimmera continues and we have been able to offer counselling to 22 students as well as run one Seasons group. We are very grateful to Kellie Morson, our school-based wellbeing worker for her work in this area.

The combined events with St Brigid's College continued this year. The swimming sports for years 4-6 and the Giving Mass were examples of how we gathered. This year the collaboration between our two schools has been enhanced with the grade three and four students taking part in science lessons and the grade five and six students utilising the STEAM facilities and the Gymnasium for the specialist subjects in terms three and four.

All the school camps and excursions went ahead throughout the year. These are such wonderful opportunities for our children to experience a range of activities and learning experiences outside of their normal school life.

Congratulations to Mr Cross who completed his VIT registration this year. We are so fortunate to have teachers of his calibre join our school.



On a personal note, I thank all the staff, our teachers, learning support officers, administrative staff, leadership staff, and library staff for their continued support and commitment to our children. The work of our School Advisory Council is also to be commended.

Thank you to everyone in our school community for your support, understanding, encouragement for your children's learning, and continued support to the staff as they work with you for the best outcomes for your child/ren.

Louise Chesterfield

Principal

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## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals & Intended Outcomes

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

Providing quality formation for staff in the area of Catholic Identity.

### 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 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 school continued to build explicit links to our local parish with opportunities for Masses and liturgies to be celebrated in our Church.

There was a clear goal to invite children into prayer at a variety of times with the preparation of prayer each morning given to the children in both our Middle and Senior Learning communities.

### Value Added

Ongoing implementation of the Awakenings Curriculum with targeted support from CEB Religious Education Staff.

Changing Student Leadership Roles to make explicit links to Catholic Social Teaching.

School Closure Day with an explicit focus on our ECSI data and how this can inform our practice and understand the religious thinking of our children, staff, and families.

Focusing on the clear link between our Inquiry teaching and Religious Education units.

Ongoing participation in daily prayer, class liturgies, and Masses.

Linking Gospels to Social Justice Initiatives such as our Gifting Mass where we make donations to our local Christian Emergency Food Bank.

Handing over responsibility for prayer at Assembly to our Senior Leadership Team.

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## Learning and Teaching

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

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

In working towards this goal, there has been a focus on developing teams that work collaboratively together to identify student needs and achieve common goals. Throughout this journey, we have explored research-based pedagogical approaches that support student learning and engagement. External providers recognised as being leaders in their field of expertise have been engaged to work with staff where and when possible.

### Achievements

Development of a school-wide scope and sequence for Mathematics

Continuing a consistent approach to the teaching of Phonics and Phonemic Awareness in Foundation to 2 through Get Reading Right.

Reviewing our Inquiry and Play-based Investigations and partnering with Shaz Bailey (IB and PYP educator) to reinvigorate and challenge our practice.

Providing targeted and evidence-based intervention

An ongoing focus on Data usage and analysis

### Student Learning Outcomes

We have invested in significant professional learning programs to increase a consistent pedagogical approach to teaching to improve student learning outcomes. The teacher judgment data (TASA) in Reading and Numeracy

Student learning outcomes show that there is a spread of students across the levels with an overall percentage between 52% and 66% at or above standard. This is also reflected in the PAT Reading and Mathematics data. The NAPLAN data shows gains in Years 3 -5 Writing, Spelling and Numeracy.

The areas highlighted for future improvement by our school includes using data to set targets that ensure 12 months growth for every student. Aligned with this intended improvement we evaluate current programs and use data to determine the efficacy of programs in improving student learning outcomes.

<b>NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards</b>			
<b>Domain</b>	<b>Year level</b>	<b>Mean Scale score</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	368	33%
	Year 5	495	72%
Numeracy	Year 3	375	44%
	Year 5	465	48%
Reading	Year 3	382	57%
	Year 5	514	92%
Spelling	Year 3	372	47%
	Year 5	441	40%
Writing	Year 3	403	78%
	Year 5	461	52%

\*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.

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## Student Wellbeing

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

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

Develop consistent behavioural expectations across the school through the implementation of a Positive Behaviours Rubric.

Continue with relevant and age appropriate social-emotional programs.

Identify increased opportunities for student voice.

Increase our explicit focus on Staff Wellbeing.

### Achievements

Continuing engagement with MacKillop Family Services and ReLate

Strong focus and continuity of wellbeing programs

Liaising with external providers of wellbeing support to ensure vulnerable families were supported

Planned meetings and events for staff with a focus on their wellbeing

All staff show respect for and interest in each student and establish strong connections.

Continuation of Camps Program for children in Grades 3 - 6

Agreement with an outside provider to run music lessons at school

Partner with Kelly Sports to run vacation program

### **Value Added**

Signing an agreement with Real Schools for a 3-year partnership beginning in 2024 to develop Restorative Practices across the school.

Continuing position of full-time Deputy Principal, as Wellbeing Leader within the school.

The final year of commitment to ReLATE through Mackillop Family Services to build a trauma-informed community with a strong focus on the wellbeing of students, staff, and families.

Partnering with Uniting Wimmera to maintain counsellor to work at the school two days a week.

Planned and intentional teaching of social-emotional literacy utilising Zones of Regulation, Respectful Relationships and Bounceback.

All staff completed Mandatory Reporting Online Modules and Disability and Discrimination Modules

Better Buddies program supported with resourcing from the Alannah and Madeline Foundation

Nationally Consistent Collection of Data for Students with Disabilities (NCCD)

E-Safety accreditation and training modules for children

Parent Volunteer Training Program on Child Safety

## **Student Satisfaction**

### **STUDENT SATISFACTION**

Our 2022 Insight SRC student satisfaction data has remained steady in Student Wellbeing (76-77) and Student Behaviour (84 - 83).

In general, children appear confident in speaking to adults when there are concerns at school. The developing, consistent, and clear behavioural expectations support children's sense of safety and wellbeing at school.

The school has maintained a focus on Trauma Informed Practice through our continuing work with MacKillop Family Services and ReLate.

## **Student Attendance**

Student attendance is monitored daily. Families can notify the school via the Parent Access Module to phone the school office to report absences. After rolls are completed our Administrative Officer sends text messages to any families who have not notified us.

If individual attendance is low classroom teachers notify leadership and contact families. Ongoing issues are then addressed by the Principal.

Extended family holidays require the school to be notified and an educational plan put in place.



<b>Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level</b>	
Y01	93.2%
Y02	93.8%
Y03	92.8%
Y04	93.3%
Y05	91.9%
Y06	90.8%
Overall average attendance	92.6%

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## Leadership

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Build a shared vision of 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.

Identify opportunities to build middle-level leadership opportunities.

### Achievements

The leadership teams of both Ss Michael and John's and St Brigid's College continued to meet to identify opportunities for partnering throughout the year.

As a result of the ReLATE professional learning through MacKillop Family Services, a School Implementation Team continues to meet weekly. As well as this the Curriculum and Intervention teams also meet weekly. The outcome of these teams has been the sharing of leadership across the school.

<b>Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning</b>	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
Mandatory Reporting Online Modules	
Disability and Discrimination Modules	
Learning through Inquiry with Shaz Bailey	
ReLate with MacKillop family services	
ECSI data with Gina Bernasconi	
SOLAR Labs - Science of Reading Latrobe University	
Brown Collective Leadership Program	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	28
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1310.00

### Teacher Satisfaction

The Insight SRC survey undertaken in 2022 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. 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 Appraisal and Recognition, indicating that staff want a more formal procedure that allows for observation of peers and coaching.

The RELaTe survey undertaken by staff in November 2022 shows a decrease in staff stress since beginning our work with MacKillop Family Services, which supports the 2022 Insight SRC data.

<b>Teacher Qualifications</b>	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	13.8%
Graduate	6.9%
Graduate Certificate	3.4%
Bachelor Degree	62.1%
Advanced Diploma	13.8%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

<b>Staff Composition</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	20
Teaching Staff (FTE)	17.6
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	22
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	14.1
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

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## Community Engagement

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Evaluate the strengths and challenges of current practice in the area of Community engagement.

Reimagine the role of the School Advisory Council in light of the new guidelines

Be as invitational as possible in as many areas as possible to get families back through the school doors.

### Achievements

Continuing opportunities to partner with St. Brigid's College.

Mandatory Volunteer Training

Opportunities for families to attend masses, liturgies, sporting events, classroom helpers, assemblies etc

Utilising multiple forms of communication with families -

- Get to Know You meetings,
- Student Led Conferences,
- Parent Access Module (PAM),
- SeeSaw,
- Google Classrooms,
- Email,
- FaceBook etc

Partnership with Uniting Wimmera

Collaborative partnerships with NDIS Allied Health workers

Kinder to School Transition Program - By Five

## Parent Satisfaction

The 2022 Insight SRC data indicates very little change in the data since the last data set in 2020. 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:

- 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.

The following is a direct quote from the Review validation report in regards to parent satisfaction:

*'It was evident to the panel that the school community holds the school in high esteem and feedback from parents demonstrated their appreciation of the school's ability to offer their children high quality learning, social and emotional support within an environment that has a strong Catholic Culture.'*

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## Financial Performance

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

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