

2023

Annual Report to the School Community



St John the Baptist's School

172 Station Street, KOO WEE RUP 3981

Principal: Christopher Dortmans

Web: www.stjohnskwr.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 1416, E Number: E4016

Principal's Attestation

I, Christopher Dortmans, attest that St John the Baptist's 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 05 Mar 2024

About this report

St John the Baptist's 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

The 2023 school year marked my first year as Director of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Sale following the retirement of previous Director, Ms Maria Kirkwood who served in the role for ten years.

Throughout the year, I had the pleasure of visiting each of our 38 Catholic primary schools and five Catholic secondary schools. It was inspiring to witness the dedication of staff and the wonderful work taking place to provide a high-quality Catholic education for our students in a faith-filled environment.

Working with the Bishop, the Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL) Board, DOSCEL Secretariat, schools and parishes, the mission to offer every student the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God while achieving their personal best, remained at the forefront of our work.

Investing in school staff and leadership teams to promote expert learning and teaching practices was a top priority. The nation-wide shortage of teachers presented challenges, but we were committed to finding new and innovative ways to attract and retain high quality, committed Catholic educators.

Reflecting on the 2023 year, we have much to be proud of. Ongoing significant investment in new learning facilities and refurbishments through the Capital Grants Program and school community funding continued across our schools to enhance learning spaces and amenities to benefit students and staff.

During 2023, 13 blessing and opening ceremonies were held to celebrate school projects completed over the past three years, while the commencement of three new major projects were recognised with sod-turning ceremonies.

We were particularly excited to begin construction on the new St Josephine Bakhita Catholic Primary School at the newly established Five Farms estate in Clyde North. This will be the 44th school within the network of primary and secondary schools operated by DOSCEL.

The care, safety, and wellbeing of children and young people remain a central focus and fundamental responsibility. During Child Safety Week 2023, schools and parishes were invited by DOSCEL to showcase their innovative projects and activities to keep young people safe. Many of the projects were developed by young people themselves. A video and education resource were created from the submissions to share the work and promote awareness of child safety.

Our Catholic schools continue to be places of learning and enrichment, nurturing students in their spiritual, academic, physical, and emotional development.

I extend my deep appreciation to everyone involved in Catholic education within the Diocese of Sale for their commitment to our vocation of Inspiring Faith, Inspiring Learning.

Paul Velten

Director of Catholic Education - Diocese of Sale

Chief Executive Officer - Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited

Vision and Mission

Our Vision:

Inspired by St John the Baptist - we are a faith-filled community
empowering all to learn and serve.

Our Mission:

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

Our mission is to provide a high-quality Catholic education where young people are supported to thrive in the world. At our school they will come to know of the love of God and see themselves as created in God's image. St John's will be a place where spiritual accompaniment will be offered and opportunities for the development of a personal, active faith provided. Our students will be supported to engage with their broader social context, and develop a contemporary knowledge and understanding of faith and the Catholic tradition.

School Overview

St John the Baptist Primary School is a Catholic school that services the Koo Wee Rup community and surrounding areas. The school has modern and innovative facilities as well as up-to-date technology resources that cater for our 21st century learners.

We pride ourselves on being a warm and welcoming school forging strong family, school, parish and community partnerships. Parents are an integral part of the school and are encouraged and invited to participate in all programs.

We consider each child to be a special member of our school community and our aim is to develop the whole child through a comprehensive curriculum where the learning is engaging, exciting and relevant. Our staff work tirelessly to implement the Victorian Curriculum to ensure entitlement for all and to fully understand the progressions of learning for our students. Our ongoing assessment practices enable us to identify areas of individual need and to make valid learning adjustments to modify the curriculum accordingly. The social and emotional growth of our students is also extremely important and as a result we have a number of well-being initiatives in place.

St John the Baptist Primary School supports the academic growth of all children. Our school offers a quality learning environment, with specialist areas including Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Physical Education STEM and LOTE.

Principal's Report

It is a privilege to be Principal of St John the Baptist Primary School. Welcoming students while on duty each morning and seeing the excitement as they learn, achieve and socialise together is a pleasure to see.

Child Safety is a high priority at St John's. Throughout 2023, we had a dedicated team of staff who promoted our Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour. Through this focus we hope to develop in all members of the St John's school community the skills to be Respectful, Responsible, Resilient, able to Learn Together and Keep Safe.

The St John the Baptist Advisory Committee and the Friends of St John's Committee continued to be an integral part of our school community. I would like to thank all members for their leadership, encouragement, fundraising, guidance and hard work. In partnership we must continue to work together to make sure that St John's is the best school that it can possibly be.

I would like to thank all of our staff for their professionalism, commitment, hard work, dedication and ongoing care for all students at St John's. We have a staff with a great diversity of skills and talents that are dedicated to the wellbeing and education of our children.

Our focus moving forward will be to continue to promote expert teachers and develop practices that enable an accelerated rate of progress for all students across all curriculum areas.

The sense of community continues to develop, and we genuinely value our relationships with the parish, our families, local clubs and organisations, St Francis Xavier College and Mary MacKillop College.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Fr Avinash who continues to be a wonderful support to the school. His presence, advice and encouragement have been of great assistance.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To promote a mature faith stance through a recontextualisation of the Catholic tradition in dialogue with self and the other.

- Teachers have a deep knowledge of the progressions of learning within the RE Curriculum, *To Live In Christ Jesus*.
- Students are assisted to a Post Critical Belief stance.
- Develop and maintain greater links between school, parish and community, which reflects the Catholic identity of our school.

Achievements

In working towards our intended outcomes, we continued to develop an environment that:

- Enhanced teaching and learning in the Religious Education Curriculum, by creating a scope and sequence of units which ran through the whole school and reflected the strands and lenses of the *To Live in Christ Jesus* RE Curriculum.
- Further developed the understanding of Catholic Social Teachings through our Social Justice Leadership team and involving the wider community.
- Provided teachers with the background knowledge of scripture in order to support students in moving towards a Post Critical Belief.

Value Added

In partnership with parents as the first faith educators of their children and the local parish community, the School seeks to provide an authentic and dialogical Catholic education, inspiring hearts and minds to know Christ, to love learning, to use their talents to be the very best they can be. Our vision, purpose and all we do is founded on faith in Jesus Christ, and informed by Christian values and reflected in our school prayer, being cheerful, brave, forgiving and encouraging people.

The Principal participated in Parish Council meetings throughout the year keeping the Pastoral Council informed of ways in which we are working on connecting with our Parish and supporting opportunities the Parish offered for our families to connect. Our school Leadership Team supported the activities of the Parish by encouraging participation in Parish related events and contributing to discussions concerning the evaluation of the Sacramental Program and the strengthening of relationships between school and Parish.

The Parish Sacramental Program ran with the support of the school. Parents with children attending Catholic and government schools attended sacramental preparation sessions during the year. Our Religious Education Leader organised two spirituality days for our staff, focused on recontextualising scripture. Our Year 6 Walk Ambassadors, led by our Religious Education Leader, contributed to the faith life of the school. The students in the team led our whole school liturgies to mark special occasions e.g. welcome back to school, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparents' Day, ANZAC and Remembrance Day as well as special feast days. We established a relationship with the Koo Wee Rup nursing home, a local group supporting the elderly. Regular visits, communication and sharing of faith created a supportive connection with this very special group. Outreach included supporting Caritas' Project Compassion initiatives. There is a strong sense of mission amongst the staff, children and parents of St John's and a desire to express this in practical and prayerful ways.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To develop expert teacher practice to ensure targeted student progress.

- Teachers exhibit Expert Teacher Practices.

To target excellence in learning for all students.

- Appropriate learning adjustments are made for all students.
- Students reach targeted growth.

Achievements

The Learning and Teaching cycle continues to focus on developing high performing learners.

Our achievements in this area include:

- Whole school approach to learning entitlement
- Professional learning for staff with strategies or methodology informed and supported by evidence
- Staff meetings were allocated throughout the year to continue our Evidence Based Learning journey with the effective writing of Learning Intentions & Success Criteria
- Personal learning plans were developed to assist with the monitoring and learning of children with learning disabilities
- Whole school Professional Development on Mathematics pedagogy focusing on misconceptions
- Use of Essential Assessment across the school
- Mathematics Assessment Interview testing of all students
- PAT Literacy assessment to guide teaching and learning
- Maths explorer and enrichment programs have been introduced in Year 3/4 level
- Observation and feedback Maths sessions were introduced in the Year 3-6 area
- Whole school approach to Writing
- Greater student engagement and progress in the area of problem solving in Mathematics
- Reading growth strong in P-2 students as evident in Pre and post Text levels
- Teachers committed to a evidence based, approach to phonemic awareness in P-2 with the introduction of the Little Learners Love Literacy program

Student Learning Outcomes

Looking at 2023 NAPLAN data for Year 3 less than 50% of students are meeting minimum proficiency standards. The introduction of an evidence based, synthetic and systematic phonics program should address the learning needs in the Foundation to Year 2 area.

The Numeracy results for both Year 3 and Year 5 show that there is room for improvement and that there is still a need for a whole school focus in the area of Maths pedagogy.

The Writing results are very positive and we are encouraged by the value added between the Year 3 and Year 5 data. There has been growth in every area by at least 1% for Writing, up to 32% for Grammar and Punctuation.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	374	39%
	Year 5	502	73%
Numeracy	Year 3	403	68%
	Year 5	489	77%
Reading	Year 3	404	71%
	Year 5	522	90%
Spelling	Year 3	378	50%
	Year 5	492	77%
Writing	Year 3	421	89%
	Year 5	498	90%

*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

Teachers have a deep knowledge of the Victorian Curriculum capabilities content with a focus on Wellbeing.

- Implementation of the Victorian Curriculum capabilities content with a Wellbeing focus at staff, planning and PLT meetings.
- In the continued leadership of the Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour team to implement the approach across the school.
- Ensuring Teacher planning reflects the Victorian Curriculum.
- Ensuring Learning Adjustments were made for all students where required.
- In the auditing and reviewing of our Child Safe practice in line with legislative standards.
- Enable student agency to improve student learning outcomes.

Achievements

Throughout the school in 2023, we developed student's personal and social capabilities through our inquiry-based unit 'Learning to Learn'. Students explored resilience, positive learning behaviours, relationships and feelings, to support their social, emotional and academic success. Our "W.A.L.K. Ambassadors" worked closely with the Student Representative Council (SRC) to heighten awareness of the values within our Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviours. These became a focus at each assembly.

We also continued to liaise with a school counsellor, to support students who required more targeted and intensive support.

Value Added

We are very privileged at St John's to be able to offer a number of extra-curricular activities and community events. We believe that by having a strong community focus, a sense of belonging and connectedness is achieved. Throughout 2023, we have encouraged active participation from staff, students and parents as much as possible. Our success in this area is highlighted by attendance rates at extra-curricular events such as camps and excursions, Family Picnic, Grandparents' Day, Father's Day Breakfast, Mother's Day Breakfast, Art Show, School Sports, Open Mornings and, School and Class Masses.

The 'Inform and Empower' program supported and informed students, parents and teachers on the importance of online safety. Sessions were available at each year level, for parents and staff.

The SeeSaw App has continued to provide our parents and families with another way to access what is happening in the classroom, such as student achievements and what they are learning about each week. Positive feedback from parents has highlighted the successful use and implementation of this communication tool.

Student Satisfaction

At St John’s, there is a positive tone amongst the students both inside the classrooms and out on the playground. Our 2023 Insight SRC Survey Data indicated that students feel safer and that the classroom behaviour is positive. They feel encouraged to learn and have positive relationships with their teachers.

Student Attendance

We are pleased with the 2023 student attendance rate at St John’s. Any non-attendances for extended periods without notification are followed up by the classroom teacher, office administration and Principal. When deemed necessary, appropriate intervention plans are put in place. Constant communication with parents is maintained in newsletters and by classroom teachers, to build parent understanding that ‘Every Day Counts’. Student attendance is recorded twice a day.

In 2023, we updated our Visitor Management System to better record student and visitor signing in and out and implemented the use of the SiMON (PAM) automation platform. This platform has enabled parents to communicate student absences and to receive notifications of unreported absences.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	88.6%
Y02	90.1%
Y03	88.3%
Y04	88.6%
Y05	90.2%
Y06	84.2%
Overall average attendance	88.3%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To ensure strong leadership which empowers every teacher to lead in learning and expert teaching.

- Build a coordinated and consistent approach to learning and teaching.
- Build a critically reflective and committed leadership team.
- To further develop all school learning spaces and resources in order to cater accordingly for the needs of all learners.
- That all compliance matters are met and maintained.
- That all grounds and facilities are well maintained and regularly upgraded where required.

Achievements

At St John's we have a School Leadership Team representing the four areas:

- Education in Faith
- Learning and Teaching
- Student Well-being /Leaning Adjustment
- Leadership and Management.

We continue to develop the role of Middle Leadership to support the promotion of expert teacher practises. These leaders attend the DOSCEL Learning and Teaching Network days and the 'Collective' Professional Learning Sessions while supporting the Learning and Teaching Leader in follow-up PLTs.

Professional development opportunities are provided for staff through Professional Learning Teams with a particular focus on Literacy and Mathematics. Professional Learning days are scheduled throughout the year, with all staff given further opportunity to attend off site professional development learning programs.

At St John's, we have an ongoing commitment to identifying the needs of the school and adopt a strategic approach to improvements.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<p>In 2023 St John's staff participated in a wide variety of Professional Learning including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Staff and PLT meetings • Spirituality Closure Day • Sacramental information sessions • Principal Meetings and Briefings • Learning and Teaching Networks • De-escalation training • Setting achievable learning goals, unpacking and knowing school data • NAPLAN Data • Administration Conference • Principal Conference • Master of Clinical Teaching • Levelled Literacy Intervention • School Collective Initiatives. • Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting • NCCD modules • First Aid, CPR, Asthma and Anaphylaxis training 	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	18
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1785.00

Teacher Satisfaction

The staff at St John the Baptist are enthusiastic, eager, and hardworking. They have a genuine care for the students they teach and feel pride in being a part of our school community. Teachers collaborate, share ideas, and solve problems together, leading to a shared understanding of the team goals and school vision. All staff at St John's truly live by our motto: "Everything we do is for the kids".

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	24.0%
Graduate	4.0%
Graduate Certificate	4.0%
Bachelor Degree	56.0%
Advanced Diploma	4.0%
No Qualifications Listed	8.0%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	19
Teaching Staff (FTE)	14.8
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	11
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	8.6
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

That the school community connectedness and inclusiveness grows.

Achievements

In 2023 St John's provided a wide variety of Community inclusive opportunities, including:

- Fortnightly parent newsletter sent home electronically
- Fortnightly whole school assemblies
- We were able to return to most of our normal special events schedule across the year providing opportunities for the school community to come together.
- The School Advisory Council meetings were held as per the guidelines. Our School Advisory Council is an essential component of governing our school, and they were a forum for consultation and participation for our parish and school community, ensuring that we are accountable for the decisions we make in collaboration.
- The Parents and Friends committee continued to support the school in its fundraising efforts and provided many fun activities for the students across the year.
- Parent survey data was collected and every parent was invited to contribute.
- Parents are invited to attend Grade levels Masses with local parishioners.
- Parent evenings were held for those students receiving Sacraments.
- Feast Day and Special Masses and liturgies
- The school hosted community celebrations such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Grandparent's Day.
- The Art Show
- Picnic evening
- Sporting and cultural events
- Graduation Mass and award ceremony.

Parent Satisfaction

The most recent Insight SRC data shows high parent satisfaction in the following areas:

- Parent Partnership
- Approachabilities
- School Improvement
- Behaviour Management
- Stimulating Learning
- Connectedness to School

- Classroom behaviour.

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.stjohnskwr.catholic.edu.au