



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

2023

Annual Report to the School Community



Mother Teresa School

5-15 Windrock Avenue, MOUNT RIDLEY (NTH CRAIGIEBURN) 3064

Principal: Amy Leahy

Web: www.motherteresa.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 2055, E Number: E1387

Principal's Attestation

I, Amy Leahy, attest that Mother Teresa 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 10 May 2024

About this report

Mother Teresa School is registered by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). The Annual Report to the School Community (ARSC), provides parents and the wider community with information about the school's activities and achievements throughout the year including information about various aspects of school performance. The Report is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the school community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students. Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can also be obtained from the [My School website](#).

Governing Authority Report

When Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) launched our inaugural strategic plan MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World just over a year ago, I spoke about the need for our whole organisation to reflect on the biggest challenges that confront us, and to work at speed to find practical, ambitious, student-centred solutions.

As a relatively new governing authority, 2023 set us on the path to achieving our first goals, as we focussed our efforts on building strong foundations for success. The four pillars of MACS2030 – Inspired by Faith; Flourishing Learners; Enabled Leaders; and Enriched Communities - serve to guide our work on how we achieve our strategic intent.

When we surveyed our teachers in late 2022, over 80 per cent told us that they want access to quality teaching and assessment resources. So in January 2023, we secured a system-wide licence for MACS primary and secondary schools to access the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) assessment suite. The inclusion of the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Survey allows schools to monitor the wellbeing of their students and target resourcing to specific areas of need. Together, these tools provide a coherent and systematic approach to student assessment.

In partnership with Ochre Education, we began work on F-6 Mathematics curriculum resources, being developed in a phased approach over three years, and delivered the first tranche for F-2. A key consideration in developing the materials is ensuring teachers retain autonomy to tailor curriculum implementation to meet the individual and local needs of students.

This is an exciting development for our MACS community, clearly demonstrating the commitment we all share to delivering the best possible education opportunities for our 120,000 students and supporting our 10,000 classroom teachers to be the very best that they can be.

Archbishop Peter commissioned a comprehensive review of Religious Education curriculum, the first in over a decade. It offers us some challenges, but fundamentally is a hope-filled report that invites a path of ongoing work to develop a new RE curriculum for all Catholic schools. We continued Working Together in Mission with Parish Priests throughout the Archdiocese, including through regular roundtable discussions.

Across greater Melbourne, one in five students attend a Catholic school and 2023 saw steady growth in enrolments across our system, demonstrating the value families place on a Catholic education and the high quality, holistic education MACS schools provide.

As a system of schools, we can be better together, reducing the administrative load on our schools and freeing our teachers and principals to focus on what they do best.

I would like to pay tribute to our MACS school and office colleagues who have worked so hard to achieve our goals. We look forward to further strengthening those partnerships as we work together to deliver an education that inspires young people to enrich the world.

Yours sincerely

Dr Edward Simons

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

Vision and Mission

We believe Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School is a place where:

We will embrace the values for which Mother Teresa herself was so famous:

- Caring for and supporting every person, no matter who they are,
- Giving kindness and compassion at all times,
- Teaching and nurturing the Christian faith with enthusiasm,
- Emphasising strong moral and ethical values and personal discipline.

We will live out these values through:

- Excellence in all that we do,
- Developing a modern, contemporary and innovative approach to learning,
- A commitment to personalised learning, allowing every child to learn and develop in a manner and at a pace best suited to them,
- An environment that both challenges and supports each individual child

School Overview

Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School was established in 2009 to serve the educational needs of the growing Catholic population, who reside in the Mt Ridley area. It is now one of five Catholic primary schools in the Parish of Our Lady's, Craigieburn & Roxburgh Park, in Melbourne's northern growth corridor.

As a professional learning community, staff value the partnership of all within and beyond the learning community. Mother Teresa Primary school is a place where children, parents and staff engage in learning together to create the very best Catholic learning environment.

Our learning and teaching approach focuses on inquiry-based learning and the development of a culture of thinking. It is reflective of a culture of thinking where thinking is valued, visible and actively promoted (Ritchhart, 2002). As a contemporary Catholic learning community, we are attuned to current research in learning and teaching and are undertaking a strategic approach, which is clearly identified in our vision for Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School.

As a Catholic Dialogue school and more specifically a Recontextualising Dialogue School we provide a contemporary Catholic education. In keeping with the beliefs and understandings of the hermeneutical –communicative model of religious education time and opportunities are provided for learners to engage in authentic dialogue about the Catholic faith. This dialogue occurs within the context of a culturally enriched and multi faith learning community. We believe the following continues to resonate with our vision as a Catholic school today:

“The end product of Catholic education is not the perfectly socialised pupil, but a pupil who is able to inquire into everything and everyone positively and with an open mind, inspired by a profound sense of humanity and by a connection with old and new stories which can open alternative worlds and which grant the future a utopian orientation (i.e. the promised land, kingdom of God)” M. Moyaert & D. Pollefeyt (2004)

Principal's Report

As a Catholic Dialogue school our continued 2023 whole school focus *Hospitality and Dialogue...an invitation to encounter*, provided us with many opportunities to engage with others. On the surface our focus means being welcoming to all. However, at a deeper level hospitality is an invitation to encounter 'the other'. Through being open to others, we seek to gain new perspectives and understandings not only about 'the other' but ourselves. In terms of our hermeneutical learning, we speak of 'seeing new layers of meaning', 'valuing a multiplicity of voices' and 'an openness to and from other religions, cultures and ways of life'. Through our encounters with one another Pope Francis suggests we can encounter God. In a Twitter tweet in December 2022 Pope Francis said:

'Let us be shaken out of our torpor (mental inactivity) to recognise God's presence in daily situations. If we are unaware of His coming today, we will also be unprepared when He arrives at the end of time. Let us remain vigilant!'

Throughout 2023 our Catholic Dialogue school took up the invitation to be hospitable and enter into an authentic dialogue in order to encounter others. Our learning opportunities through a consistent and strategically planned inquiry-based approach, enabled this to be realised.

The constant commitment of staff to the learning and teaching philosophy through professional learning, collaborative planning and the facilitation of learning and teaching is commendable. This was especially evident in 2023 as the school community managed staff shortages. Despite the challenges the staff committed to our school pedagogy and placing all children at the center of all we do.

Congratulations to all in our learning community for your ongoing commitment to excellence in Catholic education for all in our community.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To continue to build the culture of a Recontextualising Dialogue School within the Catholic tradition.

- That our learning community will be empowered to think, question, reflect and develop religious understandings.
- That learners our learning community will be empowered to engage in authentic dialogue with all within and beyond our learning community.
- That learners will embrace and enact a hermeneutical approach to religious learning.

Achievements

Our Catholic Dialogue School continues to provide opportunities for all within our learning community to engage in dialogue with the multiplicity of voices that make up our learning community. This includes Eastern Catholic traditions, Orthodox traditions and a number of non-Christian traditions. Through dialogue all traditions have a voice with the Catholic faith tradition as a key dialogue partner. The focus on Faith and Life Inquiry mirroring the beliefs and practices of the hermeneutical-communicative model of religious education enhances the dialogue and the learning.

Learners within our school community are empowered to reflect on religious learning through an inquiry approach supported by hermeneutical prompts that scaffold interreligious and intercultural dialogue. This is evident through our learning community's ongoing partnership with Murrundindi, Wurundjeri elder. Engagement with other cultural and religious groups also enrich this learning.

Through the commitment of staff, parents are supported in their role as primary educators in faith. Sacramental preparation including parent and children workshops provide faith development within the context of the Catholic faith tradition and how to express this faith today.

Our Catholic Dialogue School remains committed to fostering inclusive dialogue within our diverse learning community. This encompasses engaging with Eastern Catholic traditions, Orthodox traditions, and various non-Christian traditions. Through dialogue, all voices are valued, with the Catholic faith tradition serving as a key participant in these conversations.

Our focus on Faith and Life Inquiry, which reflects the beliefs and practices of the hermeneutical-communicative model of religious education, enhances this dialogue and learning experience. Learners are encouraged to reflect on religious learning through an inquiry-based approach, supported by hermeneutical prompts that scaffold interreligious and intercultural dialogue. This commitment to dialogue is exemplified through our ongoing partnership with Murrundindi, a Wurundjeri elder, and engagement with other cultural and religious groups, enriching our learning community's understanding.

Furthermore, our staff's dedication ensures that parents are supported in their role as primary educators in faith. Sacramental preparation, including parent and child workshops, provides opportunities for faith development within the context of the Catholic faith tradition and its relevance in contemporary society.

Our previous participation in the Recontextualising Prayer project, at the time promoted by MACS and the ECSI project has continued to impact on our learning community. Whole school and learning space prayer has been influenced by the 10 characteristics of recontextualising prayer. This is evidenced through prayer opportunities that are provided at school.

Value Added

The value added is the additional value and contribution our school makes to the learning outcomes of the students in the sphere of Education in Faith. These areas have been our focus for a number of years to ensure they are embedded with our learning community to enable our goals and intended outcomes to become the agreed ways of living and learning at Mother Teresa PS.

The value added in Education in Faith continues to be reflected in our professional learning community and is evident in:

- The involvement of the parent and wider community at our whole school prayer, Mother Teresa Feast Day celebrations and sacramental celebrations.
- Students leading whole school prayer including reading and playing guitar
- Student input into the formulation of prayers and the sharing of religious ideas at whole school prayer;
- Parent and child sacramental evenings for families wishing their children to prepare for and receive the sacraments.
- Staff attendance and support of children and families at sacramental celebrations.
- The presence of Murrundindi, Wurundjeri elder through onsite and online workshops

The presence of an active Mini Vinnies group that promotes social justice actions in our learning community. Mini Vinnies strive to promote not only social justice actions but also provide authentic opportunities for all children to inquire into the Catholic Social Teaching principals.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To maintain strong partnerships inclusive of all, which sustains and promotes a safe and positive learning community for all learners.

To strengthen our culture of learning as a Community of Inquiry and a Culture of Thinking to enable our students to achieve their expected learning growth and beyond.

That students are motivated, empowered and animated learners, able to participate fully in school life and the wider community.

That students will continue to be stimulated and engaged through a variety of learning opportunities.

Achievements

Flexible learning spaces and multi-age groupings (Foundation–Year 2, Year 3/ 4 & Year 5/ 6) enable and promote a safe and positive learning environment. Within the Mother Teresa numerous learning opportunities include Foundation – Year 6 groupings such as our Sustainability program.

Student learning opportunities are informed by student interest through student input in curriculum design specifically inquiry-based learning. This learning is supported and enhanced through a Culture of Thinking which values student thinking and ways in which this is made visible through dialogue

Data informs learning and teaching and the formulation of targeted teacher focus groups in both literacy and numeracy. The learning needs of children across a range of abilities is addressed through focus groups. Students who require additional assistance with learning are supported through the development of personalised learning plans that are also supported through day-to-day teacher programming based on progress.

Our ongoing engagement with consultants in the areas of literacy, numeracy and inquiry support the planning process for learning and teaching. Engagement with literacy consultant Deb Sukarna has seen the continuation of a focus on writing. The development of a whole school writing process with routines and structure has supported this work. This includes seeds for writing, writing exemplars and writing workshops and conferences. A focus on writing conferences began in 2022. Ongoing professional learning in this area has been put in place to continue this work. 2023 began a focus on grammar and spelling, to continue to build teacher capacity in this area as part of learning in the English curriculum.

In 2023 we were able to provide students with some specialist learning despite the impact of teacher shortages. This included visual arts, Japanese language, sustainability and physical education. Opportunities to engage in Cyber Safety learning continued through Faith and Life inquiry and incursions. These specialist programs are engaging and highly valued by students and parents and the school endeavors to restore specialists programs in 2024.

Student Learning Outcomes

Mother Teresa Primary School focuses on the learning for all through data informed planning for learning and teaching. Learning and teaching occurs through teacher focus groups which targets the needs of individual learners. Co-educators support the facilitation of groups offering additional assistance to learners.

Learning and teaching is audited against the Victorian Curriculum both termly and annually.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	389	43%
	Year 5	467	46%
Numeracy	Year 3	381	48%
	Year 5	459	50%
Reading	Year 3	385	56%
	Year 5	459	57%
Spelling	Year 3	397	57%
	Year 5	466	64%
Writing	Year 3	403	81%
	Year 5	464	61%

*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

Our aim is to enhance our community's approach to student wellbeing, ensuring every student has the chance to thrive as learners and contribute positively to the global community.

- Cultivating students who exhibit confidence, resilience, and compassion within our learning community.
- Fostering positive interactions among students to create a secure and supportive environment.

Achievements

In 2023, we maintained our commitment to 'Agreed Ways of Living and Learning at Mother Teresa'. Our inquiry-based pedagogy, coupled with Positive Behaviour Support, remains integral to our educational approach, with ongoing exploration and support facilitated by both internal leadership and external partnerships with MACS. The structure of our school promotes safe and positive engagement, particularly through multi-age learning groups fostering a nurturing and peaceful environment.

Our annual school-wide inquiry focus on 'Learning to Learn' continues to reinforce our agreed-upon values and provides a foundation for building confidence, resilience, and compassion among our students. Through inquiry-based learning and Personal Inquiries (iTime), students have opportunities to interact with diverse perspectives, fostering confidence and pathways to success.

Student Wellbeing remains a priority, supported by access to MACS Student Services referrals and the presence of a school counselor, along with additional support from Allied Health professionals for students and their families when needed. Each year, we integrate a Wellbeing-focused component into our inquiry sequence to further enrich the learning and teaching experience. In 2023 we also began to roll out the Smiling Minds Program to enhance staff and student mental health and wellbeing, as part of the MHIPS funding.

Value Added

The added value lies in the extra contribution our school provides to enhance student wellbeing and learning outcomes. This added value is demonstrated through our professional learning community's active involvement in various initiatives:

- Resource Smart Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative Victoria (AuSSi Vic)
Children's participation in sustainability focus groups
Mini Vinnies Group (Foundation to Year 6)
Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program
Observance of National Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week
Celebration of Mother Teresa Feast Day
- Smiling Minds

Additionally, we offer further opportunities for children to thrive, including:

- Participation in a Sustainability Leaders group
Experience Music program offering private tuition
iTime sessions for personalized inquiries

Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction expressed in our 2023 MACSIS data indicates that students have a positive disposition towards learning to the school. Students feel that there are clear expectations, they generally feel safe and connected to the school. Children at Mother Teresa believe their voice is valued and acted upon. Students have a positive perception of the Catholic identity of the school.

Student Attendance

Within our learning community, the significance of school attendance is emphasized through informational sessions about our school. Regular reminders about attendance requirements are included in the school newsletter. Whenever a student is absent, families are promptly contacted, and informational pamphlets such as "It's Not OK to be Away" are provided to families. Families planning extended absences during holiday periods are required to formally request leave following the guidelines established by MACS.

For any unexplained absences, follow-up messages are sent via SMS, and if contact is not established, phone calls are made to ensure clarity and support.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	87.3%
Y02	87.7%
Y03	89.5%
Y04	88.6%
Y05	89.1%
Y06	88.3%
Overall average attendance	88.4%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To enhance and uphold a high-performing culture within our professional learning community, characterized by organization and responsiveness, aimed at empowering and enhancing the capabilities of all learners:

- Ensure active participation of all members in a data-informed and research-based Professional Learning Community (PLC) to optimize outcomes for every learner.
- Foster the ongoing development and sustainability of the PLC, where all leaders consistently engage in reflective practices to evolve and refine their approaches.

Achievements

In 2023, our Professional Learning Community remained dedicated to offering high-quality professional development opportunities for all staff members. The following initiatives were undertaken to support our community's professional growth and ultimately enhance learning outcomes for our students:

Facilitated planning sessions for learning and teaching were conducted, emphasizing dialogue focused on and conducive to learning consistency across our educational community. The adoption of a shared language regarding inquiry phases, learning dispositions, learning assets, thinking processes, and hermeneutical learning further reinforced our contemporary approach to education in the 21st Century.

Staff actively engaged in discussions centered around student data, extracting valuable insights into student learning patterns and informing the creation of additional learning and teaching strategies.

Our school maintained a steadfast commitment to the theme of "Hospitality and Dialogue...an invitation to encounter," fostering ongoing professional development through the annual staff professional reading initiative. Through reading and reflective practices, staff remained informed about current educational research and best practices, supported by collaborations with educational consultants.

In 2023, we continued our partnerships with educational consultants, including Kath Murdoch (inquiry, iTime personal inquiries), Deb Sukarna (Writing conferences, a greater shift in focus

on building capacity of staff in teaching Spelling and Grammar), and Colleen Monaghan (Mathematics), who contributed their expertise to enrich our teaching practices.

Professional learning endeavors persisted throughout the year, encompassing both internal and external providers. This included on-site professional development sessions and religious education credentialing studies, ensuring a comprehensive approach to ongoing professional growth.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<p>Our professional learning is linked to our school's 4 year Plan. Throughout 2023 staff participated in a wide range of school based professional learning as well as external professional learning. These opportunities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Inquiry Professional Learning – Kath Murdoch · Mathematics Professional Learning – Colleen Mongahan · Writing, Spelling and Grammar – Deb Sukarna · Positive Behaviour Support – Internal · Graduate Teacher PL – VIT · Post graduate studies - ACU · RE Accreditation Studies – CTC · Deputy Principal Network – MACS · Northern Region Learning and Teaching Network – MACS · Religious Education Network – MACS · Learning Diversity Network – MACS 	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	33
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1946.00

Teacher Satisfaction

The MACSSIS survey data 2023 indicates that staff at Mother Teresa PS consider there is a common vision for school improvement. They identify opportunities to engage in collaborative planning within teams and the support offered within teams and value this highly. Highlighted in the data is the positive response to quality professional learning offered at Mother Teresa PS. The data also indicates that teachers have a positive belief in their capacity to improve student learning. There is also an indication of positive relationships between staff and leadership, as well as an strong Catholic identity.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	13.5%
Graduate	13.5%
Graduate Certificate	2.7%
Bachelor Degree	45.9%
Advanced Diploma	10.8%
No Qualifications Listed	13.5%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	36
Teaching Staff (FTE)	33.0
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	12
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	9.9
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To maintain strong partnerships inclusive of all, which sustains and promotes a safe and positive learning community for all learners

- That families are engaged with, and empowered to actively participate in the life of the school

Achievements

Our learning community continues to grow in building partnerships with our parent community. This includes the active involvement of our Parents and Friends group, collaborating closely with school leadership to organize social events that bring our community together. In 2023, these events included festivities in honor of Mother Teresa Feast Day and raffles for Easter and Christmas. Additionally, there were celebrations for Mother's Day and Father's Day featured open mornings where parents could share in their child's learning, followed by enjoyable morning teas.

To welcome new families, an information night and orientation session were held in 2023 for incoming Foundation families, providing them with early opportunities to engage in school life. Regular invitations were extended to families to join us for whole school prayer celebrations on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, which were prominently featured in our newsletters. We were delighted to see many parents participating in these prayer sessions throughout the week. 2023 also saw increased parent involvement through helping in learning spaces and supporting school excursions. Opportunities for children to share their learning were also included through open mornings and afternoons as part of Faith and Life inquiries.

Promoting a strong partnership in learning, onsite parent/child/teacher conversations were facilitated, fostering a sense of collaboration and involvement in our educational journey. Our commitment to transparent communication continued through our newsletters, featuring updates on learning and teaching activities in each learning space and specialist areas through the "What's Happening in the Learning Spaces" section. Furthermore, parents remained informed about their child's progress through portfolios showcasing their Faith and Life inquiries and demonstrating growth over time.

Parent Satisfaction

The parent MACSSIS data in relation to the 7 domains: Family engagement; Barriers to engagement; School fit; School climate; Student safety; Communication; and Catholic Identity sit close to the MACS average comparison.

The Catholic Identity is a strength of the school. Parents acknowledge the school's school safety and school fit as positive. There is some areas of improvement in communication and a the school is committed to continuing to build family engagement, as these areas are identified as challenges.

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.motherteresa.catholic.edu.au