



*With God First,
We Will Live, Learn
and Thrive*



St Thomas More School Alfredton

2021 Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 1803

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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Simon Duffy, attest that St Thomas More 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 2021 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 Schools.

06/03/2022

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

Governing Authority Report

The governance of fifty-six schools in the Diocese of Ballarat was transferred to Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) on 01 January 2021. Thus, beginning an exciting and challenging first year of governance under DOBCEL and continuing the long partnership between all schools of the Diocese and Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) of continual improvement of learning outcomes for the students in the schools of the Diocese.

COVID-19 continued to cast a long shadow over the communities in the Diocese. Our students, their families and our dedicated staff are to be commended for their ability to move from one mode of learning to another with very short notice. The true impact on learners may not be known for years. We may well reflect on the 'challenging and uncertain times of COVID' in a similar way to the those reflected on the Spanish Flu a century ago. We will remember with awe the commitment of our school communities, those who lead them and their staff. We will also speak of the resilience of the children of this generation in meeting a 'new normal' and often leading our wider communities in an optimistic response.

In 2021, our school communities and CEB have maintained a strong focus on reviewing and updating policies, procedures and practices that reflect the new governance model and continuing their commitment to providing safe, learning environments for all learners.

I thank the priests of our school communities for their ongoing pastoral care and ministry, without the demands of Governance resting on their shoulders. I acknowledge and thank the Principals of our schools for their committed leadership, care and support of their school community.

I commend this Annual Report to the School Community as a summary of the many achievements in supporting the learning needs of our students.

Tom Sexton

Executive Director

Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited

Our School Vision & Mission

Mission St Thomas More School is a child-safe school that offers an educational foundation, which is united in faith and committed to developing the whole person to live, learn and thrive in God's love.

Vision

As a community of learners, we will strive to:

- Achieve excellence in education in a Catholic faith community. [SEP]
- Nurture the spirit, mind and body of each learner. [SEP]
- Provide a stimulating and collaborative learning environment preparing all for lifelong learning.
- Empower learners to meet the future with confidence and resilience.

Philosophy

St Thomas More School makes connections for and with the students through the curriculum, learning experiences, feedback, and teaching approaches so that students can develop as active and socially just citizens that integrate faith and life. Integral to improving student outcomes is learning and teaching, curriculum, assessment and reporting.

Our teaching and learning philosophy is based on the belief that all students can achieve success given sufficient time and support. We believe that a focus on collaboration, learning and results are crucial in supporting students to achieve success in all facets of their school life. By offering a rich curriculum, we nurture an enthusiasm for learning in our students and a belief that optimal achievements are possible.

School Overview

St Thomas More School is a Foundation to Year 6 co-educational Catholic school in the St Patrick's Cathedral Parish of the Diocese of Ballarat. Our school is located in Alfredton, a suburb in the west of Ballarat, which is located in a high-growth area of Ballarat West. Our school draws students from the local area as well as from the surrounding rural areas. There was an enrolment of 428 students in 2021.

St Thomas More School draws on the Gospel values to build a learning environment where students feel valued and inspired to learn. We offer a quality-learning environment where each individual is supported to reach his or her potential. ^[1]_[SEP]

We promote a vibrant, caring community that works together to create a welcoming and stimulating educational environment. Our teaching and learning philosophy is based on the belief that all students can achieve success given sufficient time and support. We believe that a focus on collaboration, learning and results are crucial in supporting students to achieve success in all facets of their school life. By offering a rich curriculum, we nurture an enthusiasm for learning in our students and a belief that optimal achievements are possible.

In 2021 the school staff continued to implement the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) model that is based on "an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve." (Dufour et al).

We believe that nurturing children through the critical, formative years means surrounding them with a learning environment rich in experience and opportunity and a pastoral atmosphere of individual care and attention.

Principal's Report

It is with pleasure that I present the 2021 Annual Report to the School Community for St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. I am very proud of the spiritual, academic, social and sporting achievements of our students throughout the academic year considering the ongoing impact of COVID 19 restrictions and implications.

Our school staff and community have continually strived for excellence in teaching and learning in a Catholic school community both at school and during remote learning. The teaching staff and community are to be commended on their continual pursuit of excellence through another challenging year. I would like to thank students, staff and families for their significant and valued contributions to our school.

St. Thomas More School continues to be well respected and has continued to strongly serve our local community. We are very proud of the sense of community that continues to develop, and we genuinely value the input from the parish, our families, the Parents and Friends association, School Advisory Council, Catholic Education Office Ballarat and other external support networks.

I have again been blessed to lead this wonderful school community. Throughout this year the school truly enlivened the school motto "With God First, We will Live, Learn and Thrive".

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School Board Report

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Catholic School Culture

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- We will develop our Catholic identity so that post-critical belief and dialogue are the defining features of our school community.
- We will develop our understanding of the Awakenings Curriculum and continue to provide learning opportunities to further develop our Catholic identity.

Achievements

Opportunities to develop our understanding of enhancing St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School's Catholic identity include the following:

- The Religious Education Leader (REL) attended two online Catholic Education Office Cluster meetings throughout the year focusing on supporting the interpretation of scripture and continuing to develop an understanding of the Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project.
- Catholic Education Staff facilitated an online professional learning day that focused on the planning of a Religious Education unit and the supporting of staff personal spiritual development.
- The REL attended two planning sessions a term with each teaching team to support the Awakenings curriculum following our PLC format. Each Religious Education unit continues to contain 'I can' statements, keeping in line with the process used for other core curriculum areas. The REL also led scripture dialogue sessions which continues to be invaluable for recontextualization. This process allows for the interpretation of deeper meaning which is required to develop post-critical belief within our students. This also provides teachers with the confidence to bring this to the students as they develop greater knowledge of scripture.
- Our school's Mission and Vision, and motto, continued to be embedded in our school culture. Our motto informed student awards and learning celebrations, and we began our year with a whole school focus on the behaviours and expectations that allow us to Live, Learn and Thrive as a community. The school Mission and Vision statements were at the forefront of our planning for the implementation of the 'School Wide Positive Behaviour Supports' (SWPBS) framework.
- Displays in classrooms, shared areas and the school foyer reflected units of work and the events of the liturgical year, providing visual images of Catholic culture in a recontextualised manner.
- Weekly Whole School Prayer, led by one class per week, continued throughout the year in both an online format and in the hall when restrictions allowed this. Focus was on ensuring this school gathering together in prayer took place, no matter the circumstance.
- Celebration of masses included the Beginning of the Year Mass, St Thomas More Feast Day and the Feast of the Assumption. Students from one Grade Five/Six class attended Ash Wednesday at the Cathedral and returned with ashes to share with the rest of the school community. Term One saw the inaugural K's for Caritas fundraiser occur where students carried buckets of water, walking in the shoes of those who have no access to clean drinking water. St Thomas More Feast Day included a 'Talent Show' exhibiting strengths of our student community. The students particularly enjoyed this event as no celebration had been able to occur the previous year. The End of Year Mass and Graduation was celebrated in 2021 at St Patrick's Cathedral in person. This was welcomed as again, this had not been able to occur the previous year.
- Sacramental programs were again compromised by restrictions although the final term of the year saw some catch up on sacraments that had otherwise not been able to occur. Staff

members facilitated parish meetings, were members of the Sacramental Team and lead mass dismissals with students when COVID restrictions allowed.

- Weekly staff prayer encouraged staff to reflect upon and celebrate their own faith. Through having staff prayer, we remember our faith and benefit from the discernment and guidance that our prayerful experience offers.
- After consultation with Principals and REL's , staff from the Ballarat CEO released in Term Four a scope and sequence for the scripture focus and unit planning. This was welcomed by staff who had previously not had a set sequence of units and scripture to follow. The final day of the year was spent with staff familiarizing themselves with this scope and sequence and applying this to their Term One 2022 unit.

VALUE ADDED

- Continue commitment to the interpretation of scripture through dialogue amongst teams provided an additional depth which ensured that the post-critical belief dimension was being prioritised.
- Staff continued to be led by the REL and CEB staff to develop appropriate RE units of work that were inclusive of all, following the Shared Christian Praxis and provide students with opportunities to discern and dialogue with scripture as a basis of the unit.
- The Scripture Scope and Sequence and unit plan were presented to staff as a basis to begin the 2022 year.

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To enhance the school community connectedness.
- To improve student engagement through school community engagement.
- To strengthen the parent/school/parish partnership

Achievements

As a result of continued COVID-19 restrictions and multiple periods of remote learning throughout 2021, at all times the school prioritised being able to connect with the school community. Many and various strategies and actions were utilised throughout 2021 to enhance the school community connectedness and promote/strengthen parent, school/ parish community partnerships.

Being unable to invite parents, other family members and friends into our school space as frequently as we would have liked meant that we had to rethink new ways of connecting with our community. While many physical events were not possible we were fortunate to have technology that allowed us to connect and communicate with those beyond our physical boundaries. These included:

- A comprehensive fortnightly newsletter that informed the parent community on all aspects of the school. This always featured a combination of information and photographs. In addition, it also contained a section related to Community Notices and Events where community groups, clubs and organisations could promote their endeavours.
- The St Thomas More Catholic Primary School app. was frequently used to instantaneously communicate information with parents.
- A St Thomas More Catholic Primary School Facebook page was updated frequently to reflect the activities, events and achievements involving students, staff, families and the parish in a very timely manner. Many likes and comments from the school community were regularly recorded.
- Parent Access Module (PAM) remained the primary method of acquiring and checking parental consent in response to digital notifications.

In Term 1, prior to once again being impacted by short periods of school closure along with continued COVID-19 restrictions and requirements, the school offered parents the opportunity to attend a variety of information sessions that focused on:

- Strategies for settling students into school.
- How students learn to read, the approaches and strategies used at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School and tips on how parents are able to support their child to become a competent reader.
- Parents were invited to the annual Information Evening where teachers outlined the expectations, routines, proposed curriculum and events that they expected the students would be involved in throughout the year. This event provided an opportunity for parents to

ask questions, seek clarity, make connections with other parents and speak 1:1 with the classroom teacher.

- Participation in the Classroom Helper's program aimed at up-skilling parents/ grandparents and family friends who wanted to assist in the junior classrooms during the Literacy block (9-11am).
- Parent support groups meetings and mini-courses led by the school's pastoral care worker.
- All parents/volunteers/contractors were required to comply with Child-Safe standards which meant that all staff/volunteers/contractors at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School were required to annually complete the Child Safe Induction process prior to assisting in classrooms, on excursions or participating in group work on committees. Once the induction was completed and a Working with Children Check and photo ID had been provided and recorded by administration staff, they were then permitted to assist with school events.
- Prior to Parent Teacher interviews occurring in late February, parents were invited to complete a short questionnaire with their child/ren relating to assisting the teacher to know more about each individual student. This proforma formed the basis for discussion at the PT Interviews and assisted with student goal setting.
- There were limited opportunities to have parents and members of the community to attend onsite after Semester 1 had concluded. Prior to COVID restrictions being enforced the school welcomed the community to attend the Opening School Mass, Assemblies and weekly Whole School Prayers. Unfortunately, these events, where we gathered together as a whole school, needed to be suspended as the gatherings did not comply with government guidelines.
- While parents and members of the school community were restricted from being onsite the weekly Whole School Prayers and assemblies were still prepared, pre-recorded and shared with classes each Thursday.
- Our Parents and Friends committee remained active and creative in how they could hold events, both social and fund-raising, though their efforts to organise social events became more challenging throughout the year. They did manage to organise and hold a very profitable and well attended Trivia Night in Term 1.
- During remote learning periods, teachers kept in touch with student's parents on a fortnightly basis by offering a variety of contact methods: phone calls, emails, google meets and preparation/collection of individualised learning packs where required. Where required or requested, contact was made more frequently with individual families.
- Student progress and achievement was conveyed to parents at the end of each semester through a formal written report. Given the learning environment which students and teachers had endured throughout remote learning, these reports were, once again, modified from their usual format. Parents were notified of these changes and, as per usual practice, were offered the opportunity to discuss student progress with their child's classroom teacher if desired.
- The second semester Parent Teacher interviews which we had planned to take on the new format of 'Student Involved Learning Conferences' (SILC), unfortunately, due to lockdown, did not eventuate. As we were only able to have limited staff and students onsite, these meetings were conducted via video conference/phone interviews and did not include the student in the conversations.

- Throughout the first half of the year, on four different occasions and in an effort to forge stronger connections between the three parish primary schools, all teachers and Learning Support Officers (LSOs) from Siena, St Patrick's and St Thomas More Catholic Primary schools visited each other's school sites to gain an insight into the size, layout, demographics, structures, programs, pedagogy and initiatives that are specific to each of the schools.
- The school website was regularly reviewed and, through the support of our school compliance officer, remained current and up-to-date for purposes of enrolment enquiries and Child Safety requirements.
- Traditionally we have held short face-to-face 'interviews' with each of our new Foundation students (for the forthcoming year) and their parents. For the second year running we were unable to conduct these meetings onsite but instead chose to offer all 63 families the choice of a phone call or video conference. The majority of respondents opted for the video conference which was pleasing to us as it supported us in putting names to faces and gathering information crucial for supporting a smooth transition to formal schooling.
- We continued our connection with Australian Catholic University (ACU) and in 2021 extended this connection to Latrobe University whereby we benefitted from the services of two 4th year pre-service Bachelor of Teaching students working as part-time Learning Support Officers. Both of these university students successfully managed to combine their full-time studies with their STMCPS work commitments. They each graduated from their courses at the end of 2021 were successful in gaining graduate teaching positions. Throughout 2021 we continued to host and mentor pre-service students of various year levels from Australian Catholic University.
- COVID restrictions impacted on the number of external providers (e.g. speech pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists etc) who were able to work onsite with individual students. Some of these services were maintained via phone contact and video conferencing while others were 'put on hold'.
- Each morning two staff members from the school's Leadership Team would supervise student arrival. They were positioned at each entry gate and would welcome each student and provide hand sanitizer as students entered the school grounds. This supervision occurred daily from 8:30-8:55am.

PARENT SATISFACTION

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

- Parent Partnership
- Approachability
- School Improvement
- Parent Input
- Behaviour Management
- Stimulating Learning

- Connectedness to School
- Classroom behaviour

Leadership & Stewardship

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- We will build staff capability to be leaders of learning so that we develop a culture of continuous professional development.

Achievements

- Successfully completing a scheduled External School Review (Part of a 5-year cycle) focusing on Validation and Planning from 2018 - 2021.
- Setting a 5-year strategic school goals for 2022-2026, with involvement from the whole school community.
- Working with St Patrick's Parish Primary and Siena Catholic Primary Schools to build links between the schools, allowing for more sharing and understanding.
- The continued emphasis on the use of a Shared Leadership model within the school.
- Offering staff the opportunity to develop and 'thrive' by undertaking leadership roles and responsibilities.
- Five staff undertook the L4L program (Learning for Leading) that focused on leadership that was conducted by the Catholic Education Office.
- The school utilised Catholic Education Office staff expertise where/when required as well as out-sourcing other professionals in various fields when required.
- Large investment in information technology for staff and students- all staff and students in Years 3-6 were allocated personal computer.
- Installation of a playground and environmental garden into the school grounds.
- Purchase of new classroom furniture (for 13 classrooms).
- Continue to allocate resources (physical, human and financial) to school initiatives.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2021

- Mathematics: MTLC workshops
- Religion: Catholic Anthropology (all teachers)
- Literacy -THRASS Professional learning
- Literacy -Dr Misty Adoniou (University of Canberra)- Scaffolding Literacy-Going Deeper.
- Religious Education - Exploring Enhancing Catholic School Identity
- Learning support - Autism Spectrum Disorder,
- Information Technologies - EduTech (ICT) conference - online
- Child safety- Mandatory reporting (all staff)

- Student health - Diabetes in School Level 2 (all staff)
- National Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) - Disability Standards for Education for Primary school - Part 1 and 2 (All teachers)
- Sexual Harassment Compliance Training (All staff)
- Work Health and Safety Compliance Training (all staff)
- First Aid, anaphylaxis, diabetes training (all staff)
- Leading for Learning (L4L program) - 5 staff

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2021	49
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$338

TEACHER SATISFACTION

The latest Insight SRC data showed Staff Climate improvement in the following areas:

- Student behaviour
- Respect for students
- Teacher confidence
- Professional growth
- Work demands
- Pastoral Care
- Appraisal and Recognition

Individual Morale, School Morale, Respect for students, Student Management remained at very positive levels.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	93.9%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	88.0%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	10.7%
Graduate	10.7%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	82.1%
Advanced Diploma	35.7%
No Qualifications Listed	3.6%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	32.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	25.1
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	18.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	15.8
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- We will build staff capability to be leaders of learning so that we develop a culture of continuous professional improvement.
- We will engage students in their learning so that they become independent and interdependent learners.

Achievements

The Professional Learning Community (PLC) at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, informed and supported by the pedagogical framework, *The New Art and Science of Teaching* (2017), by Robert J Marzano, continues to thrive. Our pedagogical approaches, consistent with the Professional Learning Community (PLC) ideals, drive learning and teaching at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. Learning conversations and decisions continued to be based on the six guiding PLC questions, keeping our focus firmly on learning for students and staff.

We began 2021 with a focus on student engagement. This was one of the key priorities from the Annual Action Plan. The reference that inspired our thinking and action is *Leaders of Their Own Learning*, a book by Ron Berger. Teachers and students have had data conversations previously, and are now engaged in the process of setting goals for learning collaboratively. We began the process of leading students towards being able to confidently articulate what they are learning and why, as well as having a productive reflective conversation for the direction of their learning moving forwards.

To support learning conversations between home and school, we implemented the use of the digital platform, Seesaw. This tool was readily taken up by teachers and students, with 3-6 students engaged in uploading work samples, preparing and uploading video footage, and talking about their work and achievements. The purchase of Chromebooks for the 3-6 classes means that all students across this area now have ready access to an individual device as a learning tool and a link to Seesaw.

We continued to respond to COVID-19 impacts and subsequent remote learning with flexibility and dedicated teamwork across the school. Teachers continued to adapt the delivery of essential content, and we remained available to families and students where needs were evident. This included regular communication with all parties. The use of Google Meets, to maintain contact, engage in explicit teaching- whole class, small group and one-to-one, continued to be part of our repertoire of responses to student's learning needs.

We have continued to implement ongoing assessment and reporting practices as per the school assessment schedule. This has been regularly reviewed to ensure that our assessment practices meet our needs. We have also explored and broadened informal assessment strategies and practices in order to give timely feedback to students, which needed to be modified when online learning was in place.

Further changes were made to the format of student reports as a result of teacher feedback, and in doing so, we have achieved a streamlined and concise product. We will continue to ensure that we regularly review the information in and format of our student reports to meet the needs of the school community.

An ongoing, and important focus has been to strengthen of the collaborative practices within and between teams of teachers. Team leaders met regularly, and engaged in their own professional learning through a Leading 4 Learning project. Whilst some positive outcomes were achieved, the project was impacted by COVID-19.

The Senior teachers along with the Literacy Leader 3-6, attended P-D with Dr Misty Adoniou (University of Canberra)- Scaffolding Literacy Day 1, with a second day in early 2022. This has enabled us to build the capabilities of teachers through this professional learning opportunity, and has led to a team investigative and collaborative approach towards implementing the strategies. We now have this strategy in place across most levels of the school, with a positive response from teachers and students. We have therefore created an authentic context for teaching grammar, understanding sentence structures, and building vocabulary from rich mentor texts. The Middle Team, along with the Literacy Leader 3-6, embarked on a project focused on reading. 'Reading Beyond the Early Years' was delivered over the course of the year via a digital platform, CANVAS. It provided invaluable professional readings, resources, opportunities for dialogue and a focus for collaborative professional learning.

With the guiding principle and commitment, "I commit to doing whatever it takes to achieve growth for all", we maintained structures to support differentiated learning F-6. This included the school wide practice of targeted intervention to support students in areas of need. We were able to provide some 'boost' sessions for students in literacy and numeracy. This included a focus on lifting student levels as well as extending students. We have a number of intervention programs to support student learning at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. Reading Recovery for Year 1 students has continued as usual since the beginning of the year. This has enabled us to get maximum coverage for those students with the greatest need. Other intervention programs that are ongoing in Term 3 and 4 are: ERIK, MiniLit, MultiLit and MacqLit. We have also had JEMMS in place, which is a program designed to build automaticity and number sense in Mathematics. During periods of remote learning, these interventions continued using Google Meets.

Our commitment to the implementation of the Victorian Curriculum continued, even though this year continued to be a little different with various periods of remote learning. This was reflected in the prioritising of content and planning for student learning in different learning contexts (onsite and offsite). Teams of teachers demonstrated proficiency in determining key areas of priority, whilst making adjustments in response to changing circumstances.

We set and monitored whole school SMART goals in reading using the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessments (3-6) and Alpha Assess (F-2). All students were part of a whole school data wall that was monitored and kept up to date. Further to this we have used PAT Assessment tools online to inform, set and track whole school SMART goals in the areas of Spelling, Reading and Numeracy. The use of this standardised assessment continues to provide valuable trend data, and supports the other school assessments in use. In 2021, students were able to participate in NAPLAN assessments, and we also partook in the School Readiness Tests in Term 4 (NAPLAN online), as we are moving to online versions of NAPLAN in 2022.

We continued to make use of the practice of having visible 'I can...' statements which made learning foci transparent. Teachers monitored student reading and writing, by incorporating the use of I can statements in the formation of learning goals.

We maintained the use of integrated Inquiry as a means of ensuring curriculum delivery across areas such as The Arts, Technologies, the Humanities, Health and Science.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

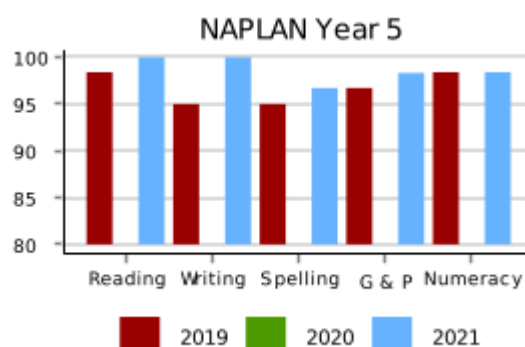
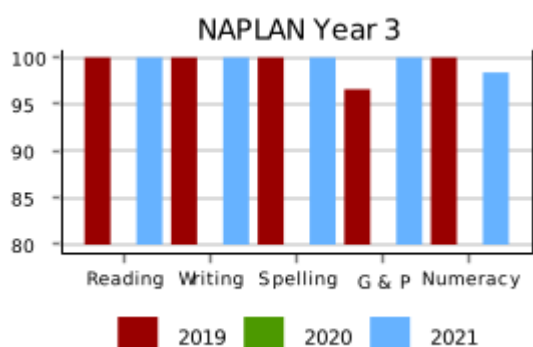
[StudentLearningOutcomes]

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2019 %	2020 *	2019 – 2020 Changes *	2021 %	2020 – 2021 Changes *
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	96.6	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	-	-	98.4	-
YR 03 Reading	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Writing	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	96.7	-	-	98.3	-
YR 05 Numeracy	98.4	-	-	98.4	-
YR 05 Reading	98.4	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Spelling	95.0	-	-	96.7	-
YR 05 Writing	95.0	-	-	100.0	-

* 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

- To maintain and increase a high level of student engagement.
- To continue to develop the social and emotional curriculum using the 'Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships' program.
- To implement the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework through the use of the behaviour matrix and lesson plans.

Achievements

The social and emotional wellbeing of our school community continued to be a primary focus throughout the 2021 school year with the year again being a particularly difficult year for all within the school community.

The year began with the initiative, 'Fantastic 48' with an explicit focus on relationship building - student to student and teacher to student. In spending the first two days of class time getting to know each other and setting both team and individual goals, each student was well placed to develop the connections so vital to being happy at school. 'Fantastic 48' has now been in place for a number of years and teachers are very positive about its impact and are experienced in ensuring that the activities and tasks are targeting the goal of the initiative.

The wellbeing program, Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships has continued to be implemented, teaching and monitoring the way in which we explicitly teach and monitor social skills here at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. Developed by researchers from the Melbourne University and highly endorsed by the Victorian Government, the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships program specifically focuses on developing positive relationships with others, emotional literacy and problem-solving. Following work completed some years ago, aligning the Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships content with the Personal and Social Capabilities strands within the Victorian Curriculum, teachers have continued to plan a thorough teaching and learning sequence that included weekly lessons with targeted "I can" statements - providing clear direction and outcomes for both students and teachers.

The student leadership group continued to be a very important part of the Year Six program for our senior students. 2021 saw us again having two groups of approximately twenty students, one each semester. This highlighted the commitment of our students to participating in the program and wanting to be active, contributing members of our school community. Whilst it was an interrupted year both groups enthusiastically went about their commitments, attending meetings, speaking at online school assembly each week, making posters to advertise school events and coordinating many events throughout the year. Links between our school and the wider community provided exciting and purposeful actions for our student leadership group to engage with. The group were involved in making care packages consisting of donations from both staff and students to donate to St Vincent De Paul Ballarat. In the lead up to Christmas our school community donated grocery items to the St Vincent De Paul Society. The Student Leadership

Group were involved in advertising, organizing and presenting the hampers to the St Vincent De Paul Society.

The continued employment of our school counsellor for two and a half days per week further promoted strong connections between families and school, supporting many of our community members when faced with challenges. This was even more so evident as many families continued to face hardships as a result of the COVID pandemic. In working together and ensuring partnerships, we have been able to continue providing that additional support where and when required.

Our wellbeing team, consisting of the school counsellor, Principal, Deputy Principal and our two learning diversity leaders met each week for one hour. The purpose of the team was to ensure that we could monitor the wellbeing of individual students, families and staff and then respond with appropriate action to support these individuals.

The school's motto of "With God First, We Will Live, Learn and Thrive" has continued as the umbrella for acknowledging and celebrating our student's social, academic and spiritual growth.

2021 saw staff continue with the implementation and development of School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS). This is a framework that brings together school communities to develop positive, safe, supportive learning cultures. When SWPBS is implemented well, teachers and students have more time to focus on relationships and classroom instruction. Students and staff benefit from increased respectful and positive behaviour, increased time focused on instruction, improved social emotional learning and positive relationships among students and staff. The implementation of SWPBS continued to be supported by the Student Leadership group focusing on one area each week to be highlighted in the online assembly. This continued to keep each of the areas relevant and familiar to the students.

The Peaceful Kids program was again implemented as a social and emotional intervention program. The program is an eight-week program that targets students who require further development of their daily coping strategies. It introduces mindfulness, identifies stress and problem-solving response strategies. Due to the interruptions throughout the year only two groups completed the program in 2021. A grade three/four group and a grade five/six group participated in the program. Students, parents and staff were able to see the positive benefits of the program. One major benefit of the program is the relationships that are developed between the students and facilitator, these connections transfer into other areas of the school and continue well beyond the program completion.

VALUE ADDED

- Referred families to support programs and networks

- Weekly student leadership meetings worked to contribute to the greater global and local community.
- Student leadership group coordinated a Christmas 'Food Drive' to donate to St Vincent De Paul society.
- Student Leadership group made care packages to donate to St Vincent de Paul from donations from staff and school community
- Utilised CEB support staff to further investigate both social emotional and academic development of students
- Foundation 2021 information meetings and tours for new families seeking enrolment.
- Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationship and Smiling Mind program taught once a week to enhance social skills.
- Quiet Play options during second break on Wednesdays and Fridays.
- Special Days - St Thomas More Feast Day and Mission Day.
- P-6 buddies encouraged cross-age mentoring and friendships.
- Anti-bullying Code of Conduct agreed to and followed by students, staff and parents.
- Restorative Practices Model used by staff in the classroom and on the yard.
- Utilized behavioral think sheets to encourage students to think about others and make better choices when incidents occurred.
- Behavioural contracts and Safety Plans written and developed for individuals when required.
- Implementation and development of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support framework.
- SSG meetings and Personalised Learning Programs each term for students with diverse needs.
- Provided weekly Response to Intervention meetings to plan and intervene for identified students, lead by our Learning Diversity Leaders.
- Utilised Learning Support Officers to assist in classrooms and deliver small group and one-on-one intervention programs.
- Fostered an open relationship between school and home through regular communication such as Parent Information sessions and Parent/ Teacher interviews.
- Student/staff monitoring of 'at risk' students at break times.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

The latest Insight SRC data showed Student satisfaction improvement in the following areas:

- Purposeful teaching
- Teacher Empathy
- Student Safety

- Teacher Empathy

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Attendance-related notifications from parents are recorded by school administration staff who in turn notify class teachers. Attendance registers are monitored in the front office daily and parents were contacted in the event of unexplained or regular student absence.

Due to our high attendance rate (93.6%) the above policy and practice is adequate.

When students were learning remotely their attendance was recorded through their attendance at online class meetings and through daily work submissions.

The Principal contacts families where non -attendance is significant and when students are absent on a regular basis.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y01	94.8%
Y02	93.4%
Y03	94.0%
Y04	93.6%
Y05	95.7%
Y06	92.6%
Overall average attendance	94.0%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of students at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School.

To empower families, students and staff to have a voice and raise concerns.

To implement rigorous risk management, employment practices, as well as staff review processes and practices.

Achievements

- Provided professional development for all staff to understand their professional responsibility towards enacting the Ministerial Act 870 regarding Child Safe Standards. This required the development of policies, protocols, processes to ensure compliance with the seven standards and the cultivation of a child safe culture.
- All staff members completed the online Mandatory Reporting module that outlines the legal requirements for certain professionals to report a reasonable belief relating to child physical or sexual abuse to child protection authorities.
- Ensuring that all staff, CRTs, volunteers and contractors are aware and responsible for upholding of the School's Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct. Records of signed Codes of Conduct were stored digitally. Ensured that all school staff signed off on the Child Safety Code of Conduct and were bound by this Code of Conduct.
- Ensured that all volunteers contractors, clergy, School Advisory Council members and all visitors have signed off on the Child Safety Code of Conduct and were bound by this code of conduct.
- Ensured that all volunteers had completed the Child Safety Induction requirements and had supplied the school with a current Working with Children Check and photo ID.
- Maintained registries to reflect up-to-date compliance of staff, volunteers and contractors in regard to Child Safe requirements.
- The school continued to implement the Child Safety Policy and Standards.
- Staff were provided with annual professional development around the Reportable Conduct Scheme including what it is, staff requirements and responding to a report.
- Child Safety was an ongoing agenda item at all weekly staff meetings and termly School Advisory Council (SAC) meetings.
- The Child Protection Officer (CPO) position was maintained.
- Circulated, adopted and implemented the Reportable Conduct policy and processes to all staff.
- The CPO attended and participated in termly Diocesan Schools Child Safety Network meetings conducted online. Information gained through these meetings was passed on to staff at staff meetings and through emails.
- Ensured that staff selection, supervision and management practices met with the requirements of the Ministerial Order for Standard Four.
- All staff received updates on their roles and responsibilities in responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse.
- Informed the school community regarding our policies, practices and compliance requirements.

- Ensured our Behaviour Policy was an active document and that the students and the community were well-informed about this policy.
- Offered student wellbeing programs such as RRRR, PaTHS, Bounce Back, Restorative Practices, Circle Time.
- Continued implementation of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) model. To maintain its importance an element of the framework was selected as a focus for the school's weekly online assembly presented by the principal.
- Created and delivered lessons that explicitly outlined the expectations of student's behaviour associated with all aspects of school life.
- Continued to have a school counsellor available to support the wellbeing and safety of students and their families.
- An outline of the Rights, Roles and Responsibilities of each of the staff positions were reviewed and made available to all staff. The tenure of some of the Positions Of Responsibility (POLs) were due to expire at the end of 2021 which created the need to follow the process for appointing or re-appointing staff to these positions for the following three years.