



# 2025

## Annual Report to the School Community



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

### St Thomas More School

Cuthbert's Road, ALFREDTON 3350

Principal: Simon Duffy

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

Registration: 1803, E Number: E2068

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## Principal's Attestation

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I, Simon Duffy, attest that St Thomas More 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 2025 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 23 Mar 2026

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## About this report

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

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## Governing Authority Report

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From the Murray to the Sea, DOBCEL aims to realise a vision of the 'fullness of life for all' for more than 18,600 students across a community of 63 Catholic primary and secondary schools.

We began 2025 with an uplifting Mass led by Bishop Paul in a packed St Patrick's Cathedral. In his homily, Bishop Paul highlighted our mission as Catholic educators to pursue the fullness of life for every child in our care, reminding us to keep students, staff and mission at the centre of our work.

The January 2025 publication of the DOBCEL Strategy 2035 represents a pivotal moment for the DOBCEL community and marks an important phase in our ongoing development.

The main purpose of this 10-year strategy is to inspire the whole system to commit to and move towards a high performing system of Catholic schools. The system is strong and well-performing, but we can do better.

Underpinned by our Catholic Identity, the strategy identifies five strategic pillars that reflect primary areas of focus.

- Collaborative Cultures
- Engagement and Belonging
- School as Community
- Rich Pedagogical practices for Deeper Learning and Wellbeing
- Sustainable Stewardship

The strategy was co-designed with teachers, school leaders, non-teaching staff, students, parents and those working in Catholic Education Ballarat offices.

I had the great privilege of participating in these co-design sessions, which showcased the professionalism and passion of all those in our system that devote their working lives to provide a great education for our children and young people.

Therefore, it is only fitting that I record my sincere thanks to all of you. These are exciting times of opportunity for our community of schools, but it is only possible because of your extraordinary work and dedication.

Tom Sexton  
Executive Director DOBCEL

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## Vision and Mission

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### **Mission**

St Thomas More Catholic Primary 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
- Nurture the spirit, mind and body of each learner
- Provide a stimulating and collaborative learning environment preparing all for lifelong learning
- Empower learners to meet the future with confidence and resilience.

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## School Overview

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St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is a Foundation to Year 6 co-educational Catholic school within the St Patrick's Cathedral Parish in the Diocese of Ballarat. Located in Alfredton, in the rapidly growing western corridor of Ballarat, our school serves both local families and those from surrounding rural communities. In 2025, our enrolment stood at 429 students.

Guided by Gospel values, St Thomas More fosters a learning environment where every student is known, valued, and inspired to grow. We are committed to providing a high-quality educational experience that supports each child to reach their full potential - academically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually.

We take pride in nurturing a vibrant and inclusive community where collaboration between staff, students, families, and the wider parish is central to our success. Our teaching and learning philosophy is grounded in the belief that all students can achieve when provided with the appropriate time, support, and encouragement. A strong focus on collaboration, continuous improvement, and student outcomes ensures that learners are equipped to succeed across all aspects of school life.

Through a rich and engaging curriculum, we cultivate curiosity, resilience, and a lifelong love of learning. We recognise the importance of the primary years as a critical foundation and strive to provide a learning environment rich in opportunity, underpinned by strong pastoral care and a commitment to the wellbeing of every child.

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## Principal's Report

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It is with great pleasure that I present the 2025 Annual Report to the School Community of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. I am immensely proud of the many achievements of our students across spiritual, academic, social, and sporting domains throughout the year.

St Thomas More continues to be a highly regarded school within the local community, and we are proud of the strong partnerships that underpin our success. We deeply value the ongoing support and contributions of our parish, families, Parents and Friends Association, School Advisory Council, DOBCEL, and other external partners. These relationships enrich our school and strengthen our shared commitment to providing the best possible outcomes for our students.

It is both a privilege and a blessing to lead such a dedicated and faith-filled community. Throughout 2025, our school has truly embodied our motto: "With God First, We Will Live, Learn and Thrive". This guiding principle is evident in the way our students engage with their learning, support one another, and grow in faith and character.

I thank our staff for their professionalism, commitment, and care, and our families for their trust and partnership. Together, we continue to build a community where every child is supported to flourish.

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## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Key priorities for 2025, as articulated in our Annual Action Plan were:

Creating and nurturing a Christ-centred learning community that recognises, recontextualises and responds to the Catholic tradition and experiences/needs of all.

Liaise with Catholic Earthcare to establish a plan centred around the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and ecological conversion.

Assist teachers to create effective ongoing assessment tasks that makes links with their units' scripture focus and recontextualises its relevance for today's society highlighting a Catholic response to action.

To enhance Catholic School Identity by using the current ECSI data to inform religious education teaching and practices within the school community.

### Achievements

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, the DOBCEL Religious Education Scope and Sequence has been successfully integrated into the curriculum for its fourth year. This program, operating on a two-year cycle for all grade levels except Foundation, provides comprehensive units developed each term by Ballarat REL and Catholic Education, Ballarat (CEB) staff. These units, created using the Shared Christian Praxis model, include a wide array of resources, such as detailed PowerPoint presentations, insights into scriptural texts, Catholic Social Teaching principles, including diverse teaching strategies. By focusing on different Old and New Testament texts throughout their schooling, students engage with a rich and varied religious education experience.

To tailor the program to the needs of St Thomas More School, the units were reviewed and adapted collaboratively by teaching teams, guided by the school's Religious Education Leader (REL). Each team works through four units annually, with each term focusing on a broad concept. The CEB REL Education Officer further enriched the process by assisting staff in unpacking the units during planning sessions, sharing scriptural knowledge and practical insights. This collaborative and flexible approach ensures that the curriculum remains engaging, relevant and aligned with the educational goals of the school community.

DOBCEL Religious Education staff continued to support staff at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School through termly professional development sessions, focusing on key areas such as Spiritual Capabilities, Recontextualising Prayer and the Three Worlds of the Text

model for scriptural exploration. These sessions were highly engaging, with staff gaining valuable knowledge, deeper understanding and increased confidence in interpreting scripture passages.

It is a requirement that all staff accrue a minimum of fifty hours of Religious Education professional development over a five-year period in order for them to receive their accreditation to teach Religious Education. The professional development provided through staff meetings, planning meetings and professional development days continue to ensure our staff are accruing their required hours.

The Religious Education Leader attended three online network meetings and the three-day National Catholic Education Conference in Cairns. This was an opportunity to liaise with other Catholic educators and receive up to date information regarding all areas of Catholic education.

Whole School Prayer, led by one class on a fortnightly basis, remained a cherished tradition at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School this year. Held in-person in the hall, these prayerful gatherings welcomed many members of the school community and played a vital role in nurturing the school's Catholic Identity. Each class contributed by focusing on different aspects of the liturgical calendar, significant cultural days or themes from their current units of work, enriching the prayer experience with meaningful reflections.

The students also had the opportunity to celebrate mass three times as a whole school community: our Beginning of Year mass, St Thomas More Feast Day and the Mass of Thanksgiving and Year Six Graduation. Each year level also celebrates mass as a team once throughout the year.

Many special events throughout the year enabled students to recontextualise their scriptural understanding through various actions. Term One included a Crazy Sock day, a Casual Clothes day and our annual Ks for Caritas, raising important funds for Caritas. Catholic Education Week celebrations took place in May. Again, we took the opportunity to open the school for parents and friends to share lunch with their children, tour the school, participate in classroom activities and celebrate a liturgy together. It was a special day to again see the school crowded with visitors. Mission Day took place in October and our Year five and six students enjoyed coordinating this event for all students with an amazing total of approximately \$2300 being raised to be donated to Catholic Mission.

The St Patrick's Cathedral sacramental program again underwent further changes this year with parent information sessions being facilitated at a school level with direction from the parish. Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation preparation with students involved in the program were led through the program by staff over a four-week period to cover the contents of the program. Fr Ed Moloney also visited the students throughout their preparation time prior to celebrating the sacraments.

## 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 on a termly basis to develop appropriate RE units of work that were inclusive of all, following the Shared Christian Praxis and providing students with opportunities to discern and dialogue with scripture as a basis of the unit.
- Staff professional development took place over the course of the year unpacking our Enhancing Catholic School Identity (ECSI) data which had been collected the previous year. This enables all staff to have a thorough understanding of the staff, student and parent thoughts and ideas impacting the Catholic Identity of our school community.
- Introduction of data collection tools to apply to Religious Education assessments with a focus on creating rich assessment tasks.
- REL availability at PLT and planning time on a more regular basis.
- Whole School Prayer occurring fortnightly allowing classes to create a reverent, relevant and engaging liturgy for the school community.
- Continued contributions to Catholic charities, such as Caritas and St Vincent de Paul.
- Sacramental program being more accessible to families with meetings taking place at school.

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## Learning and Teaching

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

One of our key priorities for 2025, as articulated in our Annual Action Plan was:

“Ensuring highly effective, evidence-based teaching strategies, engage and empower learners and give life to all aspects of the whole person.”

This included engaging in professional learning, facilitated and monitored by a team of school-based leaders, exploring the underlying principles, research and strategies of the FLARE Literacy Strategy, Phase A.

### Achievements

The Literacy focus for 2025 was to engage in professional learning exploring the underlying principles, research and strategies for Structured Literacy. As a school staff we were able to engage in the scheduled professional learning modules over the course of the year, provided by the FLARE Executive Team online, and with the support of Education Officers (DOBCEL), per our Annual Action Plan. We have continued to have an informed and discerning audit of our literacy and assessment practices. DIBELS is an assessment suite we have implemented in F-6 and which provides invaluable data about the subskills supporting reading development. We have already seen indicators of pleasing growth across the school, with the assistance of the DOBCEL DIBELS Data Tool. The data is foundational to learning conversations across the school. This will continue to be part of our assessment schedule and data-focused learning conversations.

The implementation of Heggerty’s phonics and phonological awareness program has continued to offer a systematic and sequential approach F-2. It has been extended into the 3-4 classes, with the uptake of the Primary Extension component (a 12-week program to ‘catch up’ students or as a point of needed review). Both DIBELS and Heggerty’s are consistent with practices within a structured literacy approach.

As part of FLARE Structured Literacy Strategy Phase A, we completed a process of extensive investigation into Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP), and selected UFLI as our SSP program. Implementation began in Term 4 2025 (Foundation classes), after online professional learning. Over the course of Term 4 we completed teacher training for six staff, with a view to further training being completed early 2026. Our Yr 1/2 classes will begin implementation in 2026, but the teachers have also completed online training provided by UFLI.

We will move into Phase B of the FLARE Literacy Strategy offered by DOBCEL in 2026, as a means of continuing to extend our professional learning with expert guidance, continuing to audit current practices, and implement an assessment schedule that is both rigorous and informative. It is hoped that by the end of 2026 we will be in the position to move into the next phase of the FLARE Literacy Strategy.

Seesaw has continued to be an effective platform to communicate student achievement regularly F-6. Parents are kept informed of focus areas across the curriculum matched with photos, videos and samples of student work, as well as special days/events. As students develop levels of proficiency in their interaction with this platform, presenting their learning with photo, video and audio attachments has become another way to show their agency.

Consistent with PLC practices, teachers meet in collaborative teams to discuss assessment data and establish goals for learning. All learning is clearly aligned with the Victorian Curriculum, and content/key learning is communicated to our students. Teachers are working together to source and make use of increasingly more effective strategies to support the learning of students, as informed by the assessment data we systematically collect.

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 additional support sessions for students in literacy and numeracy. This included a focus on lifting student skill levels as well as extending students. We have a number of intervention programs to support student learning: 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.

We maintained the approach of having integrated Inquiry as a means of ensuring curriculum delivery across areas such as the Arts, Technologies, the Humanities, Health and Science, including the capabilities: Personal and Social, Intercultural, and Ethical, as well as Critical and Creative Thinking, Sustainability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Asian perspectives. They are covered in our 2-year cycle with close links to the Religious Education curriculum. Where possible we have created connections and integration with our Specialist classes, particularly with STEM. Inquiry foci and contexts for learning continue to attract high levels of interest and engagement from our students, particularly when they have opportunities to design or negotiate what some aspects of their work might look like.

Assessment for and of learning occurs in a timely manner, guided by a whole school assessment schedule. School wide data collection of key literacy and numeracy data provides not only a level of accountability for all concerned, but a means to consider the impact of teaching. In this way we have been able to identify where practices need to be developed and improved.

We continue to use PAT Assessment tools (through ACER) online in the areas of Spelling (3-6), Reading and Numeracy 1-6. The use of these standardised assessments continues to provide valuable data and offers another perspective on student achievement along with the other school assessments in use.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

Year 3 and Year 5 students completed NAPLAN assessments online. Year 3 students completed their writing assessments in hard copy format.

Our 2025 school results were reasonably pleasing. The majority of students in Years 3 and 5 fall within the 'strong' proficiency range for reading. This is an improvement from 2024.

Writing results were also strong with most of our students falling in the 'strong' to 'exceeding' range. In spelling we are achieving mostly within the 'strong' range for both Years 3 and 5, and have shown pleasing improvement in Year 5 from the 2024 data. In Numeracy, our 2025 results are comparable with 2024 for Year 3, falling within a 'strong' range of proficiency. The 2025 results show a much tighter plot box, and stronger levels of proficiency for the Year 5 cohort compared to 2024.

Overall, we are tracking comparatively with the national averages for all year levels.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards					
	2025 (current year)			2-Year Average	
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	405	53%	412	53%
	Year 5	491	69%	497	70%
Numeracy	Year 3	417	73%	416	70%
	Year 5	488	75%	488	74%
Reading	Year 3	415	68%	419	76%
	Year 5	492	73%	499	78%
Spelling	Year 3	397	57%	399	60%
	Year 5	493	71%	488	71%
Writing	Year 3	419	83%	421	86%
	Year 5	489	70%	486	69%

\*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2025 due to participation not meeting these criteria or no students were assessed. Participants include students who were assessed, including non-attempt, or those exempted from the test.

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## Student Wellbeing

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

One of our key priorities for 2025 as articulated in our Annual Action Plan was:

“Ensuring highly effective, evidence-based teaching strategies, engage and empower learners and give life to all aspects of the whole person.”

Promote positive mental health and wellbeing practices at STMCPs through the familiarisation of the MHiPS model.

Actively work through the goals set by the SIT team.

### Achievements

As students commence the school year at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, our main focus is centred around social and emotional wellbeing. Building the foundations for strong relationships between students, teachers, peers and support staff is integral for all to feel safe and welcomed. The beginning of the school year centred around our Fantastic 48 program. This program facilitated relationship building as well as providing dedicated time to unpack our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support framework (SWPBS). The SWPBS framework provides students and staff with clear expectations and shared responsibility for being 'safe, responsible and respectful' within our learning and playing spaces. Our staff continued to implement the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships curriculum as our social emotional learning framework.

The Wellbeing team continued to meet weekly. This team consisted of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Pastoral Care Worker, Learning Diversity Leader and Wellbeing Leader. The aim of these meetings was to ensure the wellbeing of students, staff and families continued to be supported as required.

We transitioned to an online wellbeing check-in platform called Pulse. Pulse is a mid-week check-in process for all students in Years 3-6. The students respond to two identifiable questions: How do I feel about school today? Do I need help? If help is requested, the adult is sent an email and conducts a check in with the student in order to support their need at that time. Students then participate in answering a series of de-identified questions that support our understanding of our school wellbeing culture in relation to 6 key domains from the ARACY framework. These are: Value and Safe; Healthy; Material Basics; Learning; Participating; Positive Sense of Identity and Culture.

Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHiPS) professional learning was engaged with by two staff members. This involved attending a 2-day conference and the completion of four online modules through the University of Melbourne. The MHiPS initiative is a statewide rollout to upskill Mental Health and Wellbeing Leaders (MHWLs) in the school setting in order to support the development of mental health literacy of staff and parents and build capacity to support those in need.

### **Value Added**

- Employment of a Pastoral Care worker 3.5 days/week
- Wellbeing leader engaged in DOBCEL led professional development days
- New students transition days utilised to support social emotional wellbeing
- Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationship program embedded
- Quiet Play options during second break on Tuesdays and Fridays for students to monitor personal self-regulative needs
- On-going implementation of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support framework
- Restorative Practices Model used by staff in the classroom and on the yard
- Behaviour Flowchart linked to the SWPBS framework
- Parent, student and teacher communication methods including SSG and Student-Led Conferences to encourage a shared approach to student learning and wellbeing
- Behavioural contracts and Safety Plans written and developed for individuals when required
- Weekly Wrap Around the Learner (WATL) meetings to plan and intervene for identified students, led by our Learning Diversity Leaders
- Wellbeing Team meetings weekly
- Learning Diversity Leaders facilitating wellbeing interventions
- Engagement of Catholic Care with families to support 1:1
- Parent development opportunities: 'Building Resilience in Kids' and 'Digital Media Literacy & Safety'
- Promotion of School TV via our school newsletter
- SIT (School Implementation Team) met fortnightly to plan and implement ReLATE goals.

### **Student Satisfaction**

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

- Managing Emotions (Emotional Awareness and Emotional Regulation)
- Connectedness to School
- Student Morale
- Encouraging Learning
- Personal Development

**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 are contacted in the event of unexplained or regular student absence. Due to our high attendance rate (91.59%), the above policy and practice is adequate. The Principal contacts families where non-attendance is significant and when students are absent on a regular basis.

<b>Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level</b>	
Y01	92.1
Y02	90.93
Y03	92.64
Y04	92.74
Y05	91.69
Y06	89.46
Overall average attendance	91.59

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## Leadership

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

One of our key priorities for 2025 as articulated in our Annual Action Plan was:

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

### Achievements

Throughout 2025, St Thomas More Catholic Primary School made significant progress across a number of key strategic and leadership areas, reflecting our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and excellence in education.

The school effectively drew on the expertise of Catholic Education Office staff, as well as external professionals where appropriate, to support school improvement initiatives. Staff engaged in a wide range of professional learning opportunities, including both onsite and offsite sessions, delivered in whole-school and individual formats. These opportunities strengthened teaching practice and supported staff growth.

A strong culture of shared leadership continued to develop, with staff embracing opportunities to "live, learn and thrive" through leadership roles and responsibilities. Positions such as Team Leaders, Sports Coordinator, ICT Coordinator, and Wellbeing Coordinator were further strengthened as key leadership roles within the school, contributing to improved coordination and outcomes across priority areas.

The school also strengthened its partnership with neighbouring Catholic primary schools, including St Patrick's Parish Primary School, Siena Catholic Primary School, and St Columba's Primary School. These partnerships fostered greater collaboration, professional dialogue, and shared understanding across school communities.

Significant investment in information and communication technology enhanced connectivity and access for both staff and students, supporting contemporary teaching and learning practices. In addition, extensive maintenance and improvement works were undertaken across classrooms and outdoor areas, contributing to a safe, functional, and engaging learning environment.

<b>Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning</b>	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2025	
First Aid, anaphylaxis, diabetes training (all staff)	
ACHPER conference - 1 staff	
EduTech Conference (Melbourne) - 2 staff	
Religious Education Professional development (all staff)	
Child safety- Mandatory reporting (all staff)	
Student health - Diabetes in School Level 2 (4 staff)	
Online Work Health and Safety Compliance Training (all staff)	
Religious Education - Exploring Enhancing Catholic School Identity	
UFLI literacy training (6 staff)	
NCEC Conference in Cairns (2 staff)	
FLARE Literacy Strategy Phase A (54 staff) and Literacy Leader Coaching Days	
RRRR PD (1 staff)	
Launch of DOBCEL 2035 strategy (all staff)	
MHiPS training day (2 staff)	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2025	53
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$412.00

### Teacher Satisfaction

The latest Insight SRC data showed Teacher Satisfaction improvement in the following areas:

- Compassion
- Opportunity
- Teamwork
- Ownership
- Parent partnerships.

<b>Teacher Qualifications</b>	
Doctorate	0
Masters	3
Graduate	2
Graduate Certificate	0
Bachelor Degree	28
Advanced Diploma	5
No Qualifications Listed	4

<b>Staff Composition</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	37
Teaching Staff (FTE)	30
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	30
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	20.67
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

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## Community Engagement

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Key priorities for 2025, as articulated in our Annual Action Plan were:

Embedding a culture of inclusivity that celebrates diversity and partners with the community to provide relevant and authentic learning opportunities for all.

Making connections to culture and diversity more explicit and visible across all areas of the curriculum.

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

### Achievements

We have continued to warmly welcome parents and families onto the school grounds and at school events and this has promoted increased opportunities to forge stronger connections and partnerships with the school community. Many and various strategies and actions were utilised throughout 2025 to enhance the school community connectedness and promote/ strengthen parent, school/ parish community partnerships.

#### 2.1 Partnering with Families

Inviting parents, other family members, and friends into our school space offered many opportunities for school members to reconnect with existing families and establish connections with new families.

The school's communication strategies included regular newsletters, digital platforms like Seesaw, Instagram and Facebook, and effective use of the Parent Access Module (PAM) to keep parents well-informed and engaged.

A comprehensive fortnightly newsletter kept the parent community informed about all aspects of the school, always featuring a mix of information, photographs, and a calendar of events for the current and upcoming school terms.

The school's Facebook and Instagram accounts were updated regularly to showcase activities, events, and achievements involving students, staff, families and the parish.

The Parent Access Module (PAM) served as the main platform for parents to access and update student information and provide consent in response to digital notifications.

Teachers consistently used Seesaw to communicate examples of student learning. This included a variety of content such as videos, photos, text, images, files and drawings.

The School Advisory Council (SAC) met each term and was a culturally diverse representation of the school community. They were frequently consulted on both operational and strategic matters, and their input was valued as a reflection of the broader school community.

In Term 1, the school provided parents with the opportunity to attend a range of information sessions covering the following topics:

- Strategies for helping students settle into school.
- An overview of how students learn to read, the approaches and strategies used at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School and tips for parents on how to support their child in becoming a confident reader.

All parents, volunteers and contractors were required to adhere to Child Safe standards. This meant that every staff member, volunteer and contractor at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School had to complete the Child Safe Induction process annually before working onsite, assisting in classrooms, attending excursions or participating in committee group work. Once the induction was completed, and a valid Working with Children Check and photo ID were provided and recorded by the administration staff, they were authorised to assist with school events.

Throughout the year we communicate student learning formally on four occasions, consisting of once per term; by doing so we ensured we met VCAA requirements.

Term 1: Parent Teacher interviews occurring in early February. Parents were invited to complete a short questionnaire with their child/ren relating to assisting the teacher know more about each individual student. This proforma formed the basis for discussion at the PT Interviews and assisted with student goal setting.

Term 2: Student progress and achievement was conveyed to parents at the end of the semester through a formal written report available through PAM. Follow-up discussions were available.

Term 3: Our Semester Two Parent Teacher interviews took the format of 'Student Involved Learning Conferences' (SILC) involving the teacher, parents and student. The SILCs involved the child having a significant role to play in talking about their own learning.

Term 4: Student progress and achievement was conveyed to parents at the end of each semester through a formal written report available through PAM. Follow-up discussions were available.

Our Assemblies, Whole School Prayers and meetings (Staff, SAC and parent meetings) all begin with Acknowledgement of Country.

Our Parents and Friends committee remained enthusiastic and active in organising and hosting, both social and fundraising events, throughout the year. In general, these events were very well supported and attended - Easter Raffle, Mother's Day Breakfast, Father's Day Breakfast and Christmas Concert were some of the highly successful planned events.

We held five Parent Information sessions to give families of prospective 2026 Foundation enrolments the opportunity to learn about our school, its structure, the curriculum offered, our teaching approaches and more. Attendees were given a guided tour of the school led by members of our Year 6 Student Leadership group. After a centralised application process, we were able to offer Foundation placements to all families who listed St Thomas More as their first preference.

We conducted brief face-to-face 'interviews' with each of our new Foundation students (for the upcoming year) and their parents. These 63 meetings were held onsite and helped us put names to faces while gathering important information to support a smooth transition into formal schooling. The meetings also provided parents with an opportunity to share details that would help us better understand and support their child as a student at the school.

At the end of Term 4, a 'Thank You Afternoon Tea' was held to express our gratitude to classroom helpers who had volunteered their time throughout 2025 to support learning in the junior classes.

## **2.2 Community Partnerships**

Throughout the year, our students had several off-site learning opportunities, often making use of local attractions such as Lake Wendouree and the wetlands precinct, Sovereign Hill and local sporting venues. Additionally, our middle and senior students participated in annual camps.

The school invited the community to join in various celebrations, including the Opening School Mass, fortnightly assemblies, Whole School Prayers, and the End of Year Mass, all of which were held onsite.

We continued our collaboration with Australian Catholic University (ACU) in 2025 by offering placements to second, third, and fourth-year students. Having pre-service teachers work as Learning Support Officers (LSOs) was highly beneficial, providing them with practical experience in applying university theory within the classroom, as well as the opportunity to observe and learn strategies from experienced teachers.

We partnered with local sporting clubs to provide specialised sports coaching for various year levels. Thanks to Sporting Schools funding for Terms 1, 3 and 4, during 2025 we were able to bring in external specialist coaches for Bike Education for our Years 1-2 classes, badminton for our Years 3-4 classes and hockey for our Years 5-6 classes. Each class received five one-hour specialist coaching sessions, fully funded by the Sporting Schools Grant.

Our middle and senior year students had the opportunity to attend performances by St Patrick's College and Loreto College throughout the year. In Term 4, the St Patrick's Junior Band visited and performed a variety of musical pieces, showcasing different instruments and talents.

We also worked with several external allied health providers, including speech pathologists, occupational therapists and psychologists, to offer onsite support and assessments for individual students. Additionally, our ongoing collaboration with staff from Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) provided school visits and professional learning opportunities. These partnerships addressed identified student needs and offered access to resources, support and experiences not available within the school, including collaborations with the parish, other educational institutions, local businesses and community organizations.

Towards the end of Term 4, our 2026 Foundation students participated in three onsite transition sessions to help them experience life as an STMCPs student. These sessions allowed them to become familiar with their new environment, teacher and peers. One of the sessions also included a Parent Information meeting, which was well attended by both new and returning parents. The session featured presentations from the Principal, Deputy Principal, learning and teaching leader, learning diversity leaders, Year 6 student leaders and Foundation students.

Similarly, our Year 6 students had the opportunity to visit their future secondary schools. In collaboration with families and secondary schools, some students attended multiple sessions to help facilitate a smooth transition to secondary school in 2026.

The school continued to support after-school activities for students and families. Kelly Sports utilised our facilities twice a week for after-hours sports sessions and we also offered a daily 'walking bus' service to escort students safely to Out of Hours School Care at Alfredton Primary School, run by Ballarat YMCA.

Our Year 5 students participated in Secondary Education Experience Days (SEED) at St Patrick's College, Loreto College and Damascus College. These sessions gave students a firsthand look at secondary school life and offered them the chance to experience subjects

not typically taught at the primary level. This annual event strengthens our relationship with local Catholic secondary schools and forms part of their promotional efforts.

As a school community, we also encouraged students to think of those less fortunate in Ballarat. The Student Leadership Group organised a Christmas food drive, asking families to donate non-perishable food items for St Vincent de Paul. Donations were collected at the school office and forwarded to St Vincent de Paul for distribution.

## **Parent Satisfaction**

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

- School improvement
- Teacher morale
- Stimulating learning
- Parent partnerships.

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## Financial Performance

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

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