



2024

Annual Report to the School Community

St Michael's School



29 Smith Street, DAYLESFORD 3460

Principal: Timothy Hogan

Web: www.smdaylesford.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 715, E Number: E2076

Principal's Attestation

I, Timothy Hogan, attest that St Michael's School is compliant with:

- The minimum standards and other requirements for school registration and school boarding premises (if applicable) as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic).
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2024 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 13 May 2025

About this report

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

Governing Authority Report

Reflecting on 2024, we have much to be proud of, with DOBCEL demonstrating our dedication to ensuring the highest quality student outcomes in a safe, affordable, faith-based and nurturing environment. There was significant ongoing investment in new learning facilities and refurbishments through the Australian and state Government Capital Grants Program and school community funding continued across our schools, enhancing learning spaces and amenities for the benefit of students and staff.

In 2024, I visited all our Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) schools from the Murray to the Sea. DOBCEL governs 51 primary schools, one F-8 school, and five secondary colleges, educating approximately 13,500 students and employing over 2,200 teachers and staff across the diocese. These visits highlighted the spirit of harmony and sense of community, along with the cultures of care for students and staff.

During 2024, I had the privilege of meeting with all Principals along with leadership colleagues and staff. Demands on schools continue to grow, as the communities they service undergo change and face challenges such as devastating bushfires and cost of living challenges.

During the year DOBCEL commenced the development of its future DOBCEL Strategy 2035. Our strategy is focused on ensuring fullness of life for all in our school communities and particularly our students. With our Catholic Identity foundational to our mission our focus will be on

- Collaborative Cultures
- Engagement & Belonging
- School as Community
- Rich Pedagogical practices for deeper learning and wellbeing
- Sustainable Stewardship

I recognise the extraordinary work, exceptional dedication and professionalism of staff in our schools and offices in providing education services to the families and communities they serve. I particularly acknowledge the commitment of our school leadership teams and their staff in nurturing and empowering the students in our care, as together we work to bring to life our vision: As partners in Catholic Education and open to God's presence, we pursue the fullness of life for all.

Tom Sexton

Executive Director DOBCEL

Vision and Mission

Vision

Excellence I learn

Nurture You matter

Community We grow

Mission

To transform lives through education.

As a faith inspired community of learners we are committed to:

- implementing a comprehensive and stimulating curriculum which engages children with their learning and responds to their individual needs; (Excellence)
- creating an environment which is true to Gospel values and promotes Catholic Identity; (Nurture)
- fostering positive and respectful relationships amongst all members of the school community;

providing a child safe environment where children are treated with respect and kindness.
(Community)

School Overview

The school commenced in 1892 when the Presentation Sisters opened Holy Cross College as its second establishment in Victoria. Presently the staff of St Michael's School is predominantly lay in nature. Mother John Byrne was the visionary who brought the Presentation Sisters to Daylesford.

In 1955, a new St Michael's School was built on the opposite side of Daly St on what was known as the Police Paddock. The school remained there until 1980 at which time it moved back to the Holy Cross site after the Parish of St Peter's had purchased and converted Holy Cross to a primary school. In 1992, land in Smith St was purchased by the parish for a new site for St Michael's with occupation taking place in 1994. Sports Houses are Daly, Nagle and Marian which represent our links to the Presentation Sisters, and the site of Holy Cross Convent.

In 2010, the Presentation Centre was built at the current Smith St site - a multipurpose area, which allows for the current students to enjoy Performing Arts, Indoor Sports and Assemblies.

In 2015, the School installed a sculpture at the front of the school building, in recognition of the contribution of the Presentation Sisters to the area. It was blessed and opened by the Parish Priest of the time - Fr Gary Jones.

In 2018, the school building undertook a major refurbishment - the first since it was built. Many of the current students, are second and third generation of students who have attended at Holy Cross.

The final stage of our building project was completed last year and our new space now consists of 5 classrooms, a Multipurpose room, a Library/Italian room and a re-imagined learning street.

Principal's Report

Catholic Identity

There has been much to celebrate following the 2024 school year. Our staff continue to be open to a recontextualised dialogical space. On the Melbourne Scale, adults indicated their current (5.58) and preferred (5.70) practice is Recontextualisation. We made links with the community through faith activities and engaged with families through liturgical celebrations such as the Father's Day liturgy.

Children and families continue to link direct references of Catholic Social Teaching in school life activities. Our students are able to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of Catholic Social Teaching by making explicit references to Gospel values.

Learning and Teaching

The Visible Learning journey has brought many positive strategies to the learning experience of students: the use of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria is embedded in the teaching process, students are familiar with the Learning Dispositions of Courage, Grit, Collaboration and Curiosity. There is a good student/teacher voice ratio and a greater awareness and acceptance of feedback.

The consistent use of MAPPEN, RE units, moderation activities and connection to the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships program (RRRR) has resulted in a more consistent experience for all students from F to 6.

The Learning Dispositions of Courage, Grit, Collaboration and Curiosity continue to be explicitly taught to students and are embedded in the teaching of the curriculum.

Wellbeing

We are fostering a supportive and proactive environment for student wellbeing and academic success. CHECS data indicates an 'Evident' response mean of 4.57 for Quality Relationships. We value positive relationships between students and staff, with staff feeling supported and respected by their colleagues. The ReLATE program has given staff a more informed understanding around student behaviours. The understanding that certain

behaviours are a message from students has helped shift the thinking of staff about student behaviour and has therefore positively affected the experience of students at school.

Leadership

We continue to draw on the expertise of staff and use a strength-based approach to improvement, such as using staff expertise in specific areas. Staff professional learning is focussed and informed by best practice standards.

The Leadership Team is attentive to improvement and implementing goals through structures and supportive partnerships. This has been shown through utilising the partnership to provide development for staff (such as through the PLCs) and in utilising expertise in networking opportunities to support any challenges that the school may face.

Community

We continued to be visible in the community throughout the 2024 school year. We supported local activities such as ANZAC Day and demonstrated support for other community events, such as the Swiss Italian Festival. This is in addition to the outreach work done by our Mini Vinnies group at Hepburn House and the Good Grub Club.

Farewell

After spending 2 years at St. Michael's (one as an LSO and another as a classroom teacher), Emily Ridge will be finishing up at the end of 2024. We thank Emily for the role she played in maximising learning opportunities for all students during her time with us.

Marg Bird will be taking some well deserved long service leave during Semester One in 2025 and Breanna Millard will be taking long service leave during Semester Two.

Welcome

We welcome Claire Allen (Connection Teacher) and Shay King (Discovery 1 Teacher) who will both be joining our team in 2025.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Catholic Identity

Religious Education

- Teachers engaged positively with good support from CEB in the implementation of the DOBCEL Awakenings Units and feel supported in the development of their knowledge, skill and confidence. CHECS 2023 Religious Education score is 4.57.
- Teachers were committed to continue the development of their understanding of the theology that underpins the RE units, so as to refine their skills in the teaching of recontextualised Religious Education (RE). Eight teachers are accredited to teach in a Catholic School and four teachers have their Accreditation to Teach RE or Lead in a Catholic School.
- There was effective and consistent use of the Awakenings RE units from F-6, with dedicated time in PLCs to develop staff capability in the teaching of RE.

Enhancing Catholic School Identity

- Staff have a deep appreciation for the opportunities the school offers for faith formation, opportunities which extend to teachers, learning support officers, administration and maintenance staff.
- Staff Professional learning was intentionally aligned to and supported by the Diocesan preferred stance.

Social Action & Justice

- We continued our participation in several social justice activities, such as Mini Vinnies, the Good Grub Club, helping at Hepburn House and collecting for St Vincent de Paul Hampers at the end of the year. The CHECS survey score for Social Action and Justice is 4.57. In Features of Catholic Education (ECSI data 2024), both parents and staff rate Involvement in Social Justice Projects as important (3.78 and 3.65), whereas students rate this feature lower at 3.15. Linking social justice activities with Catholic Social Teaching is an ongoing opportunity for the school.

- The Clean Up Australia Day was enjoyed by students and their families. In Features of Catholic Education (ECSI data 2023), students, parents and staff all indicated a keenness to develop their ecological awareness (care for nature and for the environment). Developing this interest in environmental initiatives is another opportunity we have pursued, especially in the light of the encyclical by Pope Francis about the environment, Laudato Si.

Achievements

Stronger links have been made through Catholic Social Teaching Principles being taught throughout the school. We continue to reflect upon the community events we participate in and how these events are tied to Gospel values.

Value Added

We have benefited through the support we have received from CEB staff over the course of the year, leading professional learning for staff and providing feedback on our action plan through quarterly partnership meetings.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Learning and Teaching

- Existing curriculum documentation is available and there are clear links between individual unit plans and the Victorian Curriculum. Staff appreciate the opportunities they have been given to collaborate in the writing of their various curriculum units: CHECS average for A Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum is 'Evident' at 4.43.
- The use of Bump it up Walls (BIUW) for writing and a set Maths Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC) to inform and shape learning opportunities for students has continued to aid teacher understanding of the curriculum.
- Teachers have been enriched by the professional conversations around what the curriculum asks of their teaching and how to best provide for all students.
- A shared storage system which has been implemented and which is accessible to all staff is well structured and allows staff to access knowledge of the curriculum.

Effective Teaching

- Professional learning was provided throughout the year with the view of keeping teachers abreast of the direction required for best presentation of the curriculum.
- The use of Essential Assessment helps ensure consistency in assessment for students (not used for students in Foundation).
- The teaching of RE units, as provided by CEB, has facilitated a greater teacher understanding of and insight into the theology underpinning the RE units. This support has been especially helpful for and welcomed by teachers that do not have a faith foundation but who are eager to learn. The opportunity to participate in faith formation professional learning has also assisted teacher confidence.

Engaging Students in Their Own Learning

- The three-way learning conferences continued to be led by students, who are pleased to showcase their work and explain their learning achievements to their parents/carers. •

Students know what the learning intentions and success criteria are for their lessons. They are also able to articulate their learning goals.

- The Clubs program continues to be a highlight for students, an initiative that provides students with a variety of different experiences and opportunities to work with peers across the school.

Analysis and Use of Data

- Staff use an Assessment Schedule for all areas of the curriculum.
- Students' writing tasks are moderated during PLT meetings where professional dialogue is entered into regarding the next steps required for each student to progress with their writing
- Teachers started implementing the use of Intellischools - more professional learning in the use of the program and the analysis of data will continue into 2025.
- Teachers use data from a variety of sources as a basis when making decisions to improve student learning. These sources include phonics data, PAT testing data, Essential Assessment data and Wellbeing data. The determination of relevant data sets and the analysis of such data to inform best learning and teaching practices is an area that the school wishes to improve in the next Validation cycle. (Analysis and Use of Data in the CHECS survey is 'Mostly Evident' at 3.86).

Coordinated Strategies for Intervention

- Teachers and Learning Support Officers (LSOs) are informed at meeting students at their point of need.
- Intervention occurs in the classroom and teachers and LSOs have implemented Tiers 1/2/3 interventions.
- Teachers attended Parent Support Meetings (PSGs) which allowed teachers to offer focussed and practical ways to support student learning.
- NCCD processes and communication are appreciated by staff (teachers and LSOs). This section of Coordinated Strategies for Intervention shows as a 'Mostly Evident' score of 4.29 (CHECS 2023): students are identified and placed in intervention programmes and teachers are becoming more proficient at understanding NCCD processes and intervention processes.

- We are fortunate to have such a vibrant LSO team: there is a supportive collegiality and mentoring in this team, with LSOs confident in the implementation of student interventions and in their support of teachers and students.

Achievements

Data is used to inform teaching practices and assist staff in meeting students at their point of need.

Student Learning Outcomes

Due to the small number of participants in Year 3 and Year 5 who participated in the NAPLAN assessments, a comparison on previous years can't be determined.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	451	46%
Numeracy	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	444	46%
Reading	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	466	55%
Spelling	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	412	27%
Writing	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	445	18%

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2024 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

Wellbeing

Quality Relationships

- We are fostering a supportive and proactive environment for student wellbeing and academic success. CHECS data indicates an 'Evident' response mean of 4.57 for Quality Relationships.
- There are clearly positive relationships between students and staff, with staff feeling supported and respected by their colleagues.
- Student data seems to show that students appear to be actively involved in their learning by building on their strengths and improving their weaknesses. Students in Years 5 and 6 conveyed that their teachers deliver the curriculum in a planned and effective manner. Percentiles for Teacher Relationships are Encouraging Learning (65), Personal Development (68), Teacher Empathy (49) and Purposeful Teaching (40) (Insight SRC, School Improvement Survey Interpretive Report 2023).
- Parents and carers articulate their appreciation for the positive relationships that staff have with their children. Parents are also grateful for the frequent and open conversations they have with teachers about their children's learning.

Wellbeing Practice

- The Wellbeing surveys elicit student voice, which staff use to inform their teaching practices.
- There has been a focus on staff wellbeing by supporting staff in understanding their vulnerabilities and how they can support their own wellbeing.
- The PSG schedule promotes a sense of partnership with parents.
- Teachers share strategies for supporting students at staff meetings.
- The Student Wellbeing Aggregate Indicator has increased from the historical 72.6 to the current 74.8 (Insight SRC, School Improvement Survey Interpretive Report 2023). Student wellbeing data shows that wellbeing practices at the school are 'Evident', with the CHECS 2023 score at 4.71.

Community Engagement

Partnering with Families

Actions embedded within the school culture result in a positive experience and perception of the school. Staff continue to be visible and approachable for parents. St. Michael's continues to hold the dignity of each person firmly in all that they do.

- There is a strong commitment by parents and the community to support the school's activities and events. This is evidenced by the support for the school fete and the Glenlyon fundraiser. Eight parents completed the INSIGHT SRC Survey, which equates to about 15% of families. The percentiles for Parent Opinion for Parent Partnerships (47) and Approachability (52) were aligned, with Parent Input high at 78 (SIF Survey: Interpretive Report 2023).
- We have explored many opportunities to partner with families, extending invitations to special events such as our AGM and SAC meetings, Athletics Carnival, Welcome Evening, liturgies and assemblies held throughout the year.
- Student events such as Parent Support Group meetings (PSGs) and the three-way chats are strongly supported by families.

Achievements

- The RRRR implementation and structure for social and emotional learning has been positively received, with clear results already seen in student behaviour.
- The Clubs program provides an enriching experience for students, engaging them more fully with their learning journey.

Value Added

We have benefited through the support we have received from CEB staff over the course of the year, leading professional learning for staff and providing feedback on our action plan through quarterly partnership meetings.

Student Satisfaction

When asked about their enjoyment of school, 85% of students gave a favourable response (either a 3 or 4 out of 4).

When asked about their enjoyment of learning, 86% of students gave a favourable response.

Student Attendance

The overall student attendance rate for the 2024 year was 90%.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	84.7
Y02	93.2
Y03	87.9
Y04	90.1
Y05	89.1
Y06	81.7
Overall average attendance	87.8

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Leadership and Management

Shared Leadership

- There are effective communication systems in place which especially help part-time staff remain informed about the daily processes at the school.
- We continue to be focused on school improvement.

Building Staff Capability

- The leadership team and various staff members are open to the support available from CEB.
- LSOs feel equal and empowered in their work and have strong autonomy in their working partnerships. There is a strong collegial relationship between teachers and LSOs.

Stewardship of Resources

- The school uses the resources available in terms of good stewardship in school improvement, especially with well-planned budgets and physical resources.
- The current building project is nearing completion and will add a most welcome addition in terms of facilities for classrooms and a stimulating learning environment.
- Students, staff and families were consulted and provided input into the current building project.

Achievements

We continued to work in partnership with staff from Catholic Education Ballarat, conducting quarterly partnership meetings with a focus on our annual action plan.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellischools • ReLATE • Catholic Identity • School Wide Positive Behaviours • Visible Learning • DIBELS • UFLI • Supporting students with ASD 	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2024	17
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1700.00

Teacher Satisfaction

The school's Organisational Climate Aggregate Indicator of 69.8 is similar to the historical value of 73.9 (SIF Survey: Interpretive Report 2023). The ranking scores of the Four Cultural Pillars in 2021 and 2023 of Empathy and Clarity are very similar.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0
Masters	2
Graduate	0
Graduate Certificate	0
Bachelor Degree	7
Advanced Diploma	1
No Qualifications Listed	2

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	8
Teaching Staff (FTE)	6
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	9
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	4.71
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Community Partnerships

- We have a welcoming and calm ambience throughout the school that is representative of all that the school undertakes.
- Partnerships with community and agencies enrich the learning experience of students. These partnerships include initiatives such as the Adopt a Parishioner program, the Daylesford Show, the Rotary Art Show and the Book Week Library visits.
- Various partnerships have been developed with other Catholic schools and local schools, such as camps, sport activities and the 'Little Feet, Big Footprints' program.
- There are supportive professional connections with CEB.

Achievements

We communicated with families in a variety of ways including:

- Fortnightly newsletters
- Learning tasks posted on PAM
- Student led conferences
- Parent support group meetings
- Fortnightly assemblies
- Information sessions relating to important events such as Sacraments and camp
- School open days

Parent Satisfaction

According to the school improvement survey, parents indicated that 'connectedness to school' had improved from a historical score of 77 to the current score of 85. Parents also noted that student motivation (Historic: 74 Current: 85) and social skills (Historic: 80 Current 85) had improved over time.

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.smdaylesford.catholic.edu.au