



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

2023

Annual Report to the School Community



St Thomas More's School

313 Canadian Bay Road, MOUNT ELIZA 3930

Principal: Martine Verhagen

Web: www.stmmtlza.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 1822, E Number: E1321

Principal's Attestation

I, Martine Verhagen, attest that St Thomas More's School is compliant with:

- The minimum standards and other requirements for school registration and school boarding premises (if applicable) as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic).
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2023 school year under the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth) and the Australian Education Regulations 2023 (Cth).
- The Child Safe Standards as prescribed in Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises.

Attested on 10 May 2024

About this report

St Thomas More'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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely

Dr Edward Simons

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

Vision and Mission

Our Vision

We are a welcoming, inclusive community,
growing in faith, love and knowledge,
nurturing resilient, life-long learners,
empowered to make a difference.

Our Mission

We are a welcoming, inclusive community...

At STM we believe everything we do is guided by our Catholic faith. We are committed to providing a safe, supportive and caring environment for all in our community, where each individual is known, valued and respected.

Growing in faith, love and knowledge...

As a Catholic school, our beliefs and traditions are central to all that we do. We strive to develop a faith filled community of people who are empowered to serve others, ensuring that our Catholic values guide our actions, decisions and interactions.

Nurturing resilient, lifelong learners...

The dedicated staff at St Thomas More are committed to providing every student in our care with an exemplary education. Staff work collaboratively, using student data and the latest educational research, to plan high quality learning experiences that meet the needs of each individual and ensure they reach their full potential.

Empowered to make a difference...

At St Thomas More, education is a holistic journey shaping not just minds but also character, resilience, and adaptability. Through rich inquiry learning, students gain a deeper understanding of the world, empowering them as lifelong learners, critical thinkers, and responsible global citizens. Our Religious Education programs and social justice initiatives encourage students to embody Gospel values by caring for others and making a positive difference in the world around them.

School Overview

St Thomas More's School is a Catholic Parish Primary School located in Mt Eliza on the Mornington Peninsula. The school was established in 1981 and is an integral part of the St Thomas More Parish community. We recognise the strength of our vibrant community and are enriched by the partnerships between staff, parents, students and parish. We firmly believe that Catholic school communities are most effective when teachers, staff and parents work together to educate the whole child emotionally, academically, physically, socially and spiritually.

St Thomas More Primary School is set within a natural bushland setting which provides a uniquely beautiful learning environment for our students. School facilities include dedicated Prep, Junior, Middle and Senior learning areas where classrooms are spacious, bright and welcoming. Students at St Thomas More enjoy a dedicated STEM space, a well-stocked library, a multi-purpose area, a visual arts area and performing arts room. A state-of-the-art gymnasium is used for PE, school assemblies and other special events. Students are blessed with expansive grounds that provide excellent spaces for outdoor learning, fitness and play.

In 2023, there were 279 students enrolled at St Thomas More Primary School. Students were organised into thirteen classes from Prep to Year 6 with an average class size of twenty-one. Students were supported by a dedicated and caring staff totalling thirty-four, with twenty-two teaching staff and twelve non-teaching staff.

In addition to our Principal and Deputy Principal, positions of leadership on staff included leaders of Religious Education, Learning and Teaching, Student Wellbeing and Learning Diversity. These leaders actively supported our teaching staff to provide rich, contemporary learning and teaching programs based on current educational research and targeted to meet individual student needs.

At St Thomas More Primary School we strive to provide every student with a high quality education in a safe and supportive learning environment. Through our evidence-based learning and teaching programs students are encouraged to become resilient and independent learners who question, reflect, take risks, critique, analyse and act. Teaching programs are personalised to meet the needs of individual students and are based on the rigorous and consistent use of student data to ensure maximum growth for every student.

At St Thomas More we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people entrusted in our care as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. We believe this is a shared responsibility and all staff at our school are committed to creating a nurturing and supportive environment where every student feels valued, respected and safe.

Principal's Report

It was a pleasure to once again lead the St Thomas More school community as Principal in 2023. St Thomas More Primary School is well-known for its Catholic ethos and values, its strong sense of community and its clear focus on student wellbeing and the education of the whole child. As a mid-sized school community, students at St Thomas More are all known and valued as individuals and establish a strong sense of belonging to our school. It is because of our nurturing environment and the school's positive reputation in the community that many families select St Thomas More as the school for their children.

In 2023, St Thomas More entered its second year of our current School Improvement Cycle. Our Annual Action Plan for 2023 centred around three key priority areas: Learning and Teaching, Student Agency, and Feedback. Of particular note in 2023 is the improvement work conducted in the area of Mathematics. With the support of Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools (MACS) Mathematics consultants, regular and rigorous professional learning sessions took place to develop staff knowledge of the Mathematics curriculum, learning progressions and high impact teaching strategies. The implementation of an evidence based, whole school approach to the teaching of mental computation strategies was also a very pleasing result of this improvement journey.

Our Mathematics journey was celebrated within our wider community at our Family Maths Night held in Term 4. This was a very popular event that provided children and their parents the opportunity to engage in enjoyable mathematics learning experiences together and experience first-hand how mental computation strategies are fostered in our classrooms. It was lovely to see so many smiling faces after an evening of Mathematics learning!

Other much loved events that brought our community together throughout the year included our annual Grandparents Day, Book Week celebrations, our Father's Day Breakfast and our Senior Level Bizarre Bazaar. The Arts were celebrated at our end of year Nativity afternoon and at our Musical Soiree, where instrumental students and our talented choir showed off their skills. Regular faith celebrations also took place and included whole school attendance at fortnightly Masses with the St Thomas More parishioners. These celebrations served as a regular reminder for our children that they are an important part of a wider parish community.

I look forward to continuing to work together with our dedicated staff and wonderful community to ensure the ongoing growth, learning and wellbeing of all at St Thomas More's.

Yours sincerely,

Martine Verhagen

Principal

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal

To support students to strengthen their Catholic identity, making sense of their lives in today's world and responding in encounter with Catholic tradition and the school's faith community.

Intended Outcome

That students will make stronger connections between the school's Catholic culture and their own Catholic identity, their learning and their lives.

Achievements

At St Thomas More Primary School, our dedication lies in upholding the principles of Catholic Social Teachings and actively contributing to positive global change. Throughout 2023, our focus remained on refining social justice initiatives that align with our curriculum and resonate with our students' experiences. By integrating these initiatives into our Inquiry/Religious Education units, we empower our students to take meaningful action and effect positive change in society

We accomplish this goal through fundraising endeavors that enable our students to address the needs of individuals beyond our immediate community. Our students play a central role in organising and implementing these initiatives, which not only offer crucial assistance to those requiring support but also cultivate empathy and compassion within our student body.

In 2023, the school joined the Mini Vinnies Program, with the Year 4 students of our SRC wholeheartedly embracing this initiative of the St Vincent de Paul Society. This program empowers primary school students to become advocates within their school and local community. As a result of their commissioning, the group took proactive steps to inspire fellow students, educating them about important initiatives such as the Christmas Toy Appeal.

Another new initiative at STM was the school's involvement in the FIRE Carrier Program. FIRE carriers are students who share a passion for learning about First Nations culture and are committed to sharing this knowledge and promoting Reconciliation within and beyond the school community. Members of Year Five SRC attended a training day and worked together to create a covenant about how they plan to take action within the school community.

Throughout 2023, our school deepened its engagement in whole-school masses and liturgies, working closely with our Parish Priest to reinforce our enduring dedication to fostering opportunities for our students to strengthen their faith. These gatherings included masses marking the commencement of the academic year, our patron saint's feast day, the Feast of the Assumption, as well as whole-school liturgies for special occasions like Grandparents' Day and the weeks of Advent. These gatherings serve as a potent means of forging links between the Catholic culture of the school and the lives of our students.

The dedication of our school staff to the Pedagogy of Encounter remains steadfast, evident in the thoughtfully crafted units aimed at deepening our students' comprehension through recontextualization. The fusion of Religious Education and Inquiry lessons is an ongoing refinement process, demonstrating our teachers' commitment to honing their expertise and delivering optimal learning experiences. Through collaborative efforts, our educators design assessment tasks that adhere to Religious Education Achievement Standards, offering a holistic view of each student's educational journey. As we continually refine our teaching approach, our dedication to providing exceptional education remains unwavering, empowering students to flourish academically and personally.

At our school, the Sacraments are integral to fostering the spiritual growth of every child. Early in the year, our Year 3 students embarked on the journey of preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation in partnership with the parish. The preparation journey proved to be a rewarding experience for our students, allowing them to deepen their comprehension of forgiveness, reconciliation, and their connection to the Indigenous community's reconciliation efforts. Additionally, our Year 3 students engaged in preparation for the Sacrament of Eucharist, where they explored the profound significance of this sacrament within the Catholic tradition.

In the second term, our Year 6 students received the Sacrament of Confirmation in a ceremony led by Bishop Anthony Ireland. They were fortunate to engage in a Reflection Day, where they could reflect on the sacrament's significance in their faith journey. Bishop Tony's visit was a memorable occasion for our students, who found inspiration in his words of wisdom and encouragement.

In 2023, our school continued to focus on enhancing the staff's use of prayer in the classroom through professional development sessions, aiming to support students' spiritual growth. These sessions proved highly beneficial, enabling teachers to incorporate diverse prayer experiences into daily routines. By integrating prayer into classroom activities, students had opportunities for reflection, strengthening their connection to faith and understanding of beliefs. We will continue to deepen the role of prayer within our classrooms in 2024.

Value Added

The school fosters a strong commitment to social justice through its fundraising efforts and charitable initiatives. During 2023, the school was able to support the following:

- Caritas, through Project Compassion in Lent
- St. Vincent de Paul, through the Christmas Toy Appeal
- Assorted local charities through our events such as Footy Day Gold Coin Appeal

Special Liturgical and Sacramental activities included:

- Year 6 Confirmation Retreat Day held onsite & led by REL
- Preps Prayers in Pyjamas evening held onsite & led by Foundation Level teachers
- Stations of the Cross reflection - with student contributing to a reflection about each station
- Whole school masses in which year levels contribute to readings, prayers & reflections

New initiatives

- Christmas Carols & Nativity play for school community
- Participation in Mini Vinnies program
- Participation in FIRE Carrier program

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals

To improve student outcomes in numeracy & literacy.

To further develop teacher content & pedagogical knowledge & confidence.

Intended Outcomes

That teachers have a strong knowledge of the Mathematics curriculum and the progressions of learning.

That quality teaching practices are consistently implemented from P-6 in the area of writing.

Achievements

Throughout 2023, our learning and teaching team focused their attention on developing a shared understanding of what constitutes quality teaching of Mathematics. Through a year long partnership with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), consultants were engaged to build teacher knowledge of the Mathematics Learning Progressions, and the Victorian Mathematics Curriculum 2.0. Following an evidence-based approach aligned with the Science of Learning, a greater emphasis was placed on explicit teaching of mathematical mental strategies. MACS consultants affirmed and refined current practice in differentiation of Mathematics, further developed Maths Yearly Overviews, and implemented planning protocols that resulted in a rigorous teaching and learning cycle (pre-assess, plan, teach, reassess).

Maintaining and embedding progress made in the area of writing was achieved through capacity building of teachers who were new to the school. Termly professional learning deepened teacher knowledge of the Teaching and Learning Cycle in writing. Genre-based writing rubrics were further embedded to support differentiated writing instruction. Leaders recognised the need to invest in resources aligned with our whole school approach to teaching spelling. Effective Spelling Teacher Resources were introduced in Prep - Year 6 to support an evidence-based approach to the teaching and learning of spelling.

Improvements in the area of reading continued in Foundation - Year 2. A systematic phonics sequence was embedded in the Junior School, complemented by a shift from 'predictable' to 'decodable' readers. This change ensured that the five essential elements of early reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, were

being taught explicitly, sequentially and systematically in every classroom from Foundation to Year 2.

A range of evidence-based intervention programs were utilised throughout the year to support students with additional learning needs in literacy and numeracy. Reading intervention programs included MiniLit for students in Year 1 and the Reading Tutor Program for students in Year 2 and above. Spelling Mastery was also added to our suite of intervention programs and was utilised as a Tier 2 spelling intervention for selected students in Years 1-6. Our Mathematics Tutoring Program continued, targeting the learning needs of students in Years 1-6 who were working below the expected standard in numeracy. Pleasing growth was evident as a result of these intervention programs.

A range of extension opportunities were also provided for students at St Thomas More's. This included student participation in the Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge and the Mathematics Olympiad Competition. Capable writers were also provided with the opportunity to participate in a range of writing competitions. A team of senior students attended Padua College's Academic Challenge Day, placing in the poetry and engineering events.

Our Japanese language program continued to be a favourite learning area for many students in our school. The Japanese language was further embedded in daily school life as the school's Japanese coach supported teachers to deliver instruction through the Teachers as Co-Learners (TCL) model. High-frequency classroom vocabulary and phrases were embedded within functional classroom dialogue.

Learning in specialist areas of Physical Education (PE), STEM, Art, Music and Performing Arts resulted in a range of exciting school events. PE learning was showcased on our athletics day at the Mornington athletics track where students benefited from facilities for long jump, running, hurdles and discus. STEM learning was complemented with senior students' involvement in the 'It Takes a Spark' STEM conference, hosted by John Paul College. Younger students continued their involvement in our community garden project, building on STEM learning and utilising the school's large outdoor space. Our Music program culminated with an end of year musical soiree, and provided a basis for our Christmas nativity concert, a brand new event that was popular with our parent body.

Student Learning Outcomes

NAPLAN data for 2023 indicates that Year 3 students at St Thomas More were performing above the state mean in Numeracy, Reading, Writing and Grammar and Punctuation. Students in Year 3 were close to the state mean in Spelling. Year 5 students at St Thomas More performed close to the state mean in Spelling, and Grammar and Punctuation. This cohort performed above the state mean in Reading, Writing and Numeracy.

The Student Learning Team, consisting of the Principal, Deputy Principal/Learning and Teaching Leader and the Learning Diversity Leader, identified and monitored students at risk, and determined students' eligibility for evidence-based intervention programs. A range of assessment tools were utilised for this purpose and Tier 1, 2 and 3 interventions were used to target students' individual needs and improve student learning outcomes.

Intervention programs that were offered in 2023 to support students to meet the expected standard included MultiLit programs, Spelling Mastery, and a range of teacher-designed Tier 2 targeted classroom interventions. A Mathematics tutor was also employed to teach small focus groups of students in Years 1-6 to support numeracy development.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	439	80%
	Year 5	490	57%
Numeracy	Year 3	452	83%
	Year 5	506	77%
Reading	Year 3	447	87%
	Year 5	524	77%
Spelling	Year 3	401	57%
	Year 5	475	67%
Writing	Year 3	448	97%
	Year 5	513	83%

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2023 due to participation not meeting these criteria or no students were assessed. Participants include students who were assessed, including non-attempt, or those exempted from the test.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal

To implement a comprehensive student wellbeing program that addresses the mental, emotional, and social aspects of wellness, promoting a supportive and inclusive environment for all.

Intended Outcome

That every student feels valued, respected and empowered to thrive academically and personally.

Achievements

The area of student wellbeing has always been a high priority and central to the educational philosophy of the staff at St Thomas More Primary School. Building relationships and strengthening social and emotional development has been paramount in providing a safe and secure learning environment where students can flourish in all aspects of learning.

An important aspect of student wellbeing at St Thomas More's is ensuring a smooth transition for students at the beginning of each year. Our ongoing wellbeing tracking system, enabled class teachers to share information regarding social and emotional wellbeing, family situations and strategies used for students with behavioural or emotional concerns. This information allowed teachers to meet individual wellbeing needs of their students from the very beginning of the year.

A whole school unit called 'Learning to Learn', undertaken during the first few weeks of the year, explored our school values and learning dispositions in detail and helped set children up for a successful year of learning,

Wellbeing programs continued to be implemented in a sequential and cohesive way throughout the year. Student wellbeing data, and a range of high quality wellbeing programs, informed the weekly classroom wellbeing lessons that were delivered throughout the school. Programs used at St Thomas More's included The Resilience Project Wellbeing Program, Bounce Back and the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships programs. An important addition to this suite of resources was the Grow Your Mind Schools Program, which uses a blended approach to learning, including engaging resources that incorporate explicit, collaborative, play-based and digital learning. Together these evidence-based resources

helped teachers deliver wellbeing programs that promoted positive mental health and enhanced the social and emotional learning and wellbeing of all children in our school.

Throughout 2023, the school implemented many wellbeing initiatives, aimed at providing a safe environment for all students as well as providing avenues for connecting students with their school, staff and peers. Connections were built during Term One through whole class and whole school assemblies, lunchtime games organised by Student Wellbeing Leaders and through our Buddy System which sees Year 5 students buddy with Prep students. Throughout the year, there were opportunities for students to attend staff lead lunchtime clubs for gardening, building, coding, bush walking, craft, dance, yoga, chess and mindful colouring. This initiative was targeted to, but not restricted to students experiencing friendship issues, and was very well received. Our school Wellbeing Dog also continued to support students in classrooms and on the playground and remained a very popular addition to our school community.

A Wellbeing Team, consisting of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Student Wellbeing Leader and Learning Diversity Leader, met regularly to discuss student wellbeing concerns and provide additional support for staff and students. Teachers followed established procedures for referring students of concern to this team. The team proposed, monitored and evaluated the strategies used for each student who needed additional support. Social skills groups were overseen by the Wellbeing Leader and implemented by Learning Support Officers. The services of a clinical psychologist continued to support the wellbeing of students and their families.

In 2023, the ACER Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEW) Survey was utilised for collection of wellbeing data from students in all year levels. The data collected from our Year 2-6 students showed over 80% to have developed, highly developed or very highly developed overall social emotional wellbeing scores. Only 1.5% of these students scored in the low range. There was a noticeable decline however in the scores relating to Feelings and Behaviours and Internal Strengths in our Senior students. These areas were a focus in wellbeing programs for these students in the second half of the year. Social emotional scores for students in Foundation and Year 1 were very positive overall.

Value Added

- Wellbeing lessons continued to be implemented weekly in all classrooms to further enhance student wellbeing
- Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness practices were embedded in classroom routines and practices
- Daily lunchtime clubs were run by teachers and Learning Support Officers to support social and emotional learning

- Weekly social skills groups were led by Learning Support Officers to support Junior School students
- Class Meetings were held regularly enabling students to share successes and concerns and problem-solve in a safe environment
- Our School Wellbeing Dog attended school twice weekly, making regular classroom visits and accompanying children on the playground
- The Student Representative Council (SRC) met regularly with the Deputy Principal and Wellbeing Leader to discuss issues relating to student wellbeing
- Student Wellbeing Leaders organised and ran lunchtime activities for younger students
- Whole school gatherings and events, including fortnightly Masses and assemblies, our school disco, Kaboom Sports Day and our Colour Fun Run, promoted a strong sense of belonging to school
- School camps provided opportunities for students to build connections and develop resilience
- Students with high social/emotional needs were supported by our School Counsellor
- Student wellbeing tools were used to collect data throughout the year, which was analysed and acted upon to further enhance student wellbeing

Student Satisfaction

In the annual Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools - School Improvement Surveys (MACSSIS), students indicated that the overall social and learning culture of the school was a positive one. Results showed that students feel like they are known and valued in our school community. 71% of students indicated that the energy at school was positive and 75% recognised that adults in the school were very supportive of them. Our strong focus on student leadership was also recognised by 98% of students.

While student data in the areas of Student Safety and School Belonging remained close to the MACS average, there was a slight decline in these scores over the past twelve months. These will be areas of particular focus moving forward in 2024.

Student Attendance

Attendance at St Thomas More's continues to be closely monitored electronically, with student attendance marked twice daily. Late arrivals and early departures are required to sign in or out at the office. To ensure the safety of all students, an automated system is in place to communicate with parents when their child is absent from school. Any unexplained absence is followed up on the day of the absence by admin staff via a text message to parents.

Information about the number of days of absence are recorded on student files and student reports. Where the rate of absenteeism is of concern, the school principal follows up directly with parents/guardians/carers.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	92.1%
Y02	91.6%
Y03	91.6%
Y04	92.0%
Y05	92.0%
Y06	92.0%
Overall average attendance	91.9%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal

To develop a school-wide performance development culture committed to improving student learning.

To broaden the current staff feedback process to include all teachers in systematic and consistent opportunities for peer observation, modelling and coaching.

Intended Outcomes

That staff capacity to improve their professional practice is strengthened.

That Learning Walks will be conducted regularly with clarity around the practice.

Achievements

At St Thomas More Primary School, the Leadership Team works closely together to ensure a comprehensive and holistic approach to educational excellence and student wellbeing. Members of this team actively promote a positive school culture and model the values of respect, integrity, service and empathy for all in our community.

The 2023 our School Leadership Team consisted of the school Principal, Deputy Principal/ Learning and Teaching Leader, Education in Faith Leader, Learning Diversity Leader, Student Wellbeing Leader and two Learning Leaders. This team met on a fortnightly basis to discuss school improvement and ensure Key Improvement Strategies from our Annual Action Plan were being implemented throughout the school.

A weekly staff memo, incorporating news from each of the school leaders, ensured clear and timely internal communication and provided an avenue to acknowledge and celebrate staff successes.

Leadership Team members organised and delivered regular staff professional learning at twice weekly Professional Learning Team Meetings. These Professional Learning sessions focused on enhancing teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and curriculum content knowledge and provided times for staff to work together to embed high quality learning and teaching practices from Prep - Year 6.

The Learning and Teaching Leadership Team, consisting of the Learning and Teaching Leader and Learning Leaders, also supported teaching staff at weekly facilitated planning sessions. These leaders ensured that the Victorian curriculum was delivered in every classroom using high quality, evidence based teaching strategies. These leaders supported teams in the planning process by sourcing quality teaching resources and sharing evidence based teaching strategies.

Learning Leaders conducted learning walks throughout the year to gain insights into the impact of their leadership and adapted their practice based on their observations of student learning.

A Student Learning Team was established in 2023 to closely monitor student learning progress. This team regularly reviewed student achievement data and used this data to make informed decisions about curriculum, instruction and student interventions. They tracked student progress, identified areas for improvement, and implemented targeted Tier 2 and 3 interventions to support student achievement.

A Student Wellbeing Team, consisting of the Principal, Deputy Principal and Student Wellbeing Leader, also met regularly to discuss wellbeing concerns. This team oversaw a range of wellbeing support services for students, including counselling services, and interventions for students with social, emotional or behavioural challenges.

In 2023, feedback processes included biannual review meetings for staff. These meetings used the AITSL Standards to provide feedback, set goals and determine future directions. These meetings also provided an important opportunity to check in with staff regarding their own personal wellbeing

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<p>Professional development for staff in 2023 maintained its emphasis on evidence-based teaching practices but shifted its focus from literacy to numeracy.</p> <p>MACS Mathematics Consultants, together with our Learning and Teaching Team, supported staff throughout the year as they refined and deepened their knowledge of the Mathematics curriculum, progressions of learning and explicit teaching strategies.</p> <p>To further support this improvement work, additional Professional Learning opportunities focused on data analysis and the development of differentiated learning experiences.</p> <p>Other Staff Professional Learning in 2023 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory Reporting & Child Safety Training • OH&S Training • First Aid and Anaphylaxis Management • Faith Development Sessions • Network Days for Leaders in RE, Wellbeing, Learning Diversity & Learning and Teaching • Individual staff sponsored study 	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	24
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$800.00

Teacher Satisfaction

MACSSIS Survey data for staff showed that a very positive school climate exists in our school, characterised by high quality instructional leadership and supportive staff leadership relationships.

Scores in the domains of School Climate, Instructional Leadership and Support for Teams were all well above the MACS average. 89% of staff indicated that there is a very positive working environment in our school and that school leaders set a positive tone for the culture of our school. The same percentage of staff also indicated that school leaders are very knowledgeable about learning and teaching practices and communicated a clear vision for learning and teaching at our school.

Scores in the area of Staff-Leadership Relationships were also very high. with 89% of staff indicating that working with the school leadership team motivates them in their role. 89% of staff also indicated that they were comfortable approaching members of the school

leadership team for support and that school leaders were supportive when they face challenges at work.

Psychological safety scores were high, with 83% of staff indicating they were comfortable sharing information about what does and does not work in our school. Leadership support for teams was also high, with 93% of staff indicating that leaders were supportive of instructional decisions made by teaching teams.

The vast majority of staff indicated that school leaders communicate important information effectively and are knowledgeable about what is happening in the school.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	3.8%
Graduate	11.5%
Graduate Certificate	3.8%
Bachelor Degree	46.2%
Advanced Diploma	26.9%
No Qualifications Listed	7.7%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	32
Teaching Staff (FTE)	23.8
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	15
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	11.5
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal

To foster a sense of belonging and connection amongst students, families, our Parish and the wider community.

Intended Outcomes

That collaborative parent and community partnerships enhance student learning.

That students and school families build a strong connection to our school and Parish community.

Achievements

One of the many things that sets St Thomas More's apart is the strong sense of community that has always been enjoyed by our students, families and Parish community. In 2023, we have continued to foster these strong connections for the benefit of all within our community.

Opportunities for students to experience a sense of community beyond their immediate class group occurred regularly throughout the year. Fortnightly school assemblies and whole school Masses provided our students with an opportunity to come together and celebrate as part of our wider school community. These gatherings enhanced students' sense of belonging to school as well as to our Parish community and provided students with an opportunity to celebrate their faith along with their learning successes.

Our extensive student leadership program is a unique feature of St Thomas More Primary School and provides many and varied opportunities for our students to run community activities and make a difference in the wider community:

- Year 6 students, who are all provided with the opportunity to take on an important leadership role in their final year of primary school, lead whole school community initiatives in their nominated area of interest, including Wellbeing, STEM, Sport, Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Sustainability.
- School Captains and Vice School Captains represented our school at community events, welcomed special visitors to our school and led school assemblies and other gatherings.
Year 5 students enjoyed leading our Preps as they modelled our school values of respect, integrity, service and empathy.

- Students in Year 5 who were passionate about national and local Reconciliation were provided with the opportunity to join the F.I.R.E. (Friends Igniting Reconciliation Education) Carriers team. This team took an active role in orchestrating The Great Book Swap to raise funds for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.
- Leadership opportunities for students in Year 4 were expanded to offer involvement in leading social justice initiatives through St Vincent de Paul. Our Mini Vinnies team were responsible for communicating and promoting the Winter and Christmas appeals to support those in need in the wider community.
- Class-based leadership positions throughout the school included membership on the Green Team, Student Representative Council (SRC) and Japanese language leader and afforded these students with an opportunity to make a difference within our school community.

Our School Camp program provided a wonderful opportunity for connection, learning and the building of resilience in our Year 3-6 students. These students all participated in an adventure camp experience in 2023, with the Yr 3/4s visiting the Ranch in Boneo and Yr 5/6s heading to Camp Marysville. We were very proud of the way our students represented our school during these programs and embraced the learning that was offered through these valuable camp experiences.

Community connections were also fostered through a range of sporting events. Year 3-6 students competed at our annual STM Swimming Carnival, Cross Country and Athletics events which promoted school spirit and a sense of connection to our community. Students who achieved top results in these events were then provided with the opportunity to represent our school at the district, division, regional and state level competitions. The Summer and Winter Lightning Premiership inter-school sporting competitions also provided our Senior students with an opportunity to try their hand at a range of other sports and compete with students from neighbouring schools.

Our commitment to community extended beyond our school, as we reached out to support local initiatives and contribute positively to the wider community. Our value of 'service' was lived out in our community as our students supported the work of Caritas, Catholic Mission, the Indigenous Literacy Foundation and St Vincent de Paul.

Many and varied opportunities were also available for parents to connect with other members of our school community. These included opportunities to assist in classroom learning programs, accompany students on excursions and participate in parent social events. Parents were also invited to share their knowledge and expertise to enhance student learning through inquiry units of work.

Our St Thomas More Parents Association continued to be a wonderful asset to our school community throughout 2023. This dedicated group of parents planned, organised and ran a wide range of activities to build community throughout the year. These included our Prep Play in the Park, Buddy Family Night, STM Disco and end of year Colour Fun Run. The PA

major fundraising event also brought our parent community together for a very enjoyable night of connection and fun in our school gymnasium.

Parent Satisfaction

MACSSIS Parent Survey data showed that families' perceptions of the social and learning climate of the school was high. 100% of respondents indicated that they felt welcome when they entered the school and 96% indicated that school leaders and teachers were approachable. In relation to school communication, 79% of parents indicated that they were satisfied with the timeliness, frequency, and quality of communication between the school and families. 88% of families indicated that they felt comfortable reaching out to the school for support. Families' perceptions of how well the school matches their child's developmental needs were also extremely positive. Over 85% of parents indicated that classroom learning experiences were motivating, that they were meeting the needs of their children and that they were preparing their child effectively for the following year

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.stmmtlza.catholic.edu.au