



# St Thomas More's School

## Mount Eliza

2022

## Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 1822

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## Minimum Standards Attestation

**NOTE:** The School's financial performance information has been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)

## Governing Authority Report

In 2022, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) delivered its inaugural strategic plan, *MACS 2030: Forming lives to enrich the world*.

At the heart of this bold and ambitious strategic plan is a common purpose - "Forming lives of faith, hope and love in the light of Jesus Christ" - that gives MACS and its network of schools a common direction.

This new purpose speaks to the role of our schools as a place for students and their families to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth.

The strategic plan also establishes a common vision, "Every student is inspired and enabled to flourish and enrich the world", and outlines the initiatives that will make our purpose and vision real across four pillars:

- Inspired by faith
- Flourishing learners
- Enabled leaders
- Enriched communities

These four pillars are foundational to the distinctive educational experiences we offer. Our common purpose and vision will guide and sustain the high-quality Catholic education our 16,000 dedicated staff continue to provide to the 113,000 young people in our care.

Alongside the strategic plan, School Advisory Councils are now in place to engage parents, communities and parishes in the life of the school and provide support to principals on school matters. Combined with a strong focus on Working Together in Mission with our Parish Priests, this will ensure that we unite around our common purpose.

Enrolments continue to increase in the growth areas of Melbourne's north and west where MACS opened two new primary schools. MACS was also excited to welcome a well-established combined level primary/secondary school in Malvern into our organisation.

We are very grateful for the support we have received from some 300 school communities throughout 2022. 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

Edward Simons

Acting 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**

In our parish school community, we model the teachings of Christ through compassionate and positive relationships. We provide a sense of belonging and develop brave learners, spiritually, socially and academically.

### **Our Key Values**

**Respect:** Treating others the way you would like to be treated

**Integrity:** Doing the right thing, even when it's hard or when no one is looking.

**Service:** Caring for those in need and for all of God's creation

**Empathy:** Understanding the feelings of others and acting with compassion

## 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 blocks where classrooms are spacious, bright and welcoming. In addition to these, the school has a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) room, a well-stocked library, a multi-purpose area, a visual arts area and music 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. These include a huge grassed oval, outdoor basketball courts, two adventure playgrounds and plenty of shaded spaces for imaginative play and relaxation.

In 2022, there were 268 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. At St Thomas More we identify ourselves as a community of learners where all students are personally known, encouraged and challenged by a dedicated, caring staff. In 2022, staff numbers totalled thirty-three, with twenty-one teaching staff and twelve non-teaching staff, including eight learning support officers, two administration officers and our Deputy Principal and Principal.

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 we strive to provide the best possible education for every student, within a Catholic framework. Through our 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.

## Principal's Report

It was a pleasure to once again lead the St Thomas More school community as Principal in 2022. St Thomas More 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 smaller school community, students at St Thomas More are all known 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.

After two very challenging years, heavily impacted by COVID restrictions, it was wonderful to see our school return to normal as the 2022 school year progressed. We were delighted to again be able to open our doors to our parent community and to be able to regularly come together as a school community to celebrate at Masses and assemblies.

The 2022 school year began with preparations for our School Review, which was held at the end of Term 1. During this time, staff worked closely with school leaders, using the School Improvement Rubrics, to complete a thorough self-assessment and reflection process. We were delighted by the outcome of our School Review, which was extremely affirming, and pleased to have new goals and a clear direction for ongoing school improvement over the next four years.

Development of our new School Improvement Plan (SIP) and 2022 Annual Action Plan (AAP) followed the School Review. Our new SIP and AAP reflected the recommendations of the reviewer, while remaining closely aligned with the values inherent in our school vision. Our dedicated staff worked throughout the year to meet the goals of the new AAP, continuing their relentless focus on improving teaching and learning in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for every child at St Thomas More.

In 2022, the school also worked closely with the staff at BSPN Architecture to finalise plans for a major refurbishment of our Prep Building. We are delighted by the outcome of this work. These newly designed facilities, consisting of beautiful light-filled classrooms, spacious break out areas, cosy reading nooks and ready access to the outdoor environment, will provide our youngest students with contemporary learning spaces that will meet their needs for many years to come. The building program commenced at the end of 2022 and is expected to be complete by the beginning of Term 2 2023.

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

Yours sincerely,

Martine Vergaen

Principal

## Catholic Identity and Mission

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

Support students to form 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 School, we are committed to following the Catholic Social Teachings and making a difference in the world by being champions of change. Throughout 2022, we continued to develop social justice initiatives that are linked to our curriculum and are relevant to the context of our students' learning. By embedding social justice initiatives into our integrated Inquiry/Religious Education units, we are able to provide our students with opportunities to take further action and make a difference in the world.

One of the ways we achieve this is through fundraising initiatives that allow our students to respond to the needs of others in the wider world. Our students take an active role in planning and executing these initiatives, which not only provide valuable support to those in need, but also help to build a sense of empathy and compassion among our students.

As life in schools moved towards a return to normal, post-COVID, our school was able to engage again in face to face whole school Masses and liturgies for occasions such as the beginning of the school year, our saint's feast day, Advent and Christmas. These events serve as a powerful tool to help build connections between the Catholic culture of the school and the students' lives. The school remained committed to providing opportunities for our students to connect with their faith and to celebrate together as a school community.

The commitment of the staff at our school to the Pedagogy of Encounter has been unwavering, and this is reflected in the rich units of work they have planned to deepen our students' understanding and thinking through recontextualisation. The integration of Religious Education and Inquiry lessons has been an ongoing process of revision and improvement, as teachers strive to enhance their skills and provide the best learning experience for our students. The use of "I can" statements and rubrics has proven to be an effective tool for accurately measuring students' progress and helping them to self-reflect and identify their next steps. By working collaboratively in teams, our teachers have been able to design assessment tasks that align with the Religious Education Achievement Standards and provide a comprehensive overview of each student's learning journey. As we continue to refine our approach to teaching and learning, we remain committed to providing our students with the best possible education and empowering them to grow as learners and individuals.

At our school, the Sacraments play a significant role in nurturing each child's faith journey. This year, our Year Three students prepared for the Sacrament of Reconciliation in collaboration with the parish. The preparation process was an enriching experience for our students, as they deepened their understanding of forgiveness and the importance of seeking reconciliation, and linked this to their learning about Reconciliation with the Indigenous community. Furthermore,



our Year Three students also undertook preparation for the Sacrament of Eucharist, where they learned about the significance of the Eucharist in Catholic tradition.

In Term Two, our Year Six students received the Sacrament of Confirmation in a ceremony presided over by Bishop Tony Ireland. Our students were fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in an off-site Reflection Day, which allowed them to reflect on the significance of the Sacrament of Confirmation and the role it plays in their faith journey. The visit from Bishop Tony was a memorable experience for our students, and they were deeply moved by the words of wisdom and encouragement he imparted to them.

In 2022, our school placed a particular focus on deepening the staff's use of prayer in the classroom through a series of professional development sessions. The goal was to enhance the use of prayer as a tool for supporting our students' spiritual development and growth. As part of this initiative, both students and staff were surveyed to gather feedback and identify areas for improvement.

The professional development sessions proved to be highly beneficial, and our teachers were able to incorporate a greater range of prayer experiences into their daily classroom routines. By incorporating prayer into daily activities, our students were given opportunities to reflect, connect with their faith, and develop a deeper understanding of their beliefs. We look forward to building on this momentum and continuing to deepen our use of prayer in the classroom.

#### VALUE ADDED

A sense of social justice is strongly promoted through the school's fundraising and charitable works. During 2022, 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 events such as our Footy Day Gold Coin Appeal

Special Liturgical and Sacramental activities included:

- Year Six Retreat Day to Don Bosco Retreat Centre in Lysterfield
- Preps Prayers in Pyjamas evening
- 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

## Learning and Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### **Goal**

To improve student outcomes in numeracy & literacy

To further develop teacher content & pedagogical knowledge & confidence

#### **Intended Outcome**

That staff will have a shared understanding of what constitutes quality teaching of writing

That the school will have an explicit statement of what constitutes quality literacy teaching

### Achievements

Following two years of disrupted learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2022 proved to be a very positive, uninterrupted year, onsite. Throughout the year, our teaching and learning team maintained a strong focus on developing a shared understanding of what constitutes quality teaching of writing.

Leaders recognised the need to adopt a whole school approach to teaching spelling aligned with current research and best practice. Professional learning via the University of Canberra resulted in implementation of a consistent approach to spelling, across Foundation to Year 6. A scope and sequence for spelling and word study was developed.

Continuing our partnership with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), consultants were engaged to further build teacher knowledge of the writing curriculum. Thorough use of Victorian Curriculum documents detailing Literacy learning progression was embedded in collaborative planning, and moderation and professional dialogue about writing assessment was refined.

MACS staff worked closely with learning leaders to strengthen knowledge of the teaching and learning cycle to align inquiry-based learning areas of History, Science, Health, Geography and Media Arts, with the writing curriculum. This resulted in our students writing for authentic purpose and audience, and therefore contributed to a higher level of student engagement in Literacy. Classroom teachers undertook the task of integrating Media Arts curriculum into classroom programs for the first time as evidenced in our school Art Show.

Informed by current research at Melbourne University, criterion referenced rubrics were developed by learning leaders and trialed by teachers. Use of rubrics in the area of writing enriched dialogue during one to one learning conferences in Years 3-6. Students began to track their own progress in Writing and articulate their next steps for learning.

Further opportunities to learn from Melbourne University benefited our junior school teachers through the Literacy Pathways program. Foundation and Year 1/2 teachers refined their practice in the area of oral language, an essential building block for all Literacy. Subsequent adjustments to practice in our junior school complemented the implementation of a systematic approach to phonics in Foundation and Year 1.

Student leadership is a prominent feature of the senior school program at St Thomas More, and in 2022, the school continued to provide opportunities for all Year 6 students to lead their nominated area of interest. The Unleashing Personal Potential (UPP) incursion ignited enthusiasm for effective student leadership in areas of Wellbeing, STEM, Sport and

Sustainability. Positions of School Captain and Vice School Captain were voted upon by peers. Year 5 students enjoyed leading their Prep buddies by modeling our school values of respect, integrity, service and empathy. Other leadership positions throughout the school, beginning in Foundation, included membership on the Green Team, Student Representative Council (SRC) and Japanese language leader.

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. Additional high-frequency classroom vocabulary and phrases were introduced and successfully added to classroom dialogue.

Learning in specialist areas of Physical Education (PE), STEM, Art and Music resulted in a range of exciting opportunities. PE learning was showcased on our athletics day at the Mornington athletics track. Students benefited from facilities for long jump, running, hurdles and discus. STEM learning was showcased in the Year 5/6 Sustainability Expo where parents and the wider community were invited to view student designed solutions to mitigate climate change. Younger students were active in the STEM area through their involvement in our community garden project which utilises the school's large outdoor space. To showcase learning in Visual Arts, the school gym was transformed into a gallery walk, displaying a wide range of art pieces created by students from Foundation to Year 6. Music lessons extended to the casting, rehearsal and performance of Madagascar Jr. Our performers sang and danced for a 'sell out' audience over two consecutive nights at the Frankston High School Theatre. Students thrived on these opportunities and flourished as they returned to a typical school calendar of events after the spate of 2020-2021 COVID school closures.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

NAPLAN data for 2022 indicates that Year 3 students at St Thomas More were performing above the state mean in Numeracy, Reading and Grammar and Punctuation. A steady increase has also been noted in the percentage of students in the top two bands for Reading and Numeracy at this level since 2019.

Year 5 students at St Thomas More performed close to the state mean in areas of Numeracy, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. This cohort performed above the state mean in Reading with almost 50% of Reading results falling in the top two bands.

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.

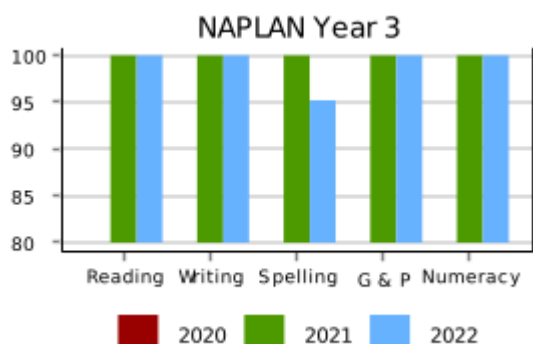
Intervention programs that were offered in 2022 to support struggling students included the Fountas and Pinnell Levelled Literacy Intervention Reading program, which targeted students requiring support in reading comprehension. MultiLit programs, including the Reading Tutor Program and MiniLit, focused on developing effective decoding skills in struggling readers. A Mathematics tutor was also employed to take small focus groups of students in Years 1-6.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2020	2021	2020 – 2021 Changes	2022	2021 – 2022 Changes
	%			%	
	*		*		
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 03 Numeracy	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 03 Reading	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 03 Spelling	-	100.0	-	95.2	-4.8
YR 03 Writing	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	-	92.3	-	100.0	7.7
YR 05 Numeracy	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Reading	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Spelling	-	88.5	-	95.3	6.8
YR 05 Writing	-	92.6	-	95.3	2.7

\* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

\*\* Data cannot be reported for this year as the number of students that sat the test was below 5 and the data has been suppressed for privacy reasons in accordance with the ACARA NAPLAN data reporting provisions.

\*\*\* No students sat the NAPLAN tests in this year level and in one or both of the relevant years.



## Student Wellbeing

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### **Goal**

To develop in students a strong sense of self in relation to others.

#### **Intended Outcomes**

That students' strong sense of self in relation to others will promote their emotional wellbeing and engagement in their learning.

### 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. 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 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 issues. This information allowed teachers to meet individual wellbeing needs of their students from the very beginning of the year.

Wellbeing programs continued to be implemented in a sequential and cohesive way throughout the school. Our association with The Resilience Project continued and all classes undertook a Resilience Project lesson each week. Teachers also implemented some aspects of the Bounce Back, Catching On and Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships programs. 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.

Throughout 2022, 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, 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.

Our School Wellbeing Leader provided individualised support for students and families as needed throughout the year. The Wellbeing Leader analysed schoolyard incident data and communicated patterns of concern to staff. She regularly conducted student check-ins on the yard and made class visits to provide support to individual students. Wellbeing articles were regularly included in the school newsletter to support parents as they navigated childhood wellbeing issues.

A Wellbeing Team consisting of seven staff members met regularly to provide additional support for staff and students. Teachers followed established procedures for referring students to this

team for extra Wellbeing support. The team proposed, monitored and evaluated the strategies used for each student who needed additional support. The services of a clinical psychologist continued to support the wellbeing of students and their families.

A student safety survey was conducted with the Year 5/6 students during Terms One and Four. When the data was analysed, it revealed that the students were feeling safe and connected at school. Students also indicated that they felt supported by teachers and peers at school. The data affirmed the efforts taken by the school to support student well-being throughout the year.

In Term Three of 2022, the students in Years 3 to 6 also undertook the 'STM Student Voice Audit Tool'. It was implemented to ascertain students' perception of their opportunities for voice and agency about their learning and the things that matter to them, so that they can contribute to making school a better place for learning for all students. The positive data received from the students showed that they feel that the teachers listen to them and that they are able to take action to solve their problems. The student's responses showed that they were very happy with their friends, teachers, environment and their learning.

Areas for improvement indicated by students in the survey data related to increased opportunities to work with other classes and further improve our environment. Some students also raised concerns that at times the way students treated each other could improve. These issues were listened to and acted upon. Greater opportunities for class collaboration and working on enhancing our environment were provided for students. An increased focus in classrooms on our school values also resulted, and fortnightly Assembly Acknowledgements were put in place to celebrate students who truly lived our school values in their words and actions.

#### VALUE ADDED

- Wellbeing lessons from the Resilience Project 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
- 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 Slime Run, promoted a strong sense of belonging to school

- School camps provided opportunities for students to build connections and develop resilience
- Student wellbeing continued to be supported by all staff members, including School Leaders, Teachers and Learning Support Officers
- Students with high needs were supported by our School Councillor
- 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 have a strong sense of belonging to school and feel like they are valued members of our community. 82% of students indicated that the energy at school was positive and 81% recognised that adults in the school were very supportive of them.

Our strong focus on student leadership was also recognised by 98% of students. Continuing to enhance the effectiveness of our leadership structures, and providing increased opportunities for students to have an impact on their school, will be an ongoing focus in 2023.

## 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 an sms 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	88.6%
Y02	88.9%
Y03	89.1%
Y04	87.7%
Y05	87.5%
Y06	85.3%
Overall average attendance	87.8%



## Child Safe Standards

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

St Thomas More Parish Primary School continues to hold the care, safety and wellbeing of students as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. St Thomas More Parish Primary School acknowledges that creating a child-safe environment is a dynamic process that involves active participation and a shared responsibility from all within the school community.

Throughout 2022, our school has sought to further embed its child safety strategies through the ongoing review and implementation of policies and practices. Professional boundaries have been reinforced with all staff members and volunteers, as has obligations regarding the protection and reporting of allegations or disclosures of abuse. We take into account relevant legislative requirements within the state of Victoria, including the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order No. 870.

### Achievements

- Regular presentations and information provided for staff on the school's Child Safety strategy with a focus on classroom and student management, duty of care, reporting requirements and the new Child Safety Standards.
- Regular meetings of the Child Safety Team and Student Wellbeing Team to identify and discuss child safety concerns.
- Regular meetings of the Child Safety Team to monitor compliance with the eleven new Child Safety Standards.
- All Staff and School Advisory Council members review and sign the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct annually.
- Student representatives involved in the annual review of the 'STM Child Friendly Code of Conduct'.
- All staff complete the Victorian Department of Education and Training online Mandatory Reporting modules annually.
- Display of, and access to, 'PROTECT, Identifying and Responding to all Forms of Abuse in Victorian School' resources for staff.
- Child Safety Information and concerns, including the implementation of the eleven new Child Safety Standards, discussed at School Advisory Council Meetings.
- Use of Passtab to induct and digitally track all visitors and volunteers to our school, maintain Working With Children Check records and ensure agreement with the school's Code of Conduct.
- Child safety risk assessments completed prior to all school excursions and camps.
- Continued implementation of essential child safety protocols when recruiting and inducting new staff.
- Regular wellbeing lessons ensure ongoing education is provided for students about healthy and respectful relationships.

## Leadership

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

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

In preparation for our 2022 School Review, staff worked closely with school leaders, using the School Improvement Rubrics, to complete a thorough self-assessment and reflection process. Our School Review, conducted at the end of Term 1, was extremely affirming and also provided a clear direction for ongoing school improvement over the next four years.

- The School Leadership Team met regularly throughout 2022 to monitor and plan for the implementation of the new School Improvement Plan and Annual Action Plan.
- Biannual review meetings continued for staff in 2022. These meetings used the AITSL Standards together with school-based initiatives to provide feedback, set goals and determine future direction. These meetings also provided an important opportunity to check in with each staff member in relation to their own wellbeing.
- A weekly staff memo that ensured clear internal communication was distributed to staff prior to the beginning of each school week.
- Professional Learning Team meetings were held twice-weekly with a focus on expert learning and teaching.
- Staff professional learning continued in the area of Writing, with a particular focus on Early Years Literacy, with staff involved in a range of MACS Professional Learning Days.
- Resources to support learning were continually updated in response to requests from staff as they strove for best practice in learning and teaching.
- School Leadership Team members attended relevant network days and external professional learning relevant to their roles.
- Individual staff were also involved in specific professional learning suited to their developmental needs and the needs of their students.
- Learning Walks and their purpose were introduced to staff and clear protocols for Learning Walks at STM were established.
- Learning Leaders conducted timetabled Learning Walks during Writing sessions

- Leaders use insights from Learning Walks to guide their leadership practice and these insights were shared with staff.

**EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2022

Staff professional learning throughout 2022 continued to focus largely on exemplary teaching in Reading, Writing and Spelling. MACS Literacy Consultants, together with our Learning and Teaching Team, supported staff as they refined their practice in this area, ensuring an evidence-based approach in all aspects of literacy teaching. To further support this improvement work, additional whole staff Professional Learning opportunities focused on the introduction of Learning Walks and the use of effective Feedback Tools in Writing.

Other Staff Professional Learning included:

- Mandatory Reporting & Child Safety Training
- OH&S Training
- First Aid and Anaphylaxis Management
- Explicit Teaching in the Early Years: Building teacher knowledge, capacity and agency
- Teachers as Co-Learners Languages Workshops
- Nihongo (Japanese) Workshops
- NGV PL for Teachers: Encountering the Sacred Through Art
- FRG Ministry - Assorted Encounter Workshops focusing on Prayer
- Mission Formation Workshops
- User B Training
- Network Days for Leaders in RE, Wellbeing, Learning Diversity & Learning and Teaching
- Individual staff sponsored study

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2022	23
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$800

**TEACHER SATISFACTION**

MACSSIS Survey data for staff showed a very positive school climate and quality staff-leadership relationships. 88% of staff 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.

All staff indicated that school leaders communicate important information effectively and are knowledgeable about what is happening in the school. 85% of staff also felt that school

leaders were knowledgeable about learning and teaching practices and that leaders communicated a clear vision for learning and teaching at our school.

Psychological safety scores were high, with 100% of staff indicating that they felt comfortable experimenting with a new approach to their work in order to improve performance, even if the approach might not work.

#### TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	83.4%
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#### ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	81.8%
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#### TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	7.1%
Graduate	21.4%
Graduate Certificate	7.1%
Bachelor Degree	71.4%
Advanced Diploma	50.0%
No Qualifications Listed	7.1%

#### STAFF COMPOSITION

Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	29.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	19.4
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	14.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	9.1
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

## Community Engagement

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### **Goal**

Develop authentic learning partnerships with families and the community that improve outcomes for students.

#### **Intended Outcome**

That collaborative parent and community partnerships support student learning.

### Achievements

Our strong, connected community is something we are very proud of at St Thomas More and something we were excited to begin rebuilding at the start of 2022, post the lockdowns of the previous two years. Opening our doors once again to parents was therefore a high priority at the beginning of the year.

While restrictions still applied to onsite indoor community events in Term One, we were able to provide parents with opportunities to connect outdoors and offsite. One of these initiatives was our fortnightly visit from the Brew Up Bar Coffee Van. Each fortnight, parents from a different year level were invited to join us for a hot beverage outdoors and all loved the opportunity to reconnect. Our Parent's Association Annual Buddy Family Night was also a great success and provided new families with the opportunity to get to know others in our community.

Whole school events for students returned in 2022. Fortnightly school assemblies and whole school Masses once again provided our students from Prep-Year 6 with an opportunity to come together and celebrate as a school. These gatherings enhanced students' sense of belonging to school as well as to our Parish community.

We were delighted when other special events could also return to our school calendar. In Term One, our hugely popular annual school disco, organised by the Parents Association, was again able to go ahead in the gym. To ensure COVID Safe practices were in place, this was broken into two sessions, Prep - Year 2 and Year 3-6. These fun-filled discos were attended by over 200 students.

Sporting events returned to STM, with our Swimming Carnival, Cross Country and Athletics events all a highlight for our Year 3-6 students. Our School Camp program was also able to go ahead uninterrupted in 2022, with camps to Forest Edge, Sovereign Hill and a pre-camp afternoon to Hedge End Maze providing wonderful opportunities for connection, learning and the building of resilience.

Sacramental celebrations returned to normal in 2022, with families all able to come together to celebrate these very special milestones in their children's faith journey.

Two of the largest community events of the year were our incredible Senior School Production of Madagascar Jr and our hugely successful STM Art Show. Madagascar Jr was performed at the Frankston High School Theatre over two nights to a sold out audience and showcased the wonderful musical talents of our Year 5/6 students. The gym was transformed in October for our STM Art Show where the creative works of many budding artists were on display. The feedback from all who attended these wonderful community events was overwhelmingly positive.

Throughout the year a range of incursions and excursions took place to support the learning programs in classrooms. Students visited Mt Eliza Village, Frankston Arts Centre, Shoreham Foreshore and Federation Square. The Green Hats incursion provided students from Prep - Year 6 with an opportunity to work together to create amazing structures with wooden planks. This was so successful that it led to the start of our weekly Build Club.

Other special days that supported student learning throughout the year included Japanese Day and our annual Book Day. Special visitors on these days included Taiko Drummers, and children's authors, Felice Arena and Mark Carthew.

The year ended with three very special community events - a visit from Kaboom Sports, the PA Slimefest and our Musical Soiree. These all provided unique opportunities for the school and wider community to celebrate the end of a wonderful year spent learning together.

## 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 enter 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.

## Future Directions

In 2023, we will continue to focus on building a culture of learning where every student and staff member is empowered, challenged and supported to achieve continuous growth and improvement. This improvement journey will be underpinned by contemporary educational theory and practice.

Our ongoing focus on quality teaching across the school will continue with the following intended outcomes:

- That quality teaching practices are consistently implemented from P-6 in the area of writing
- That teachers have a strong knowledge of the Mathematics curriculum and the progressions of learning

We will continue to strengthen the learning confidence of all students by building student agency in learning. This will involve:

- Providing regular opportunities for students to reflect on their learning through targeted teacher-to-student feedback, peer feedback and student-to-teacher feedback
- Developing inquiry units that promote metacognition and student voice

We will broaden the current staff feedback process to include all teachers in systematic and consistent opportunities for peer observation, modelling and coaching. This will involve:

- Regular learning walks to assist teachers to improve their practice by observing colleagues and receiving feedback from peers and leaders
- Teams of teachers regularly examining their practice to improve their impact on student learning through action research