



St Francis' School

Nathalia

2022

Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 1823

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Contact Details

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E NUMBER	E3051

Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Matthew Knight, attest that St Francis' School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in *the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2022 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards as prescribed in both Ministerial Orders in effect in 2022:
 - Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools, in Semester 1, 2022;
 - Ministerial Order No.1359 - Implementing the Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises, in Semester 2, 2022.

06/03/2023

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

Governing Authority Report

The 2022 Catholic Education Week theme “Tell the Good News” expresses both the joys and challenges of offering Catholic education across the Sandhurst diocese.

We continue to be committed to providing contemporary and innovative learning environments that value diversity, promote care, respect and co-operation. In 2022 our schools diligently responded to the transition back to continued face to face learning against the disruptive backdrop of the previous two years. This transition was exacerbated by staff and student absences due to COVID 19 quarantine requirements. However, school communities demonstrated outstanding resilience to find creative and sustainable pathways to ensure continuity of learning was maintained and the Good News continued to be heralded.

Our changed governance structure continues to mature, with both CES Ltd and SCECEC Ltd committed to ensuring the highest quality student outcomes in a safe and nurturing environment. A future focus that offers direction and solidarity will find expression in the development of a diocesan-wide Strategic Plan, 2023-2027.

Partnerships between schools and parishes remain a priority as parish priests continue their vital leadership role in support of the spiritual and pastoral needs of the school community. The sacramental life of both school and parish expresses and invites participation in the evangelizing mission that brings Good News to all.

Significant investment in new learning facilities and school infrastructure through the Catholic Capital Grants Program and the hard work of our school communities have ensured the provision of high-quality learning and teaching facilities for both staff and students.

The nation-wide shortage of teachers has had an impact on all schools, demanding new and innovative ways to attract and retain high quality and committed Catholic educators. Strategic initiatives will prioritize workforce placements that are sustainable and ongoing with particular attention given to our remote and smaller communities.

I continue to be extremely grateful for the commitment and professionalism that is clearly identified by the efforts throughout 2022 of personnel in our schools and in the Catholic Education Office. They continue to work tirelessly for the students and families, telling the Good News every day.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Desmond

Executive Director

Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd

Vision and Mission

Our Identity:

St Francis' school is a welcoming community striving to live the Franciscan tradition of Peace and Joy.

Our Vision:

St Francis' Nathalia strives to:

- Provide a positive learning environment with a commitment to being safe, responsible and caring learners
- Build a community with a sense of responsibility to create a sustainable future for God's world.
- Build an inclusive community that fosters respectful relationships for all.
- Build and nurture a stimulating learning environment where all are supported in reaching their full potential.

School Overview

St. Francis School provides a dynamic, student-centred approach to education for children living in and around the Nathalia area.

From our foundation in 1961 by the Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood, St Francis School has provided an education, which has at its heart the Franciscan values of peace and joy, justice, integrity and respect for all creation. With a focus on the development of the whole person; intellectual, spiritual, social, physical and emotional development, St. Francis' school seeks to create an environment which enhances learning, nurtures young people and empowers them to live the Catholic faith in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

St. Francis' school is committed to providing our young people, our future, with exemplary educational experiences and opportunities that foster their many and diverse gifts and talents and meet their many and diverse developmental needs.

In meeting this challenge, we seek to engage all children in developing a hunger for the learning journey through our commitment to:

- High expectations that promote learning and responsibility;
- Learning which caters for the uniqueness and giftedness of the whole person;
- Each person having an innate and continual capacity to learn;
- Ensure learning is meaningful, purposeful and relevant to our lives;

And most importantly;

- Maintaining close relationships between students, teachers, parents and parish community.
- As a Catholic school, at St Francis we are proud of our heritage and faith traditions.

Principal's Report

The 2022 school year was a mixture of challenge, expectation and excitement as we completed a major building project, continued to acknowledge the ever present COVID considerations and were drawn together to respond to the effects of floods in the area. The strength, compassion and willingness to help and support each other in times of need is a testament to the school community.

There have been many achievements at St Francis Primary this year. The well being of our school community was a key focus during this time, with parents, children and teachers feeling supported during these difficult times. St Francis staff made a purposeful effort to reach out and connect with all families and find imaginative and inclusive ways to support families during the peak of COVID and the natural disasters.

It was another year, where our wonderful staff came together during this time to support each other and our school families. The dedication to our school community in times of adversity, uncertainty and change is a credit to everyone.

We welcomed Fr. Jophin Joy to our school community and the St Mary's Parish mid-year, and look forward to establishing a strong working relationship with him.

Leadership

Student Leadership: Our students were offered opportunities to develop their unique leadership skills through opportunities such as; ANZAC Day services, Remembrance Day community ceremony, joint Senior Student Leadership teams and Grade 6 students had involvement in Youth Engagement, Mentoring Program (YEMP) during Term 1 & Term 4. Even with the restrictions in place this year, it is evident that St Francis has prepared many students to be strong leaders for the future.

School Improvement

PIVOT: Pivot allows teachers and school leaders to develop professionally through carefully designed, confidential, evidence-based surveys, services and reports. Students completed surveys about teaching and learning in their classroom, with the data used as a diagnostic and evaluative tool, and support planning at unit and school level.

This year we invested in a weekly student well being check in thorough PIVOT, with student responses allowing our Pastoral Well-being team to address any individual and collective concerns. Lorraine worked with staff and students 1:1 and in small groups to respond to and address any of their concerns.

Student Placement: We had a number of pre-service student teachers completing their professional placement this year.

Capital Works & Grants

Victorian Capital Grant: We were excited to finish our St Francis Learning Centre build this year. The project was principally funded through a Victorian Grant of \$1.206 million dollars and the St Francis school community contributed a further \$160,000 towards the project. The final plan encompassed 4 classrooms, 2 meeting rooms, kitchen, bathroom, outdoor undercover area, gathering and assembly spaces. The students moved into the space mid-August and the school vegetable garden was also updated in the process.

Shade Sail Grant: The school erected a Spanline roof in response to the Shade Sail grant this year. The space will be further developed in the 2023 year to use as an indigenous learning area.

Grounds: The entrance to the school was repaired and grass replaced as part of the building works to ensure a consistent appearance between St Francis Primary and St Mary of the Angels College. We will also be installing new school signage at the entrance of the school.

Learning and Teaching

Learning and Teaching: The learning and teaching at St Francis continue to show growth, especially with some Year 5 NAPLAN & Year 7 NAPLAN (Last year's Grade 6 students). The school continues to invest in Learning Support Officers to provide further support to students with additional learning needs, use contemporary evidence based practices and assess student data in a measured and meaningful way.

Spelling: This year we were part of a research project on Spelling with Catholic Education. Staff conducted professional learning with Tessa De Fern and implemented strategies to enhance student learning in this area. Data was collected and analysed to consider the effectiveness of the practice. We will continue to be part of this initiative in 2023.

MiniLit: We continued with MiniLit sessions for selected students to enhance their literacy skills. There has been positive growth shown during the year with this intervention continuing in 2023. This year we also implemented MacqLit, aimed at providing intervention in the Literacy domain for our senior students.

Governance

Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited (CES Ltd) 2022 saw a review of the operations and structure of Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited. There were a number of new appointments in the office and the organisational structure was provided to all schools.

Child Safe: Practices have been identified and enacted at St Francis; a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at St Francis primary School against sexual and physical abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes. Throughout the year staff developed their understanding of changing legislation and continued to maintain VRQA requirements in line with the Child Safe standards. We actively promoted our school requirements to families via the newsletter, website and through digital and printed materials. Staff continued to review and implement the Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships curriculum in 2022.

Complispace: The Diocese of Sandhurst and Catholic Schools within have employed the services of 'Complispace' – an online management system for school policies & procedures, OH&S requirements, governance etc. We maintained our VRQA requirements through CompliSpace. We also developed our own Staff Learning System, where all professional development is recorded in line with VRQA requirements.

ICON: St Francis moved to the Integrated Catholic Online Network (ICON), which is a collaborative program of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) involving Victorian Catholic schools and the four Catholic Education Offices.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- RE Accreditation for staff
- Support staff planning of RE curriculum units

Achievements

Accreditation: We had Malinda Rankin complete her RE Accreditation in 2022. This began as a face to face learning experience and quickly moved to an online Video Conference Professional Development.

Sacramental Program: We had 5 children receive their sacrament of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation this year. While we had to delay the sacraments on a number of occasions, St Mary's Parish finally held the celebration for our students in Term 3. Preparation sessions were completed by Veronica Williams in the lead up to the sacraments and I thank Veronica for her expertise and willingness to teach our students and families.

ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day: St Francis held school services to recognise these important days throughout the year. Our students led the ceremonies and those present showed their respect for the sacrifices of all who have served our country so diligently.

St Francis Feast Day: Students participated in activities to mark the feast of St Francis on the first week of Term 4, which coincided with all students back at school. It was lovely to see students engage in further learning about our school's patron saint.

Advent and Christmas: The students ran Advent liturgies on Monday mornings in the lead up to Christmas and the school finished our 2022 year with a Whole School Mass at St Mary's church.

VALUE ADDED

- St Mary's Parish Council - both Catholic Identity Leader and Principal attended and participated in the council meetings.
- 1 staff member completed RE Accreditation
- St Vincent De Paul collections including the Christmas and Winter Appeals.
- Ongoing commitment to CARITAS during Lent.
- National Reconciliation school service.
- Commitment to Acknowledgement of Country at all Masses and assemblies.
- Continued commitment to fly the Australian and Indigenous flags each day.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Whole school Scope and sequence for Inquiry Units
- Spelling Focus - Tessa Daffern Pilot School Project
- Strategies and timelines for curriculum e.g. scope and sequence.

Achievements

Learning and Teaching: The learning and teaching at St Francis continue to show growth, especially with some Year 5 NAPLAN & Year 7 NAPLAN (Last year's Grade 6 students). The school continues to invest in Learning Support Officers to provide further support to students with additional learning needs, use contemporary evidence based practices and assess student data in a measured and meaningful way.

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MiniLit: We continued with MiniLit sessions for selected students to enhance their literacy skills. There has been positive growth shown during the year with this intervention continuing in 2023. This year we also implemented MacqLit, aimed at providing intervention in the Literacy domain for our senior students.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The 2022 school performance data is made up from Year Three & Year Five cohorts.

All Year Three students met the National Minimum standards for 2022 in the Reading, Writing and Grammar & Punctuation domains of the NAPLAN assessments. There was a marked increase in the Year Three Grammar & Punctuation scores moving from 85.7% to 100% from 2021 to 2022.

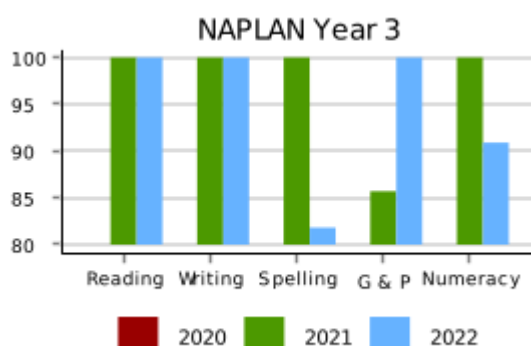
The Year Five data shows a fairly consistent result in the Grammar and Punctuation, Reading and Writing areas of learning, but a decrease in the area of Spelling & Writing. There is a significant increase in students achievement in the area of Spelling from 2021 to 2022.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2020	2021	2020 – 2021 Changes	2022	2021 – 2022 Changes
	%			%	
	*		*		
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	-	85.7	-	100.0	14.3
YR 03 Numeracy	-	100.0	-	90.9	-9.1
YR 03 Reading	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 03 Spelling	-	100.0	-	81.8	-18.2
YR 03 Writing	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	-	100.0	-	93.8	-6.2
YR 05 Numeracy	-	100.0	-	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Reading	-	100.0	-	93.8	-6.2
YR 05 Spelling	-	66.7	-	93.8	27.1
YR 05 Writing	-	100.0	-	87.5	-12.5

* 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

- Continue working on Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships program with new staff and revision for ongoing staff.
- Continue to adhere to Child Safe practises
- Support Family & Community Relationships post COVID

Achievements

The Pastoral Wellbeing team had a strong emphasis on supporting the wellbeing of all in our school community this year. This year we welcomed Lorraine Bain to the Wellbeing (Chaplaincy) role and she worked with families in a range of ways throughout the year. We catered to the needs of all through initiatives conducted by the CARE team, school wellbeing team and in partnership with local community organisations. The mental wellbeing of everyone was acknowledged with Lorraine organising a number of sessions with Kids Helpline for students throughout the school year.

VALUE ADDED

- Embedded teacher practices based on the PBiS Framework and provided students resources of how to implement this in the remote learning home environment.
- Provided Respectful Relationship PD & training for staff.
- Monitored and promoted student attendance at assembly / newsletters and in classrooms.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

The PIVOT survey student results show that there was consistency from 2022 across most reported elements, especially within the areas of Student Behaviour Expectations, Teacher knowing the content they teach, Teacher believes I [students] can succeed in school.

A future area of consideration for the school may be connecting student learning with authentic application to their lives, with the PIVOT results indicating students would like more choice in who they collaborate with during their learning time and the topics of learning during the day.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student non-attendance at school is monitored through SIMON and is followed up through automated SMS or phone contact made with parents to ensure that the student is able to return to school as promptly as possible, and that there are no serious impairments to them returning to school. First contact is completed by administrative staff, followed by the classroom teacher and further correspondence is made by the principal as needed.

Student attendance is consistently promoted at assembly and through the newsletter.

COVID positive cases reported to CESL / DHHS and the school families notified as the school was alerted.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Y01	83.5%
Y02	87.9%
Y03	84.4%
Y04	91.1%
Y05	85.6%
Y06	86.7%
Overall average attendance	86.5%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

St Francis focuses on child safety and student wellbeing by:

- Ensuring we are compliant with V.R.Q.A. prescribed minimum standards for schools.
- Reviewing our V.R.Q.A. Child Safe practices with all key stakeholders.
- Constantly communicating the Child Safe policies, School Child Safety Code of Conduct and the PROTECT documentation.
- Successfully completing Child Safe practices and procedures as part of the V.R.Q.A. review.
- Ensuring strategies are embedded into the organisational culture of child safety and understood by all key stakeholders within the school.
- Establishing and communicating Volunteer induction program requirements.

Achievements

Practices have been identified and enacted at St Francis; a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at St Francis primary School against sexual and physical abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes. Throughout the year staff developed their understanding of changing legislation and continued to maintain V.R.Q.A requirements in line with the Child Safe standards. We actively promoted our school requirements to families via the newsletter, website and through digital and printed materials.

Additionally, 2022 required St Francis to ensure our child safe and cyber safety practices were well understood by all staff, students and families, as we engaged with our students during in the Remote Learning environment. This included frameworks around Video Conferencing sessions (Google Meet / Zoom) which outlined the way these would be carried out to meet our requirements.

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Review and develop School Strategic Directions documentation
- Update Graduate Outcomes
- Develop middle leaders within the school
- Ensure COVID Safe practices across school

Achievements

PIVOT: Pivot allows teachers and school leaders to develop professionally through carefully designed, confidential, evidence-based surveys, services and reports. Students completed surveys about teaching and learning in their classroom, with the data used as a diagnostic and evaluative tool, and support planning at unit and school level.

This year we invested in a weekly student wellbeing check in thorough PIVOT, with student responses allowing our Pastoral Wellbeing team to address any individual and collective concerns. Lorraine worked with staff and students 1:1 and in small groups to respond to and address any of their concerns.

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Grounds: The entrance to the school was repaired and grass replaced as part of the building works to ensure a consistent appearance between St Francis Primary and St Mary of the Angels College. We will also be installing new school signage at the entrance of the school.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2022

- RE Accreditation (Valerie Myers and Malinda Rankin)
- Governance professional learning and meetings (Via Video Conference)
- Pastoral Wellbeing meetings with Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited Wellbeing team (Steve Hicks)

- Principal & Deputy Principal Meetings (Via Video Conferencing)
- R.E.C. Network Meetings
- Child Safe Leader Training
- MiniLit & MacqLit Literacy Training (Interventions)
- Learning Diversity Professional Development
- Numeracy PD and ongoing PLCs throughout the year (via Video Conference)
- Respectful Relationships Rights and Resilience updates.

Number of staff who participated in PL in 2022: 17 Average Expenditure per staff member for PL: \$699.

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2022	17
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$699

TEACHER SATISFACTION

There is much energy, enthusiasm and pride amongst the staff at St Francis School. Working together in such an environment is conducive to the creation of effective teaching and learning practices.

Remote Learning again ensured that staff had to be dynamic, adaptable and flexible in both the delivery of and assessment of student tasks. The PIVOT Staff Well-being survey completed in 2022 showed an Overall agreement score of 84.8% that staff well-being was a strong focus at school, with specific topics of "I can ask my school leaders for help during this time" and "I know who to speak to at my school if I need emotional support" both having 100% agreement amongst staff.

Survey results also showed 100% of staff agreed or strongly agreed that they "felt supported by their colleagues" during Remote Learning, while checking student completed work while on Remote Learning was challenging for some teachers, as reflected in the survey results.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	77.4%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	68.8%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	10.0%
Graduate	10.0%
Graduate Certificate	10.0%
Bachelor Degree	60.0%
Advanced Diploma	20.0%
No Qualifications Listed	20.0%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	14.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	10.4
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	7.1
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Embedding teacher practices based P.B.i.S Framework
- Provide Respectful Relationship training for staff 2022
- Monitor and promote student attendance at assembly/newsletters and in classrooms
- Maintain St Francis CARE team initiatives

Achievements

Pastoral Wellbeing Team: The Pastoral Wellbeing team had a strong emphasis on supporting the wellbeing of all in our school community this year. This year we welcomed Lorraine Bain to the Wellbeing (Chaplaincy) role and she worked with families in a range of ways throughout the year. We catered to the needs of all through initiatives conducted by the CARE team, school wellbeing team and in partnership with local community organisations. The mental wellbeing of everyone was acknowledged with Lorraine organising a number of sessions with Kids Helpline for students throughout the school year.

PARENT SATISFACTION

Parents expressed their gratitude of the school remaining open for children of during the year, in response to COVID protocols and providing learning tasks for children who were unwell or isolating during the year. The ability to support our large number families was commendable to all staff involved.

The Pastoral Wellbeing team had a strong emphasis on supporting the wellbeing of all in our school community this year. This year we welcomed Lorraine Bain to the Wellbeing (Chaplaincy) role and she worked with families in a range of ways throughout the year. We catered to the needs of all through initiatives conducted by the CARE team, school wellbeing team and in partnership with local community organisations. The mental wellbeing of everyone was acknowledged with Lorraine organising a number of sessions with Kids Helpline for students / families throughout the school year.

Parents were enthusiastic to share in their child's learning through the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program, which run in the second half of the 2022 school year. Parents relayed their enjoyment in participating in the learning of these life skills, with positive comments received through email and social media posts. We will continue to engage families with this program in 2023.