

STUDY | PRAYER | SERVICE | COMMUNITY



# 2023

## Annual Report to Community

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## VISION AND VALUES

Our vision is to educate as a welcoming Christian community and develop independent, positive, visible learners.

We strive to –

- foster a safe, caring and happy learning environment in which children are challenged to achieve their full potential in the spirit of Jesus within the Catholic tradition;
- provide a continuing, holistic education striving for excellence in spiritual, academic, social and physical development;
- enable every student to be the best they can be throughout their life;
- invite families to join with staff to educate for participation in Church and world communities, in an atmosphere of belonging, where individuality is respected and justice and equity encouraged;
- prepare children for the challenges at and beyond their education at St Mary's Memorial School.

## CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

St Mary's Memorial School is a Catholic primary school within the Dominican tradition of teaching and spiritual ideals. The four pillars of Dominican life are Prayer, Community, Service and Study. They work together to promote an authentic and flourishing life for each person, for his or her community, and ultimately for the wider community.

Situated in Glenelg, St Mary's Memorial School is a Reception to Year 6 Catholic parish school with a rich history dating back to 1869. Initially led by the Sisters of St Joseph for thirty-four years, before the Dominican Sisters began in 1903, continuing until the appointment of the first lay principal in 1982.

Our school philosophy is deeply influenced by the traditions of both the Josephite and Dominican Sisters. We hold a deep respect for the uniqueness of each child, emphasising justice and equity in all our programs and teaching methods.

St Mary's Memorial is an inclusive and welcoming community, enrolling Reception students from a variety of Kindergartens, Preschools, and Early Learning Centres. Glenelg Parish, which includes St Mary's Memorial and Our Lady of Grace School, Glengowrie, is cared for by the Diocesan Priest and Parish Leadership Team. Father John Herd, the current Parish Priest, resides in Glenelg and serves as the President of the School Board for both schools. The Parish Sacramental Program integrates the efforts of both Catholic schools with the Parish Leadership Team.

In response to the growing need for value-based education, St Mary's Memorial is dedicated to empowering students to become spiritual, moral, and well-integrated individuals in a rapidly changing world. We emphasise kindness, respect, courtesy, and a sense of responsibility towards oneself, others, and the community.

Currently, St Mary's Memorial School has 16 single year-level classes from Reception to Year 6. Our teachers collaborate in teams to plan and implement explicit, consistent and comprehensive teaching and learning experiences at each year level.

We place a strong emphasis on faith development and community responsiveness, which involves a mutual commitment from children, parents, staff, and the parish community. St Mary's Memorial School strives to foster positive attitudes and prepare students for a life of purpose, fulfillment, and meaning.

## LEARNING AND TEACHING

St Mary's Memorial School are committed to the goal of ensuring core skills in numeracy and literacy are explicitly taught equipping the students with the tools they need to be independent and successful learners.

We believe the best learning environment is one where a sense of belonging is valued, excellence in effort and achievement is recognised, and students develop independent learning skills, making the most of educational opportunities. Our pedagogical practices focus on pursuing excellence in learning, teaching, and student outcomes, aiming to nurture *thriving individuals, capable learners, and leaders for the world God desires*.

At St Mary's Memorial School we aim to -

- Support the total development of students: religious, social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual.
- Foster appreciation and responsibility for the natural environment.
- Provide rich, rigorous learning opportunities from the curriculum.
- Promote critical and creative thinking.
- Develop responsible decision-making skills.
- Utilise empowering teaching and learning strategies.
- Maintain a safe, stimulating environment conducive to learning.
- Encourage personal and professional growth of staff, promoting the sharing of ideas and talents.
- Cultivate skills for finding personal meaning and leading a productive life as community members.

Staff are committed to -

- Provide a stimulating and challenging curriculum linking faith and culture.
- Promote the school as a place of learning and excellence.
- Achieve continuous improvement in student learning outcomes.
- Create opportunities to apply new learning.
- Set measurable educational goals for all students.
- Make creative use of available resources.
- Embrace the privilege and challenge of teaching in a Catholic school.

Curriculum planning is continuous and evolves from the Australian Curriculum, National Initiatives, System Initiatives, and priorities within St Mary's Memorial School.

We encourage and support every child to -

- Set individual goals for literacy and numeracy.
- Develop a personal relationship with Jesus.
- Foster a love of learning and life.
- Build respectful relationships that enhance community life.
- Embrace justice and equity.
- Respect the environment.
- Gain confidence for life at and beyond St Mary's Memorial School.

Our policy is to maintain high-quality learning for all students by providing a range of learning experiences designed to:

- Assist students in improving their own learning.
- Promote excellence in learning.
- Develop self-esteem, confidence, and independence.
- Enhance competence in basic skills.

## LEARNING SPACES

At St Mary's Memorial School, we are dedicated to ensuring every child is set up and supported for success within a safe learning environment. Our thoughtfully designed learning spaces support and enhance student learning by providing opportunities for all students to be highly engaged and focused. Additionally, flexible breakout spaces foster independent learning skills, responsibility, and a strong sense of self-awareness as learners.

Students are given the opportunity to take advantage of both indoor and a range of outdoor learning environments, enabling them to work in a variety of ways and areas. They can move around, work at tables, on the floor, in small groups, on stools, or while standing. We continually support all students in building their independence and understanding of how they learn best. Our goal is to create an engaging, dynamic, and supportive atmosphere where every student can thrive.

Our learning spaces complement our use of explicit instruction as a key teaching method. This benefits our students by providing clear learning objectives, breaking down complex concepts into manageable steps, and offering step-by-step guidance. Within these dynamic spaces, this approach actively engages students, delivers direct instruction, and provides immediate feedback, ensuring a thorough understanding and development of transferable knowledge.



# PRINCIPAL'S 2023 REPORT

I extend my sincere gratitude to the St Mary's Memorial School Board, Parents and Friends Committee, staff, students, and families for their invaluable contributions this past year. It has been a year marked by achievements in learning, positive partnerships, and vibrant community engagement.

Reflecting on the accomplishments of 2023, we note the continued growth in enrolment interest, with our Year 6 students confidently leading inaugural school tours for 26 families. This highlights the important role our community plays as ambassadors of our school.

St Mary's Memorial School remains committed to providing exceptional Catholic education, guided by the Dominican Tradition and the principles of our Vision. We focus on delivering contemporary and transformative educational experiences that prioritise student wellbeing within a nurturing Christian environment. Our goal is to cultivate active global citizens deeply grounded in their Christian faith.

In 2023, our leadership team included Acting Principal Sonja Smith, APRIM Tamara Smith, Leader of Learning Ben Regester, Inclusive Education Coordinator Cathy Regester, and Wellbeing Leader Rebecca Churchman Hope.

This report outlines our progress in key areas of the 2023 Annual Improvement Plan: Catholic Identity, Learning and Teaching, Numeracy Priorities and Data Analysis, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Response to Intervention, Community Engagement, Stewardship, and Leadership Development.

## Catholic Identity and Mission

The Catholic Identity of St Mary's Memorial School is embodied in our vision statement, with our motto "Veritas" serving as a guiding principle in fostering a school environment characterised by warmth, respect, and adherence to the Dominican Tradition. Throughout 2023, our staff remained committed to integrating the new Crossways Religious Education Program into our curriculum, ensuring that Religious Education received the attention it deserves as a core learning area. Notably, our Year 4 students excelled in the Religious Literacy Assessment Tool (RELAT), showcasing their profound comprehension of Catholic Tradition and its key principles.

## 2023 Key Highlights

- **Dominican Tradition:** We introduced student awards recognising the four Dominican pillars—Community, Service, Prayer, and Study—presented at weekly Community Prayer.
- **Thematic Focus:** The 2023 Dominican theme of Community was central to our school activities.
- **Parental Involvement:** Parents and caregivers actively participated in class liturgies and Masses, enhancing our sense of community and shared spirituality.
- **Curriculum Implementation:** We continued with the Crossways curriculum, initiating a detailed scope and sequence to ensure thorough coverage across all year levels.
- **Social Justice Initiatives:** Our parent community supported social justice efforts such as Project Compassion, Vinnies, and the Hutt Street Walk-a-Mile, coordinated by APRIM Tamara Smith and our students.
- **Parish Collaboration:** We successfully collaborated with the Parish to administer the sacramental program.
- **Staff Formation:** Staff participated in a Staff Formation Reflection, deepening their understanding and practice of our school's religious ethos.

These endeavors collectively reflect our unwavering commitment to nurturing our Catholic identity within the St Mary's Memorial School community.

## Teaching and Learning

Our primary goal in 2023 was to deliver high-quality teaching through contemporary curriculum design and engaging practices. We utilised various student data sources, including the CESA Student Dashboard, to inform, review, and reflect on our results. This approach allowed us to enhance our teaching practices continually. We are committed to ongoing improvement, with staff engaging in professional learning focused on data analysis.

A major initiative was the introduction of the Dibels assessment to evaluate reading skills. Analysis of this data highlighted areas for improvement, leading to a planned review in 2024. Small group interventions like MiniLit and MacqLit also supported students needing extra help.

We adopted the SEQTA platform for reporting and assessment, which improved staff support, collaborative moderation, and communication with parents. Consistent reporting standards and the inclusion of learner dispositions enhanced transparency and parent engagement.

In Numeracy, we made significant progress by working with a CESA Numeracy Coach, developing a School-Wide Numeracy Agreement, and participating in professional development sessions. These efforts, including engagement with the Australian Curriculum v.9 Mathematics Workshops, refined our teaching and assessment strategies.

Overall, these initiatives have fostered a collaborative teaching culture, improved academic rigor, and strengthened parent engagement, advancing our mission to provide a comprehensive and impactful educational experience for all students at St Mary's Memorial School.

## Wellbeing

In 2023, St Mary's Memorial School provided student counselling services with Sandy Altmann from Centacare, available two days a week. Students engaged in activities through the What's the Buzz program and the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum, which focus on child safety and respectful relationships with age-appropriate content for Reception to Year 6.

Each term, students also completed the Catholic Education Classroom Pulse Check-In Survey during Week 5. This survey helps us gauge how students feel about their school experience, allowing us to identify and address any social, emotional, or learning needs. We use this feedback to proactively support and monitor the wellbeing of all students.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

At St Mary's Memorial School, the National Consistent Collection of Data on Students with Disability (NCCD) is crucial in addressing the diverse needs of our students. We use Personalised Plans for Learning (PPL) to provide necessary adjustments and support, ensuring full engagement and progress in the curriculum.

PPLs document and track the required adjustments, participation in Intervention Programs, and access to adult support, and are regularly reviewed with parents and carers.

In 2023, with 445 students enrolled, 106 were identified with disabilities or learning difficulties, accounting for 24% of the NCCD—a 4% increase from the previous year. This underscores our commitment to inclusive education and equitable access. A review in 2024 will assess the effectiveness of our interventions in supporting student growth.

## Community Engagement

At St Mary's Memorial School, building a strong and vibrant community is a priority for our School Leadership, School Board, and Parent Community. In 2023, our commitment to service, a core Dominican value, was evident through various initiatives:

- Fundraising for causes like Project Compassion, Walk a Mile in My Boots, and Vinnies Appeals.
- Hosting events such as Shrove Tuesday, Easter Egg Hunt, St Patrick's Day, Grandparents Day, Volunteers Morning Tea and numerous other school and community activities.
- Providing classroom and sporting support.
- Collaborating with allied health professionals and Our Lady of Grace School Board.
- Engaging with local businesses like Saucy Sweet Café and Daily Fixx.

These efforts enhance our school community and reflect our dedication to service, collaboration, and celebration.

## Stewardship and Improvement

In 2023, we focused on strategically allocating resources to enhance learning opportunities. We introduced the School Quality Performance Leadership Team, expanding Middle Leaders' roles to strengthen leadership and staff development. Collaborating with South Region leaders and the High-Performance Schools Team, we began our journey toward high-capacity collaborative leadership, with plans to involve all staff in 2024.

We continued to maintain and improve our school buildings to provide exceptional learning environments while preserving our community atmosphere. Our ethos of welcome and inclusion was highlighted through events organised by the Parents and Friends Committee, including the School Disco, holiday stalls, and the Colour Run.

Reflecting on a busy year, we are grateful for the positive experiences and look forward to future growth. We appreciate the dedication of our staff, School Board, Parents and Friends Committee, and all community members for their contributions.

Finally, my thanks must go to the wonderful students and their families. After all, you are what makes this school so extraordinary. Thank you for a fantastic 2023.

Sonja Smith  
Acting Principal



## STUDENT ENROLMENT NUMBERS

The following information is as per the 2023 Census.

The enrolment at the end of 2023 was 445 students, with 142 students in Reception to Year 1 and 303 students in Year 2-6. There were 9 mid-term Reception enrolments.

ENROLMENTS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	INDIGENIOUS STUDENTS	LANGUAGE BACKGROUND OTHER THAN ENGLISH
Reception to Year 6	445	215	230	2	15%

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Attendance continued to be maintained at a high level from Reception to Year 6 during 2023 with the average attendance rate for our students of 91%.

PERCENTAGE	REC	YR1	YR2	YR3	YR4	YR5	YR6
Average Attendance	90%	92%	91%	91%	92%	91%	90%

### Management of Student Attendance

For students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. Our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote regular attendance of students.

In doing so, St Mary's Memorial School –

- Provides a caring environment which fosters a sense of wellbeing and belonging in students
- Maintains accurate records of student attendance
- Implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance
- And to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise

Student attendance is managed in SEQTA and monitored daily. For non-attendance, parents are asked to inform the school when their child is absent. This can be done in person, via phone, email or by leaving a message on the school answering machine.

If notification has not been received, the school will contact parents by SMS to ascertain the students' whereabouts. In consultation with the staff, students who regularly do not attend school, contact is made with families and a discussion takes place to determine reasons for non-attendance. Appropriate measures are put in place where needed to try and ensure regular attendance.

## POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

The 2023 Year 6 graduates post school destinations saw 55 out of 58 continue with a Catholic pathway for their secondary education.

SECONDARY DESTINATION	GRADUATING STUDENTS
Sacred Heart College	43
Cabra Dominican College	6
Nazareth College	1
St Dominics College	2
Immanuel College	3
Portside Christian School	1
Westminster	1
Urrbrae	1

## STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

QUALIFICATION	TOTAL
Graduate Certificate	7
Graduate Diploma	5
Diploma	6
Bachelor Degree	27
Masters Degree	7
Other	0

### Human Resources

In 2023, St Mary's Memorial School had a total of 1 Acting Principal (Female), 27 teaching staff (19 Females and 8 males), and 31 non-teaching staff members (28 females and 3 males).

In 2023, 1 staff member identified as Indigenous.

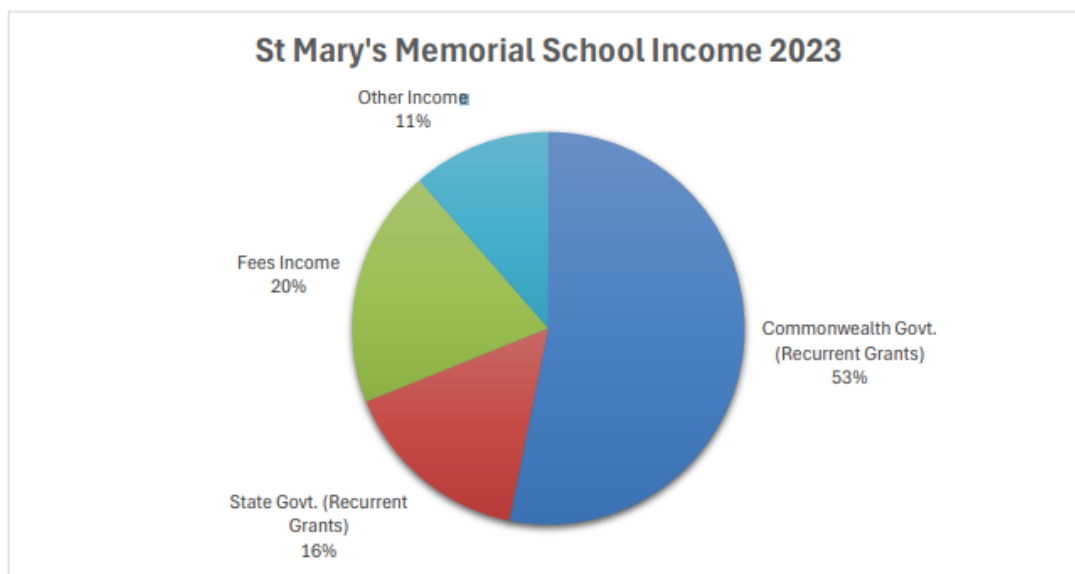
Out of Hours School Care and Vacation Care is managed by St Mary's Memorial School.

There were 4 instrumental tutors working in our Instrumental Program each week.

## SCHOOL INCOME

The school receives its income from three main sources:

- Government Funding (Commonwealth and State)
- Tuition Fees and charges
- Private Income



Commonwealth Govt. (Recurrent Grants)	3,973,719
State Govt. (Recurrent Grants)	1,175,054
Fees Income	1,470,093
Capital Grants	
Other Income	852,749
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>7,471,615</b>

# 2023 NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM LITERACY AND NUMERACY (NAPLAN)

Students in Years 3 and 5 participated in NAPLAN in 2023. The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists the school's planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

Education ministers agreed to change the way NAPLAN results are reported from 2023, following the move of NAPLAN from May to March and the full transition to online assessment. The measurement scales and reporting time series have been reset, and proficiency standards with 4 levels of achievement for each assessment area at each year level replace the previous numerical NAPLAN bands and national minimum standards. [National Assessment Program \(NAP\)](#)

## YEAR 3

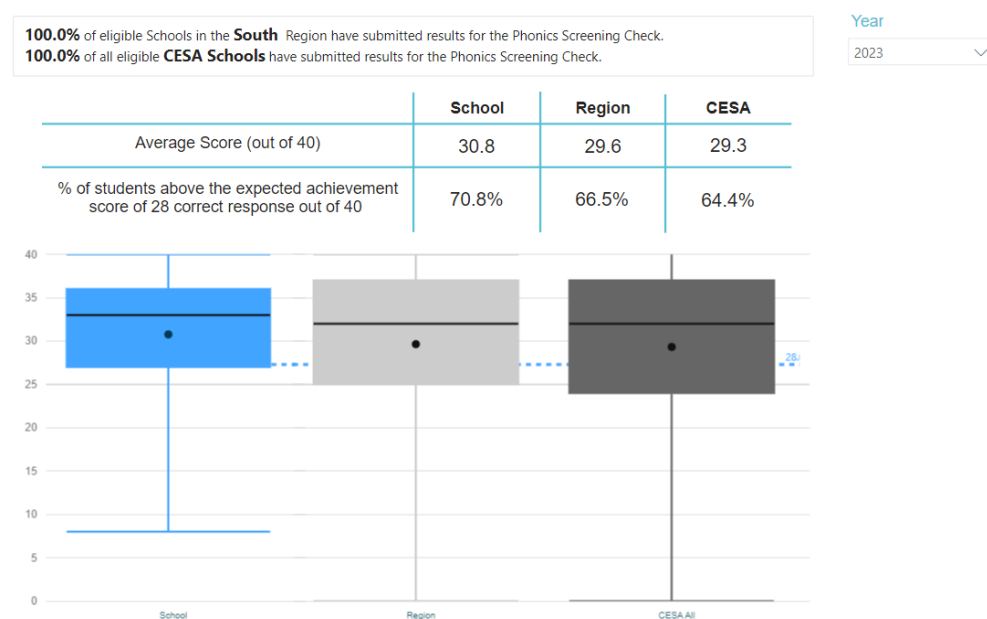
ASSESSMENT	STUDENT PARTICIPATION	MEAN SCORE 2023	PROFICIENCY LEVEL
Reading	95%	421	Strong
Writing	95%	438	Strong
Spelling	95%	428	Strong
Grammar and Punctuation	95%	428	Strong
Numeracy	97%	416	Strong

## YEAR 5

ASSESSMENT	STUDENT PARTICIPATION	MEAN SCORE 2023	PROFICIENCY LEVEL
Reading	97%	500	Strong
Writing	97%	490	Strong
Spelling	97%	495	Strong
Grammar and Punctuation	97%	515	Strong
Numeracy	97%	486	Strong

# 2023 PHONICS SCREENING CHECK

The Year 1 Phonics Check evaluates students' decoding skills through progressively challenging words. This data helps teachers identify strengths, instructional needs, and the effectiveness of teaching practices, as well as monitor phonics trends. At St Mary's Memorial School, our average score was 30.8 out of 40, exceeding both the CESA and South Region averages.



## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

At St Mary's Memorial School, staff are dedicated to making appropriate adjustments for all students, including high achievers, through a differentiated curriculum that includes enrichment. Teachers address each student's specific learning needs by adapting their teaching practices to provide focused, targeted, and intensive support.

Differentiated instruction involves modifying content, processes, and products to meet diverse student needs, ensuring relevance and flexibility. This approach aims to engage all students in challenging, meaningful tasks and supports their development as self-regulated learners.

Adjustments are made based on individual needs, documented in Personal Plans for Learning (PPL), and are developed in consultation with families. These plans are regularly reviewed and shared with relevant stakeholders, including allied health professionals.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES LEVEL OF ADJUSTMENTS

NCCD ADJUSTMENT LEVEL	STUDENTS
Extensive	3
Substantial	17
Supplementary	66
Quality Differentiated Teaching Practice (QDTP)	20



## STUDENT, PARENT AND STAFF SATISFACTION: LIVING LEARNING LEADING (LLL) SURVEY

Our work with Curtin University and Catholic Education South Australia enabled us to conduct surveys to collect significant feedback data about our school culture, practices, identity, and climate.

LLL SURVEY	PARTICIPANTS
Parent and Caregiver	33
Teacher and Leadership	21
Education Support Officer	22
Student – Years 2, 3 & 4	160
Student – Years 5 & 6	100

All participants were asked a series of between 30 – 66 questions with results across the four components, being Identity, Learning and Wellbeing, Resourcing and Community indicating St Mary's Memorial School overall has a very welcoming, inclusive, and positive school culture and provides a safe learning environment for children.

The satisfaction of Parent and Caregiver collective responses ranged from 80% - 86% satisfaction. The extent to which parents and caregivers feel the school provides a welcoming, safe environment for their children was 93%.

The Teacher and Leadership collective responses of satisfaction ranged from 65% - 85% satisfaction. The extent to which teachers feel that the culture of the school is welcoming and inclusive of parents, caregivers and their families was 96%.

Perceptions from the Education Support Officers showed a collective range of satisfaction from 76% - 90%. The extent to which ESO's feel that they effectively motivate the students they work with to engage them in their learning was 93%.

Students in Years 2-4 collective satisfaction was perceived overall to range from 84% - 93%. The extent to which students feel that their teachers support their learning by being good at the subjects they teach was 93%. Students feel that their experience of Catholic education at school is meaningful and that they learn about Jesus and God and the importance of helping others was 96%.

Students in Years 5-6 overall satisfaction ranged from 82% - 89%. The extent to which students feel that their teachers support their learning and want them to do their best was 96%. Students feel that their experience of Catholic education at school is meaningful when they learn that it is important to welcome all people in our school was 92%.