



# St Mary's Primary School Sale

2020

Annual Report to the School Community



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## Contact Details

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## Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Brett Morris, attest that St Mary's Primary 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 2020 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

09/06/2021

**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

2020 was a year unlike any other that we have experienced.

In its third year of operation, Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL) was challenged to provide timely advice, service and direction to Catholic primary and secondary schools across the Diocese, in both metropolitan and regional areas, throughout a prolonged period of rapidly changing circumstances.

The events of the year were as momentous in the Diocese of Sale as anywhere in Australia. The region was affected by fierce bushfires and drought, which put significant strain on families and communities. We farewelled Bishop Patrick O'Regan, and eventually welcomed our new Bishop, Greg Bennet. Our schools, offices, and churches faced the additional challenge of dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, including extended periods of lock-down.

The resilience shown by our professional and local communities has been extraordinary. Schools successfully adapted to a new, remote style of learning and teaching faster than anyone would have thought possible. Throughout all the disruption and social distancing, we kept faith in each other, and ensured that our colleagues, students, and their families were encouraged and supported.

As an organisation, we maintained our focus on developing and maintaining rigorous reporting and accountability structures, to comply with our regulatory requirements. With pastoral support from our Parish Priests and expert advice from the DOSCEL Secretariat, our highly-committed school leadership teams were able to maintain their focus on creating safe and welcoming learning environments, whether at school or online.

We continue to prioritise the provision of educational opportunities for every student, to nurture them, and enable them to encounter God and to develop a knowledge of the Catholic faith and tradition. We invest in leadership and support for school communities, to promote expert learning and teaching practices. We collaborate with, and involve our school communities in our pursuit of the best spiritual, social, emotional, physical and academic outcomes for students in our Diocese.

We aspire to see our students thrive in the world; to be confident, competent and connected.

I am thankful for the contributions of everyone involved in Catholic education in our Diocese in 2020. It has been an honour to work alongside you as we bring life to our vocation of Inspiring Faith, Inspiring Learning.



**Maria Kirkwood**

*Chief Executive Officer*

*Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Ltd*

## Our School Vision

St Mary's School is a welcoming and inclusive community where:

- ~ a quality Catholic educational environment exists that is strengthened through school, family and parish partnerships.
- ~ staff and students are challenged to extend their learning in a safe and supportive environment.
- ~ individuality is celebrated and the wellbeing of students, staff and families is promoted.

### Mission

St Mary's School exists to serve the families of St Mary's Parish, Sale. Mindful of the rich heritage of Sisters of Sion and the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart our school is committed to the Catholic tradition and enlivening the Gospel in the community.

As such, the teachings and example of Jesus Christ permeates all aspects of school life; relationships and learning.

St Mary's is a vibrant Catholic community where diversity is celebrated, success is acknowledged and all are empowered to achieve.

## School Overview

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a school rich in the traditions of family involvement and quality education. We seek to share in the vision and mission of the Catholic Church by ensuring the message of Jesus is alive within the school community. As a community of Faith, we endeavour to provide opportunities for children to develop their unique talents and personalities.

We believe in providing an inclusive curriculum to meet the needs of all children. We have trained literacy and numeracy intervention teachers and education support officers to assist children who need support in these important areas. We offer Reading Intensive in Year One, Extending Mathematics Understanding (EMU) in Junior Primary and Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) across all year levels. We recognize that we are a community working in partnership with parents and families and the wider Parish and town community to promote learning for each individual. Student welfare is a high priority, and we believe that we need to develop resilience amongst children through our Pastoral and Wellbeing initiatives that fall under Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour Support.

St Mary's offers comprehensive specialist programs appropriate to the needs of our students including Student Wellbeing, Italian, Physical Education, Swimming, Art and Music.

We value our partnership with families in educating their children and the support of parents and community in school activities including:

- School Board
- Class Parents Program
- Twilight Carnivale
- Liturgies & Sacramental Program
- Sporting and swimming events
- Celebrations and Feast Days
- Canteen
- School magazine
- Reading and classroom assistance
- Meals on Wheels
- Garden Maintenance
- Parents and Friends Association

## Principal's Report

2020 was a year of challenges and opportunity for School Leadership, staff, students and families. The Covid-19 pandemic certainly tested our school processes and practices. It called for an increased effort and new and creative ways for teachers to provide the best possible learning opportunities for our students during Remote Learning.

2020 was a year of transition in school leadership with myself, as the new Principal, and Mrs Nicole Telfer, as the new Deputy Principal. We were well-supported by Miss Amy Goldsmith (Religious Education Leader & Learning Adjustment Leader) and our Leadership Team.

It is a privilege to work at St Mary's school and, on behalf of the St Mary's School community, I thank Dean Bickley and Father Edwin for their support of the staff and myself. I congratulate the staff for their dedication to the children, for their support of each other and for their willingness to trial new ideas while managing the extra challenges of Covid-19 and Remote Learning. I thank the parents for their trust in allowing us to collaborate with them in the education of their children. In particular, I thank the parents for their effort and commitment to their children's learning during Remote Schooling. I congratulate the children on their attitude and resilience during Remote Learning and thank them for all their efforts, for their respect for others, for openness and cheerfulness that augers towards them becoming responsible adults and informed citizens who may contribute to the Church's mission to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

## Catholic Identity and Religious Education

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals: To maintain and enhance Catholic Identity by embedding the Religious Education Curriculum 'To Live in Christ Jesus' in a dialogical and recontextualised manner.

Intended Outcomes: That staff have a deep knowledge and understanding of the learning progressions of the Religious Education Curriculum, 'To Live in Christ Jesus' and demonstrate a strong understanding of Catholic Social Teaching and Catholic Particularity.

### Achievements

During 2020, it was important for us to continue our work in maintaining and enhancing the Catholic Identity of our school acknowledging and working with the challenges that COVID-19 brought with it. We embarked on an advertising campaign with our neighbouring Wellington Catholic schools to highlight our uniqueness and role within the wider Catholic community and local context. We also sought to find new ways to promote the Catholicity of our school to prospective families.

Faced with the varying challenges of COVID-19 a decision was made to postpone the Sacramental Program offered by the Parish. It was a difficult decision to make but the periods of lock down and uncertainty made the choice inevitable. At all times both the Parish and School kept in contact with Sacramental families to keep them informed.

With the inability to attend weekly masses we worked to continue to foster a nurturing relationship with the Parish. We took any opportunity we could to be involved in whatever capacity that was offered. We had a number of staff and students read at the televised Sunday Masses.

Religious Education units across the school allowed regular opportunities for children to bear witness to their faith. Teachers attended professional learning sessions, held within the school to assist them in developing a deeper understanding of the revised Religious Education curriculum, *To Live in Christ Jesus*. This enabled teaching staff to plan contemporary Religious Education units of work that challenged children and invited them to explore what it means to be Christian in the modern world.

Prayer forms part of our daily practice and in 2020 we continued to search for many different ways to include varying forms of prayer into our daily school life for both staff and students in our new COVID-19 context. We conclude the school week with an assembly at which we acknowledge our Catholic Australian Identity. We pray our school prayer and the Hail Mary, acknowledge the traditional custodians, sing the National Anthem and raise the Australian flag.

### VALUE ADDED

The school reached out to the local and wider community where possible by raising money for Caritas, donating to Saint Vincent de Paul and other local organisations. All classes shared the Sunday Gospel with parents and parishioners at weekly ZOOM assemblies. Once again, weekly contributions by the principal in the school newsletter provided development in faith opportunities for parents.

## Learning and Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals:

To build the professional capacity of all teachers to be expert teachers.

To improve and accelerate learning outcomes for all students.

Intended Outcomes:

Staff have a strong knowledge of the Victorian Curriculum and its progressions of learning.

- Analysis of assessment data.
- Utilise Evidence Based Practice.
- Enact a Clinical Based Teaching Cycle.
- Develop and embed Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviours Support (WSAPBS)

### Achievements

In 2020, we re-emphasized our commitment to improve learning for all students and for ourselves as teachers. It is important that we are always looking to improve and enhance learning outcomes for our students.

Literacy and Numeracy, as always, are high on the agenda at St Mary's School. We were able to critically evaluate our student data and make plans for the future. We saw a need to review our numeracy and reading programs to address some observations made from our student data. Teachers continued to use data throughout the year to drive teaching and learning.

We maintained our Response to Intervention model with appropriate instruction for all students and provision of early intervention and support programs at a more targeted level by providing small group instruction in Reading and Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) via a specialist teacher. We continued Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI) across the school. We also provided intensive Speech support for both speech production and language acquisition for students as we engage the services of a qualified practitioner to assess, instruct and develop appropriate programs for the students. We will continue to monitor all supported students as they move through the school, effectively communicating concerns with their parents.

We continue to provide a wide and varied curriculum with many opportunities to participate in Physical Education Programs at a local, regional and state level, which is very much appreciated by parents. We encourage children to participate in a variety of sports at these levels, not only for competition but to boost the self-esteem of children who may not necessarily participate in weekend sporting programs. Our swimming programs, together with winter sports programs and athletics are always well-supported by families. They provide another opportunity for parents to be involved within the school.

We provided our children with many opportunities to access learning through incursions and excursions assisted by funding from the Parents and Friends Association.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

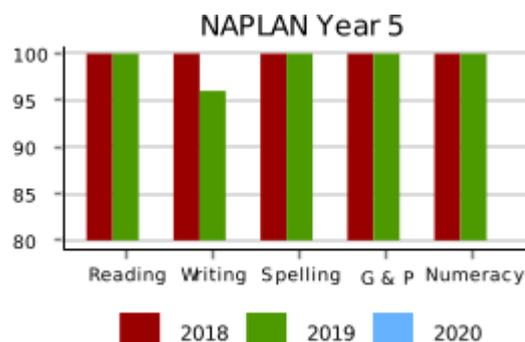
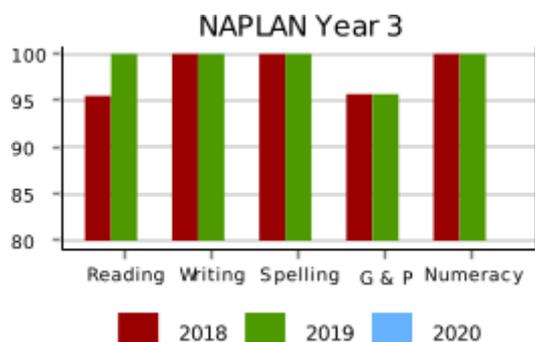
The results over the last three years demonstrate that literacy and numeracy levels across Years 3 and 5 are improving. While NAPLAN was not able to be conducted in 2020 due to the pandemic, classroom assessments indicated that students in Years 3 and 5 were at the expected level in numeracy and literacy. Teachers analysed PAT data to strategically target teaching in Reading and Number.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019	2020	2019 – 2020
	%	%	Changes	%	Changes
			%	*	*
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	95.7	95.7	0.0		
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Reading	95.5	100.0	4.5		
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Writing	100.0	96.0	-4.0		

\* 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.



## School Community and Student Wellbeing

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To build the professional capacity of all teachers to be expert teachers.

Building upon the existing culture of caring and respect to create a school environment that is safe, that celebrates difference and diversity, promotes inclusion and nurtures positive relationships.

- That the school develops and embeds the Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour Support (WSAPBS), to ensure all staff have a clear understanding of student management, ensuring all students are engaged in purposeful learning in a safe, inclusive environment.
- Build confidence in students through the development of their individual talents, interests and relationships.
- Develop meaningful ways to involve families and access the wider community.
- Continually promote and celebrate our identity within the parish.
- To develop safe digital citizenship practices.

### Achievements

During 2020, St Mary's School (school leadership, staff and parents) worked extremely hard to continue to develop links between the school, home, parish and wider community with the challenges of Covid-19. As a result, St Mary's School made the most of digital communication with the wider school community through the use of Zoom meetings, Class Dojo and regular emails. Unable to attend the usual community events (such as Eisteddfods, performances/shows) or hold various school events (such as Liturgies, expos featuring student learning and school life celebrations- Mothers/Fathers Day breakfast, School Carnival etc), our face-to-face connection with our wider school community was reduced. Many of the usual yearly events did still take place and were celebrated by students and staff while our parent community zoomed in wherever possible. Prior to Covid-19 our school swimming carnivals were held and by the end of the year, with some Covid-19 restrictions easing, the Year Six Graduation and End of Year Concert were able to be attended by families. All enjoyed the slightly modified (and Covid safe) version of "Romeo & Juliet".

Our student leaders represented the school with pride at various "virtual" community functions and our school captains played significant roles in presenting messages during the ANZAC Day "Light a Candle" ceremony.

The Parent and Friends Committee and School Advisory Committee are two particular leadership/advisory groups that engage in conversations and practically set about the task of school improvement. We are truly blessed to have such supportive and positive members within our school community. In turn, the school has parents who take the lead to ensure that the children can participate effectively in a variety of learning experiences during and outside school hours and who value what can be achieved when working together with staff for the benefit of their children.

During 2020, parents continued to welcome new families and support families in need through the "Class Parents" program.

Although there were few opportunities where the Parent and Friends Association could host school fundraising events, Zoom meetings were held regularly and the committee were keen to financially support school initiatives. The fundraising body assisted with the purchase of new decodable readers to support the introduction of the "Little Learners Love Literacy" program and the completion of the new basketball court (re-surfacing/painting).

### VALUE ADDED

St Mary's Whole School Masses (pre-Covid-19 and at the end of the year), Prayer Liturgies and our school concert "Romeo & Juliet" were all very successful events involving both the school and wider community. The involvement of grandparents, friends and parishioners celebrated the work of the school and provided opportunities for the children to learn of the past and value the generous contributions of older generations. During the Covid-19 pandemic, much of this interaction and learning was enabled through the use of the latest technology.

St Mary's continues to be involved in a number of activities in the area of service. During Remote Learning, weekly deliveries of meals to school families were well-received and appreciated by all. Some families required some extra support while other families (including school staff) generously donated to help others in the school community.

The school continues to access outside agencies (e.g. counselling to assist with specific children and family needs) and has a strong ongoing connection with local paediatricians and speech pathologists.

The school has received positive feedback and a high degree of satisfaction from families who accessed these support networks.

### STUDENT SATISFACTION

**Data from the Insight SRC Survey shows students express their satisfaction with 73% of 3/4 children and 79% of 5/6 children saying they feel connected to the school, 91% of 3/4 students indicated that the teaching is purposeful and they rate Teacher Empathy highly (92%). While the students of St Mary's are very compliant and appear to be happy at school, Remote Learning was certainly a challenge and, as a result, this may be seen in lower student scores for "Motivation" (86%) and "Learning Confidence" (70%).**

**STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

During regular schooling, if a student is absent, parents are to provide a dated and signed written note, email, phone call or return a completed absence form to the school explaining why an absence has occurred. The school contacts parents/carers by phone the morning of any unexplained absence. The principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences.

During Remote Learning (due to Covid-19) student attendance (or non-attendance) was communicated through "ClassDojo". Each morning and afternoon, teachers would send a message: "If your child is attending Remote Learning, please LIKE this post". Parents were able to simply hit the "LIKE" button to indicate their child's attendance for the morning and again for the afternoon. For any students who were absent, a private message would be sent to the parent inquiring about the student's absence. If the teacher did not receive a response from a parent for two consecutive days, the Principal was notified and the Principal would followup with a phone call to the family in question.

**AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL**

Y01	91.9%
Y02	92.5%
Y03	93.1%
Y04	92.4%
Y05	90.9%
Y06	95.3%
Overall average attendance	92.7%

**PARENT SATISFACTION**

Parents feel very involved in their child's education rating parent partnership at 73%, focus on learning at 79% and stimulating learning at 82% (Insight SRC survey).

2020 was particularly challenging for parents as they were required to provide extra assistance to their children during periods of Remote Learning. The improved rating in the area of Reporting might be explained by the increased communication to parents from teachers in relation to supporting families during the Covid-19 lock-downs.

## Child Safe Standards

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Continue the development; implementation and sustainability of child safety and vulnerable adult practices in the school

Monitor and support policy implementation; procedures and practice in relation to child safety

Improve and sustain an inclusive child safety culture in the school whilst developing the role of the Child Safety Officer

### Achievements

- Child Safe policies and related policies were revised with staff and students and made available to the school community on our school website and staff shared server.
- The school's Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour team worked with staff, students and parents to embed the standards.
- The Child Safe standards were discussed regularly at staff meetings and at the School Advisory Committee meetings.
- Staff were regularly updated on any change or new initiative in relation to child safe standards at staff meetings as well as via the newsletter and staff memo.
- Cyber-safety, awareness, procedures, protocols and expectations (including a Code of Conduct and User Agreement) were communicated to students and parents with the provision of school technology resources for Remote Learning.
- All staff are fully aware of the school's Code of Conduct and have signed it.
- All new staff are inducted and made aware of the child safe standards.
- Volunteer induction sessions were facilitated and will continue to occur as the need arises for example - new families entering the school, before school camps and so on.
- Contractors inductions are held yearly or as needed
- All families, volunteers, visitors and contractors have signed the school's Code of Conduct
- The school community were updated on any changes or new information through the school newsletter, school 'app' and school website.
- Staff worked with students developing their awareness of Child Safe issues such as areas where students feel safe and unsafe.
- The school's Child Safety officer worked with students to revise the child-friendly Child Safe policy.
- Staff completed a detailed Child Safe Risk Assessment for all offsite activities.
- The school implemented the 'PROTECT, Identifying and Responding to all Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools'.
- Students completed posters promoting Child Safe issues and these were displayed around the school.

- School was involved in the National Child Safety Week when all classes participated in age appropriate activities as well as participating in 'A Day for Daniel'.

# Leadership

## Goals & Intended Outcomes

### To build leadership capacity throughout the school

- All leaders are instructional leaders supporting staff to enact changes needed to improve students' outcomes which supports the diocesan agenda.
- That decision-making is based on evidence.

## Achievements

The school continued to focus on developing leadership capacity throughout the school. This occurred across staff, student and parent groups.

In 2020, the Leadership Team continued to meet on a regular basis to discuss School Improvement, School Review and Compliance. Each of the leading teachers were encouraged to utilize their specific skills and interests. They were also encouraged to build upon current competencies and to extend their learning to new areas. With the extra challenges of Covid-19 and students and staff working remotely during periods of lock-down, the leadership team found new ways and opportunities to lead school improvement. Directed by data, and always with an aim to improve student learning (accelerated learning) through building teacher expertise, the leadership team continued to promote and embed the learnings from the Learning and Teaching Network.

The School Advisory Committee, in partnership with the Parents and Friends, continued to maintain its profile as the body responsible for working with the principal and school staff in developing the school facilities and the sense of community. Again, monthly meetings continued with the use of Zoom.

With respect to student leadership during 2020, we sought to maintain the different Leadership groups within the student cohort and enhanced the Student Council with representatives from each classroom. The Student Representative Council continued to play a role in student engagement in school decisions especially in the area of Catholic Social Teaching. The student leaders displayed excellent leadership throughout the year and set a great tone for the school. The children represented their school with pride at sports carnivals and during community events in person and virtually. There were opportunities for all year six students to lead various components of our weekly assemblies (in person and via Zoom) and guest presenters from every year level were encouraged to share reports on school and classroom initiatives.

## EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

### Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

During 2020, all staff engaged in Anaphylaxis, Asthma and CPR training. In addition, all staff successfully completed the Mandatory Reporting and Anaphylaxis e-learning modules. Our

Leadership team participated in Teaching and Learning Days held by the Catholic Education Office. Such days revolved around professional development in implementing the Victorian Curriculum, Religious Education, Numeracy, Literacy, Leadership development and Learning Adjustment strategies. The leadership team worked with staff on further implementing the Victorian curriculum, Child Safety Standards sessions and there was ongoing Professional Learning throughout 2020 on assessment, Reading and Mathematics. Whole day sessions for all staff were held on Reading and Mathematics. A number of teachers (from the junior classrooms) were trained in the "Little Learners Love Literacy" program in preparation for its roll-out for the start of 2021 in Year One and Foundation. Two members of the Leadership team completed the Masters of Education & Theology and another member of the Leadership team completed the Master of Evidence Based Teaching (formerly titled the Master of Clinical Teaching) through Melbourne University.

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	20
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$930

### TEACHER SATISFACTION

Teacher satisfaction, as identified under learning (the extent to which staff members feel their efforts are being recognised and their capability is being developed through appropriate learning and development opportunities) suggests that staff feel their efforts are valued (Appraisal & Recognition at 81%) and they are supported through professional learning opportunities (Professional Growth rated at 82%) (Insight SRC survey)

There has been a real team effort, modelled by school leadership, to maintain staff wellbeing (81-92%) and provide learning opportunities during the challenges of Covid-19. While the pillars Empathy (89.2) and Engagement (82.8) are relatively high, further focus is required in the area of Clarity (74.7) and Learning (75.8).

### TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	93.6%
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### ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	85.7%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	6.3%
Graduate	31.3%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	68.8%
Advanced Diploma	18.8%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	20.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	11.3
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	6.0
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

## Future Directions

In 2021 the focus for St Mary's School will be to:

Develop Leadership capacity (Instructional Leadership)

Continue to build Teacher capacity (Expert Teacher Practice)

Achieve accelerated learning for all students (through data driven, evidenced-based teaching)

Continue to implement the Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour and the development of the Child Safety Officer role to lift student Engagement in Learning and Student Behaviour

Maintain and enhance the Catholic Identity of St Mary's by embedding the Religious Education Curriculum 'To Live in Christ Jesus' in a dialogical and recontextualised manner.