



St Columba's
Primary School



MELBOURNE
ARCHDIOCESE
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

St Columba's School

Elwood

2021

Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 1070

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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Daniella Maddalena, attest that St Columba's 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 2021 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 Schools.

07/03/2022

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

2021 has been a momentous year for Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) assuming governance and operations of 290 schools which previously operated under unincorporated structures.

MACS was established to ensure these schools continue the mission of Catholic education to proclaim the Good News while equipping our young people with the education, knowledge, skills and hope to live meaningful lives and enrich the world around them.

Our schools were again asked this year to respond to the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Although asked to implement many measures to keep our staff and students safe, our schools were able to continue delivering a high-quality Catholic education through the resilience and dedication of our principals, school leaders and teachers.

Alongside this important work, we were also able to deliver a new policy suite for schools to ensure our students are safe and which enhance the consistency and transparency of school decision-making, while preserving school autonomy and respecting the local context of our schools.

School Advisory Councils have been established to actively support the principal and embed the life of the local Church in the life of each school. It has been wonderful to see so many parents and members of the wider parish community engaged in these critical forums.

Thank you for the support you have given our schools in 2021. We look forward to continuing to work with you as we strive to provide the young people of the Archdiocese of Melbourne with the best kind of education possible, one that fosters a formation of the whole person that is deeply and enduringly humanising.

Yours sincerely

Jim Miles

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

Our School Vision

Our Values

Our motto, 'The little school with a big heart' represents St Columba's unique culture of care, empathy and respect for diversity. This emanates from parish life and our unique association with Sacred Heart Mission, which embody these core values as their central tenets.

Our Mission

As a Catholic school, we are called to act with compassion and empathy, to respect and care for our world and for the most vulnerable and to promote inclusion and provide community.

It is the village feel that captures the hearts of those who choose to enrol their children into St Columba's. The warmth and genuine nurturing environment that they see and feel as they enter permeates throughout the school and well into our community.

Our Vision

Now as we enter this next chapter of our school's history we see ourselves as a school for the future:

- A school that has a rich, relevant and engaging approach to learning and teaching while maintaining its tradition of care and well-being.
- A school where children truly flourish both academically and socially emotionally.
- A school that works together with its community as partners in education.
- A school where the 21st century is seen as an exciting new frontier where opportunities abound for each child in our care.
- A school that leads the way with sustainable practices and actions.
- A school that keeps at its heart the foundational tenets that it and the parish has been built upon respect, community, inclusion, care for our world and for the most vulnerable.
- A school that clearly sets its sights on providing learning that is engaging, rigorous, purposeful and meets the needs of learning for the future.
- A school that understands its place within the bigger global context and acknowledges and accepts the responsibility and challenges that come with this.

Our history is very much a part of who we are today and as we move forward we will strive to honour our past whilst embracing the challenge and excitement that St Columba's- a school for the future, promises our community.

School Overview

St Columba's, Elwood, was established under the direction of the Presentation Sisters in 1918. When it first opened on the corner of Glenhuntly Road and Normandy Avenue, it comprised only two classrooms with an enrolment of 48 students. Enrolment numbers have fluctuated over the years as demographic trends in the local area changed. However, since the beginning of the millennium, enrolments have grown and stabilized as the local area has become more attractive to families wishing to live close to their place of work. 2021 saw 154 students in eight class groupings - Prep , 1/2, 1/2, 3/4, 3/4, 3/4, 5/6, 5/6.

The school facilities have grown and been updated regularly over the past nine years to create a very contemporary learning environment. With seven home-room spaces upstairs, one classroom downstairs and two large common learning spaces, which includes the library, there is room for children and teachers to undertake a wide range of different learning and teaching activities. Furnishings are a mix of fixed and flexible with provision for rich and varied ICT & STEM learning. All classrooms and learning spaces are equipped with interactive TVs. There are enough ICT devices (laptops, chrome books and iPads) to facilitate a one-one program throughout the school. Downstairs learning spaces include a hall, parish centre and a dedicated Before and After School Care Centre. There is also a separate art room. The playground has been upgraded to include a synthetic grass athletics track, two multi-purpose courts, climbing structure, cubby house, new adventure play equipment designed by the children and green spaces including a vertical garden, a nature play area, a kitchen garden and pergola. The playground provides good areas for sport, physical education and for play.

Our School Improvement Plan 2018-2021 has brought a focus to renewing our school vision and mission, focused on developing students who are more confident, motivated and engaged as learners and empowering staff to be high quality teachers whilst improving student learning outcomes. At St Columba's we provide students with a caring, supportive and safe environment, which aims to maximise their engagement, sense of belonging and connectedness to school. We actively promote a family-friendly environment and build strong community partnerships by welcoming and encouraging a wide variety of participation in the life of the school. We acknowledge that the family is the most significant influence upon an individual, and therefore, learning is seen as an ongoing partnership between home and school. Our belief is that when parents and the community are involved in school, the outcomes for our students are enhanced. We are an authorised International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program World School.

The programs of, and teaching in, St. Columba's school, support and promote the principles and

practice of Australian Democracy including a commitment to: elected government, the rule of law, equal rights of all before the law, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and association, and the values of openness and tolerance.

Principal's Report

Who would have thought that when the 2021 school year began that we would soon be once again returning to remote learning. In an instant all our well-thought-out plans and expectations for the year had to be cast aside. At least on this occasion we were already well versed in remote learning and all the learning that occurred in 2020 was quickly enacted to ensure we could aptly support our students and families.

Despite the periods of lock-down our school has still managed to achieve some remarkable milestones. As I reflect over the year many moments come to mind. The remote learning experience was without doubt challenging but it also provided us with great insight into the children and the way in which they learn. We know some children flourished, enjoying the autonomy, independence, and flexibility whilst others found the experience a little more difficult to navigate but nonetheless gave it their absolute best effort. As a staff we have had the opportunity to discover new things about the children we teach, to see them in a different light and through a different lens which meant greater meaningful engagement with families further enhancing family -school partnerships.

We also managed to complete both our IB verification visit and Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools (MACS) review, albeit remotely, and are pleased to formally announce our status as an IB World School. The combined experience, commendations and recommendations from both reviews will assist with planning our next 4-year School Improvement Plan which we will share in 2022.

Even though we were unable to go ahead with our musical as planned it was a privilege to work with the Year 5/6 students. During the time that we did have at school and when there were less significant restrictions our students continued to reflect and personify our school vision and represented our school with pride: at sporting events, on our Canberra tour, on excursions, during our work with Port Phillip Eco Centre and at local events such as ANZAC day, and Sustainable Schools. It has been wonderful to see them flourish academically, physically and socially emotionally.

As a community, we have had the opportunity this year to reflect on our school and its future. Your voluntary feedback and the MACSSIS survey undertaken in September both highlight that the strength of our school lies in the fact that we care. We care about our students, each other, the planet and the most vulnerable. The well-being of our students has always been central and at the heart of all that we do. It is without a doubt the deep sense of connectedness and belonging that goes a long way in assisting our students to succeed whilst at school.

This sense of connectedness of course extends to our community. We are very fortunate to have the level of support that we do from our parent community. The school could not operate nearly as effectively without the assistance of our parents and on behalf of the staff and students, I thank our parents and families very much for their time, expertise and effort. I would like to thank the 2021 Parish Education Board, the Parents and Friends Association, the Parent Green Team and the many individuals who volunteer to help, for the work they do in assisting the school. We are

very lucky to have such a committed group of parents who work tirelessly for the school to improve the environments and learning opportunities for the children here at St. Columba's.

We are very excited about 2022. We have so many wonderful initiatives planned for the year. Staff have already spent considerable time planning and developing units of work that will maximise the learning opportunities for children next year. During 2021 we were very fortunate to still be able to work with literacy and maths experts, Kath Murdoch (inquiry) and were able to participate in IB PYP professional development opportunities. We have seen wonderful growth across all year levels especially in literacy (writing) and in numeracy with many of our children working well above the standard in each of these domains. We will continue to focus our professional learning for teachers on Literacy, Maths and high-quality instruction and teaching throughout next year, along with student voice, agency and feedback to students that will specifically drive learning forward.

We are extremely fortunate to be able to continue to provide extra support to classrooms with our LSOs, Differentiation Teachers and Curriculum Leaders. We are looking to really strengthening our commitment to personalising and differentiating our learning programs for students at our school particularly in numeracy. By having extra teachers working alongside classroom teachers, we feel we are more able to target individuals at their *point of need*.

Our school has a strong emphasis on visual arts, music and the performing arts and we will continue to provide the children with a vast array of experiences throughout each term and during our well-being weeks. It will be wonderful to re-engage with community sports programs for schools, inter-school sports and district events starting with the swimming carnival in term one.

Extracurricular programs for 2022 will include lunchtime clubs, instrumental music lessons, opportunities for classes to perform at assemblies, incursions and excursions. All of the above factors contribute to the development of the whole child here at St Columba's which is strongly supported by our emphasis and commitment to Social Emotional Learning and well-being.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for their care, professionalism and nurturing of the children. I know that each staff member has worked resolutely to provide the best education for each of your children. It is not by luck that we have such a committed group of teachers.

I would also like to acknowledge the support that we receive from the parish. Thank you to Fr John and the parish team for their continued support and encouragement of the work that we undertake each day.

Education in Faith

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To strengthen our Catholic Identity within the context of our contemporary world.

- That students' understanding of their Catholic identity will strengthen through encounters with a contemporary religious education.

Achievements

Despite the impact of COVID -19 and the return to remote learning for much of the year, the school managed to maintain a strong focus and priority on Education in Faith.

Our priorities for the year included:

To develop staff capacity to lead RE and model the Catholic ethos within classrooms and wider community

To develop teacher understanding of prayer, prayer spaces and teach the formal prayers eg. Morning prayer, Hail Mary, Our Father, Glory Be etc

To develop teacher and student understanding of church traditions and rituals and structure of the Mass

To make visible throughout the school the season of the church calendar and acknowledge through the use of prayer space, liturgies and school celebrations e.g. advent, lent

To use the Religious Education Curriculum Framework, the Pedagogy of Encounter and Catholic Social Justice Teachings to make explicit the connections between Catholic identity and Catholic traditions for children in and beyond the classroom.

To engage students in critical thinking and rich dialogue to gain a broader understanding of how the Catholic traditions and teachings sit in the broader world context

To provide formation to staff facilitated by Fr John

Throughout 2021 staff continued to work collaboratively to develop units of inquiry and learning experiences that were not only relevant, engaging but also sought to encourage students to think deeply about their world in light of our Catholic faith and traditions. This was supported and underpinned by providing relevant professional learning and dialogue amongst staff and making connections beyond the school, locally and globally.

Our data for staff, parents and students has always indicated a strong commitment to social justice and throughout remote learning we placed emphasis on connection and belonging to school and the community. Whilst much of what we would usually participate in was not possible we continued to be grateful as a community, coming together as a whole school weekly and as individual classes daily especially during remote learning. It was also important that we continued as a school to acknowledge and reach out to those in need with a focus on maintaining our connection with Sacred Heart Mission, St Vincent de Paul and those in our school and local community.

VALUE ADDED

Activities undertaken included:

- Linking RE with our Units of Inquiry noting stand-alone units when required
- Units of Inquiry all have an RE line of inquiry where this is not possible the unit is taught as a stand alone unit
- During planning of Units of Inquiry the Catholic Social Teachings are discussed and used to provide explicit connections for the children between Catholic Identity and Catholic traditions
- Year 6 Social Justice students attended Catholic Education Bicentennial Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral
- Staff formation about role of Catholic Teacher in a Catholic School, Pedagogy of Encounter with prayer
- Due to COVID-19 all Masses and Sacraments in term 2 and 3 had to be cancelled and held on alternate dates
- Prep prayer in PJ night was held via Zoom. A great turnout by families and linked to the current Unit of Inquiry
- Saint Columba's Feast Day prayer session provided for classes to celebrate in class via Seesaw and Zoom
- RE Seesaw opportunities provided during remote learning
- Eucharist parent night held via zoom with Fr Elio Capra school and parish
- Care packages for vulnerable families sent
- With restrictions easing we were able to proceed with Confirmation and Eucharist in Term 4
- Remembrance Day commemorated and hosted by Year 6 leaders
- Grandparents and special persons day celebrated online and acknowledged at assembly.
- Establishment of Advent liturgies taking place in classrooms rather than assemblies
- School website updated in regard to sustainability referencing 'care for our common home'
- Fr John hosted formation sessions on 'Laudato Si' and the Gospels for staff
- St Vincent de Paul Christmas Hamper drive was well-supported by families

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To increase student learning within an environment of high expectations and continuous improvement.

- That growth in literacy outcomes will improve
- That growth in numeracy outcomes will improve
- That students are more confident, motivated and engaged learners who experience success

Achievements

The focus during 2021 has been to embed practice in literacy and numeracy; to continue to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes; to complete our International Baccalaureate Candidature and be authorised as an IB primary Years Program World School; to complete our MACS review, with staff undertaking and engaging in professional learning in these areas during the year. In NAPLAN the school continues to perform well in all areas of English and has shown some gains in the area of Mathematics as a school and with some excellent individual results.

This year the school underwent a series of reviews by external consultants. We had our IB PYP (International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme) Candidacy review visit in March which gave us feedback on areas that could be improved before our IB verification review visit. These included the need for:

- Continued collaborative development of Language and Assessment policies
- A continued focus on inquiry and collaboration across all subject areas
- Continued work on assessment of conceptual understandings
- More evidence of student choice and reflection in learning journals/workbooks
- A greater emphasis on transdisciplinarity

With this in mind we developed weekly timetables that emphasised greater blocks of time dedicated to in depth inquiry - both transdisciplinary and disciplinary inquiry. We also emphasised the importance of bringing documentation of student learning and wonderings to collaborative planning so that we could truly see this evidence and use it for forward planning. In addition, we engaged in two days of 'Making the PYP Happen- Implementing Agency' professional learning that had a particular focus on agency, inquiry and assessment and completed our Language and Assessment policies.

During the consultation visit, Dr Marcia Behrenbruch spoke with the students at our school. From this we gathered evidence about student perceptions. They felt we valued their questions; that they didn't always get enough time to research and inquire themselves; that teachers knew them as learners and that they felt most confident in the Literacy domain. This echoed what teachers reported in collaborative planning sessions, particularly in regard to time for students' personal inquiries and research.

Before going into our other reviews and lockdown, we worked with Kath Murdoch on building agency and inquiry in P-2 and we continued our work with her (P-6) during remote learning by attending sessions run by the Victorian PYP Network. These focused on using rich literature to support inquiry. All classes also engaged in the 'Little Scribe Writing Festival' which gave students

and teachers the opportunity to learn the craft of writing from published authors. This worked with the professional learning we had undertaken with Matt Glover as the focus was on students creating rich works as a result of studying published texts and learning about author's processes. In addition to this, we had recognised through staff feedback that developing agency and self-efficacy in our students was a challenge. We provided professional learning to staff on strategies to develop independence and help students self-regulate so they can develop a sense of efficacy.

Strengths from the MACS Review

Well-developed programs, processes and policies are established throughout the school and evidenced in strategic planning. These are known, owned, and enacted by all staff and communicated effectively throughout the school community.

The school's preparation for candidature of the Primary Years Program through the International Baccalaureate, (evidenced by an extensive professional learning plan, and a whole school focus on interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches and learner profiles) has provided real value in building the capacity of classroom teachers to maximise learning for all students.

There is a tangible culture of an authentically contemporary Catholic school, evidenced by the strong links between the school, the parish community (and parish agencies such as the Sacred Heart Mission) and families, and by the warm and welcoming community that is open and inclusive to all.

Opportunities for collaborative planning, supported by school leaders, are established as timetabled priorities, and data discussion meetings provide rich information for all teachers, building their capacity to measure student learning growth and establish ongoing goals.

Innovative programs in sustainability, STEM and ecology encourage the development of higher order thinking skills and a greater awareness of global issues. The Green Team, Years 3 and 4 Eco-Warriors and the work with the Port Phillip Eco Centre have each contributed to the school's identity and status as a strong 5 Star ResourceSmart school.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Our NAPLAN results demonstrated good growth in writing. This included growth in the mean and upward movement of our boxplot. We have maintained our reading levels. In grammar and punctuation, we saw a slight drop in Year 5 data from 2019 but growth from 2018, while our Year 3 trend has continued to move upwards each year between 2017-2021.

Upon returning to school in Term 4, we engaged in two more reviews. The first was our verification visit facilitated by another IB team. The second was our MACS review.

In preparation for these reviews, we spent a lot of time reflecting on our practices, particularly making judgements as a staff using the SIF rubric. We focused much of our energy on the teaching and learning domain. We also had feedback from parents in regard to this domain and the SIF in general. Parental perception was generally higher than staff perception across domains, except in the Education in Faith dimension.

This year we also saw an improvement in the student perception data. We saw a 10% rise in how much students feel they are held to high expectations and the same rise in how attentive and invested students are in the school. Student voice also increased by 18%.

The IB runs verification visits when a candidate school feels they are ready for IB World School Status. Two or more IB educators visit the school for two days collecting evidence for the 92 standards and practices outlined by the IB. They meet with all teaching teams, groups of parents, school leadership, school advisory councils or Boards, learning support officers and students. They observe teaching practices and review school documentation.

At the conclusion of the visit, a school receives feedback in response to the findings. Our feedback was extremely positive and affirmed the direction we are heading. In particular, and significant is that the students all reported having choice and agency in most writing sessions, reading sessions and within their unit of inquiry. The students also reported being motivated, particularly in regard to writing and cited the student-made books in the Library as something many students contributed to.

The recommendations from the IB included:

- Continuing to broaden our assessment approaches and the giving of feedback
- Working with our specialist staff to plan subject specific units of inquiry that embrace PYP planning processes and principles
- Developing practices to better include students and parents in the planning of units of inquiry

The day after our IB review concluded we began our MACS review. This process again required all stakeholders and was equally as positive as the IB verification. Our recommendations from this review process included:

- Continuing to focus on learner agency and student learning growth in Mathematics
- Using the pedagogy of encounter and specific RE learning intentions to strengthen Catholic identity
- Developing the current peer to peer model to include a move to critical friends, and to focus on differentiation, learning intentions and learner agency.

As a result of our reflection and in light of the feedback from our reviews we have developed our 2022 annual action plan. While we will maintain our focus on literacy and have already engaged Matt Glover to assist us in this, we will also place a greater emphasis on Mathematics. We have already been in contact with the Maths Association of Victoria to assist with this and to provide staff with professional development and we will again be working with Kath Murdoch to embed transdisciplinarity.

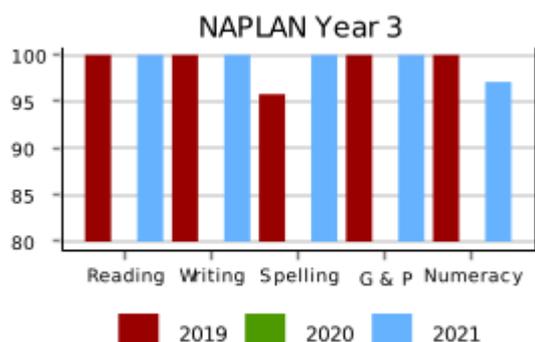
As part of the Mathematics Leadership Grant (MACS) we are participating in, the P-2 teachers have begun to work towards the goal of 'Providing opportunities for P-2 students to develop an innovative mindset to increase a sense of agency in their learning'. This year we have started our focus on finding an appropriate structure for mathematics to help meet this goal. We will begin implementing the EMC³ model across the junior school from next year. As part of this learning and change, the junior school team will participate in the MACS professional development that aligns with this model. We hope this model will assist students to develop a positive mindset towards Mathematics.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2019 %	2020 *	2019 – 2020 Changes *	2021 %	2020 – 2021 Changes *
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	-	-	97.1	-
YR 03 Reading	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Spelling	95.8	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Writing	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	-	-	95.8	-
YR 05 Reading	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Spelling	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Writing	100.0	-	-	100.0	-

* 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.



Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To encourage and support our students to flourish and thrive in a contemporary world.

- That increased student connectedness to school and peers will promote confident, motivated and engaged learners.

Achievements

During 2021 the focus has been on continuing to build on connectedness to peers and school. We believe that academic accomplishment is strongly linked with a rigorous SEL education program. To ensure that SEL is embedded across the school we have linked it very closely with our Learning and Teaching goals, the PYP Approaches to Learning and the PYP Learner Profile. At St. Columba's we use programs such as Bounce Back and the Berry St Model to help facilitate learning in this area. In 2018, we established St Columba's Kids peer support program, this has continued to evolve and is now firmly cemented in our school's philosophy and ethos. It is a powerful way of assisting all students to feel they belong.

During Remote Learning, it was vital that we kept the connection to school alive and that we celebrated as a class and as a school as often as we could. Whilst we could not all be in the same place all at once we could still share in the achievements of individuals, cohorts and the school as a community albeit remotely. That is why throughout the pandemic we maintained our weekly assemblies and our morning zooms in acknowledgement of this. Just being able to see one another goes a long way in helping to maintain the bonds, connections and relationships that we take for granted when at school. With this in mind during Remote learning we increased the number of smaller zoom sessions held throughout the week and had more frequent communication with home so we could provide more contact and face to face time for our students. As social beings this is vital and strong relationships, we know are key to success academically and socially emotionally. After the 2020 experience we decided to host more whole school community social events and opted in 2021 to host themed weeks e.g. PE Week, eSafety week, Science Week. We also hosted a number of virtual whole school gatherings in the afternoons for families i.e The Virtual Magic Show. We also included into the week 'Wellbeing Wednesdays' which featured stories and activities related to SEL.

An important aspect was regular communication with home. This was done in a variety of ways but the most beneficial were the regularity of well-being check-ins with children and their parents either via zoom, phone or email by teachers and staff. We also ensured our vulnerable children and children at risk were well-supported online or at school and families experiencing difficulties or stress were supported. During this time many care packages were distributed to our families.

Throughout all of this experience we saw first-hand the power and richness that comes from school and home working in partnership. As a school we have highlighted the importance of this for many years, but we believe this experience really highlighted how powerful this relationship between home and school can be for a child and their learning.

VALUE ADDED

- Well-being week at the commencement of each term
- Induction process for new children to the school including a morning tea
- Lunchtime clubs included: cheerleading, drama classes, art lessons, chess, Lego, STEM, library
- Peaceful Kids for 1/2 level
- Introduction of sand play program
- Supporting feeder school with work experience and social justice service St. Bede's and Xavier
- Year 5 students visit to St. Mary's (feeder school initiative)
- Friendship Fair
- St. Columba's Kids
- Celebration of International Day of Happiness as a school
- Hosted ride to school breakfast
- Launch of enrolment initiative Prep for a Day
- Participated in: Safer Internet Day , Youth and Schools Clean Up Day
- Student participation in the planting of the Nature Play Space
- Kitchen Garden program for years Prep-2
- School musical rehearsals started for term 2 but unfortunately did not go ahead because of restrictions and the lockdown
- Junkyard Beats incursion and installation of the Musical Wall
- Staff breakfast
- Introduction of Mindfulness practice at each staff meeting
- Wellbeing Wednesday - a rotation of Wellbeing picture story books that are read to each class
- Family week mural- 'The....family are grateful for.... '
- Wellbeing messages to the community on Social media
- Development of Wellbeing/SEL/POI
- Development of SEL/Well Being POI policy
- Cubby house fitted out with an art station, cozy book corner & sensory wall
- Canberra Tour Year 5/6
- During lockdown

- Hampers for families
- Magic show live online
- Personal cards for each family to show our support for them
- Pamper gift box for staff
- Fruit boxes delivered to struggling families
- Treats provided for each student: teddy biscuit, science week activity, sports equipment
- Personal welfare emails to families
- Art room open at lunchtime for onsite students
- Celebrated online: PE week, eSafety week, Science week, Book week, Sustainability Week
- Hosted weekly school assemblies online
- Weekly 'Wellbeing Wednesday' tasks on Seesaw
- Transition for Prep 2022 shifted online
- Sustainability activities and events sent out via Seesaw and Skoolbag for families to be involved with from home
- Supervision of children onsite due to family stress through covid
- Family online community activities: lottery, letter hunt
- Return to School Term 4
- SEL small group sessions with 1/2 children experiencing anxiety as a result of returning to school after remote learning
- SRC meetings recommenced
- Prep 2022 orientation sessions were held onsite
- Visits to kinders
- Meetings with parents experiencing challenges through and after remote learning
- Student wellbeing leader during lockdown remained in contact with vulnerable children and families
- Staff wellbeing during lockdown - Tuesday and Friday morning tea zooms and Friday afternoon check in zoom with teachers
- Reduced expectation of meetings for staff during lockdown to ease the pressure of working remotely and online
- Went ahead with Year 6 big day out and graduation
- Year 2 fun day
- P/6 buddies park play

STUDENT SATISFACTION

Our student data in the MACSSIS surveys shows an overall general satisfaction. This year the data included Year 4 to 6 students and the data between groups differs according to area, year level and gender. The data from our Year 4-6 children indicates our students feel very connected to school, are motivated to learn, are connected to their peers, feel safe, are engaged and have a voice.

We were concerned, given all the time away from school, but they have shown themselves to be resilient and very connected to their peers and the school despite this, and maybe even more

so, because of it. Anecdotally our students are always fully engaged in all aspects of school life and continue to thrive with the opportunities provided. As a school, we have continued to focus on strengthening the supportive and effective learning environments and improving teaching practices. This is reflected in our students' overall school climate and student safety scores.

Despite the challenges of 2021 we were determined to provide many opportunities throughout the year for students feel connected to their peers, teachers and the school. We believe based on these results that we were able to achieve this. In our 2022 AAP we have focused on engagement, student voice and agency. The survey reinforces and upholds the emphasis we place on social/ emotional learning and engagement in learning within the school.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student non-attendance is managed through the student attendance roll. Parents phone, Skoolbag or email the school in the morning to report a child's absence. If there is no contact from home by 9:30am to explain a child's absence the parent/ guardian is called to ascertain the whereabouts of the child. Students leaving early or arriving late are signed in and/or out by their parent or guardian and the data is entered into the roll. Students with high levels of unexplained absences are followed up with parents. The days absent are included on the child's report.

During COVID-19 students were expected to be at the 9:00am morning zoom session, where the roll was taken or at their first scheduled zoom small group session for the day. Should they not be attending due to illness, parents were required to notify the school either by telephone or the Skoolbag app by 8:30am. Students with unexplained absences during this time were followed up.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y01	91.0%
Y02	86.0%
Y03	89.7%
Y04	90.2%
Y05	82.7%
Y06	85.1%
Overall average attendance	87.5%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

St Columba's Primary School is committed to providing a safe environment for all students and young people and will take active steps to protect them against abuse. To achieve this, the school has developed and actively enforces Child Safety Strategies to ensure that any person involved in 'child connected work' is aware of their obligations & responsibilities for ensuring the safety of all children under their care.

In accordance with requirements of the Victorian Government's Ministerial Order No 870, St Columba's Primary School maintains a culture of 'no tolerance' to child abuse. To achieve this it has established a holistic Child Safety Strategy incorporating the processes, policies & procedures listed below.

St Columba's Primary School Child Safety Strategy includes, but is not limited to the:

- Establishment of strategies for embedding a culture of child safety at the school;
- Maintenance & communication of a policy affirming the school's commitment to child safety and the promotion of an environment where children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential;
- Maintenance & implementation of a Child Safety Code of Conduct;
- Established processes for screening, supervision, training, and other human resource practices to reduce the risk of child abuse & promote a child safe learning environment;
- Maintenance & Communication of procedures for responding to and reporting child safety complaints, suspected abuse, disclosures or breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Risk Management strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- Maintenance of strategies to promote student participation & empowerment in creating an environment where they feel respected, valued and are capable of reaching their full potential.

Achievements

In order to continue to embed and implement Ministerial Order No 870 during 2020 the school undertook the following steps:

- Details contained within Ministerial Order No 870 were reviewed by staff, board members and parish team at the beginning of the school year and consequently discussed throughout the year
- The School's Plan of Action to support school implementation of the Ministerial Order requirements was reviewed and updated along with St Columba's Child Safety Standards Booklet
- The Child-Safety Team, consisting of members of the school leadership team to support ongoing implementation of the child safe standards met regularly to ensure the implementation of the Plan of Action

- Existing policies e.g. student wellbeing, social media, cybersafety, child safety code of conduct, recruitment policy were reviewed and/ or updated for VRQA compliance
- School practice in each of the following school environments were reviewed:
 - excursions and camps
 - out-of-hours activity
 - interschool sport
 - remote learning
 - use of technology, messaging and smart phones and watches
- All members of the community volunteers, clergy, staff, CRTs, BASC, contractors are informed annually and are required to reacknowledge and sign our code of conduct before engaging in any works volunteer or otherwise in the school
- Policies are on the website and parents are informed via the newsletter, parent information night and website
- Child safety is regularly addressed at staff professional learning meetings as part of Student Wellbeing with a particular emphasis on building staff confidence in delivering age appropriate education about child protection awareness including healthy and respectful relationships
- Student Wellbeing and SEL program aligned with Respectful Relationships
- Biannually we engage Interrelate to speak with parents Years 3-6 and to engage with students Years 3-6 with regard to respectful relationships.
- During staff professional learning there was a continued emphasis on unpacking the Personal and Social capability of the Victorian Curriculum, understanding and using the Berry St Model and the Bounce Back Program to explicitly teach SEL, protective behaviours and resilience
- Our Units of Inquiry where appropriate and authentic include: the elements of the personal and social capability, protective behaviours, resilience and explicit teaching of Social Emotional Learning.
- Continued work with staff during staff professional learning to assist them to be able to empower and encourage children to participate in creating a child safe and inclusive school
- Child Safety and what can be done to minimise the risk of abuse, neglect, or harm is a regular feature of the weekly staff news
- Implementation of 'PROTECT, Identifying and Responding to all Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools
- Continued to strengthen the process of student engagement in conversations relating to Child Safety and development of effective strategies through the SRC and by including Child safety in our units of Inquiry and SEL lessons. This includes:
 - Consulting directly with our students about what they think makes their school safe.
 - Giving children information regarding their rights.
 - Teaching students how to raise concerns and, make complaints or let someone know if they feel unsafe.
- Reviewing the Child Friendly Code of Conduct for the school with SRC

- All children in the school are made aware of this code of conduct through SEL lessons with their classroom teachers
- The school is an eSmart school
- Principal and Deputy participated in the MARAM training and have begun the implementation process
- All policies were updated for VRQA and in accordance to MACS requirements

Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To embed a strong professional learning culture of mutual trust and support with a focus on sustainable school improvement.

- That staff will be empowered to be high quality teachers and to improve student- learning outcomes

Achievements

During 2021 our staff focus was to continue to strengthen our concept of high performing expert teams, ownership, clarity, professional growth and giving and receiving effective feedback. Our 2021 MACSSIS data showed that in all areas of the staff survey we are well above the MACS average, revealing a strong organisational culture within our school. With 2021 being a review year for us, we wished to consolidate the work we have been doing across the last four years of our School Improvement Plan and to complete both the IB verification and MACS school Reviews.

I am pleased to announce that we are now an officially recognised as an authorised IB World school. The feedback and many commendations that we received from both the Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools (MACS) review and the International Baccalaureate verification visit both show how far we have come as a school over the past four years. This has been an exciting part of our school's journey, and we look forward to embedding the recommendations and initiatives that we have implemented and will be implementing over the next four years.

Some of our other achievements for 2021 were:

- Re-establishment of new teams at each level including new LSOs and those who have moved levels and DSTs
- Clearer role descriptions for all roles within the school
- Focus on clarity on first day back
- Website updated as needed to keep current
- Peer to peer observations
- Learning Walks
- Professional goals and learning plans for all staff meetings completed
- All members of the school community required to sign Code of Conduct annually
- Nature Play stage 2 begun with working bees to establish new plants and planting of trees etc by children
- COVID-19 5 day lockdown - we moved to online learning swiftly and were able to support our students with an online presence and technology
- COVID -19 regular updates to parents, protocols put in place and work to ensure we can support home learning and online learning should we have another lock down this year.
- Cleaning precautions maintained re COVID-19

- Parent exchange days - each staff given a day either face to face, phone, or zoom well taken up by parents
- Support in place for the new teachers to the school - all appointed a mentor teacher
- Regular PYP updates and messaging through the newsletter
- Regular PYP focused professional learning for teachers.
- Visit by our consultant Marcia as a pre- verification visit.
- All teaching staff completed Making the PYP happen over the two school closure days
- All LSOs had an afternoon re PYP
- SWIF grant in place for another year
- Participation of teaching staff in the Victorian PYP network teach meets
- eSmart team continued and school awarded eSamart school status
- New model for Learning Diversity implemented
- Community leader in contact with Kinders and working with the SAC enrolment working group to attract enrolments to the school and reinforcing school presence in the community
- Information Sharing training completed by principal and deputy
- Remote learning 4.0 two weeks May-June
- NAPLAN online
- Broadband width increased for the school
- COVID prevention inspection took place and we were given the all clear
- Asbestos report completed. Must be done every 5 years and in place for VRQA
- VRQA documentation and MACS policy rewrites completed by 12 July deadline
- Website audit undertaken
- Social media campaign increased and streamlined
- Continuation of advertising - More than a school campaign
- Data discussion meetings held with teachers each term
- PSGs conducted online
- Time given to staff to complete F&P testing and NCCD
- OHS visit completed
- CCI Insurance review completed 5 June
- Collection of data for the review process in Leadership & Management sphere, Community and Wellbeing. Surveyed staff and Board. Staff allocated to a group to commence work on the SIF rubric and collection of evidence of the core capabilities in these spheres.
- ECSI survey completed.
- Investigations into a Master plan feasibility undertaken. Architects have been suggested after talks with Fergus Chisholm
- All new MACS policies adopted and adapted and required policy loaded onto school website

- Focus on Review and IB verification in term 3 - completed the SIF rubric for the remaining spheres with supporting evidence; collection of evidence for verification
- OHS audit
- Child safety compliance audit completed
- VRQA documentation gathered
- Updating of EMP and drawings/procedures
- New School bell/ PA installed
- Purchase of new Chrome laptops for 2022 and PC locker
- Remote policy reviewed and updated
- Painting exterior of school completed
- Restoration of upstairs windows
- Learning walks - during zoom sessions with class teachers
- SAC terms of reference completed and presented to the current board which will finish at the end of 2021
- Wellbeing of staff, students and families: hampers, food deliveries, etc during lockdown
- New protocols for the return to school in place
- School zoned and bubbles formed
- Continuous updating of COVID safe plans
- All staff double vaccinated
- Protocols in place for vaccination status of visitors to school in place, including collection of vacc status
- Shade sails grant application approved \$25000
- Discussion of developing area outside between church and school and quotes underway
- Completed MACS review
- Completed IB verification visit
- Verified as a IB world school
- Parish education board for 2021 disbanded and new SAC formed for commencement 2022 in line with new terms of reference
- MACS Policies updated again - new policies include confessional fees and mandatory vaccinations
- MACSSIS survey undertaken by staff, students Year 4-6 and parents
- Uniform discussion and changes implemented to winter girls uniform.
- Contract between MACS, school and Andy' Before and Aftercare in place (no longer with the Parish because of governance changes)

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2021

CPR Training online modules and face to face

Dynamiq emergency management warden training online modules and face to face

Southern Digital Network

RE Network

SWIF Network

Learning Diversity Network

Student Wellbeing Network

PYP Network

Principal Network

Deputy Principal Network

NCCD

Matt Glover - Writing workshops

ECSI

RE - Prayer and Pedagogy of Encounter, Gospels, Laudato Si, role of the teacher in a Catholic School

Training for new REL

Accreditation for staff

Peer to peer observations

Scripture, sacraments, prayer, church ritual and seasons - Fr John

Making the PYP Happen

PYP - From Principals into Practice professional reading and learning

Wellbeing during COVID-19 including mindfulness and meditation

Inclusion -SMART spelling and upskilling in assessments

Sustainability and nature play

Art

Maths

Coaching and Mentoring

Mandatory Reporting

MARAM

Literature and Inquiry- Kath Murdoch

Kath Murdoch - Inquiry in the early years work with teachers

- Introduction to the Language of the PYP
- Teach Meets - PYP network
- Seesaw upskilling
- Essential Assessment upskilling
- Assessment - F&P
- Remote Learning: podcasts, zoom professional learning (Chapter International etc)
- Asia Pacific PYP remote 3 day conference online
- PETAA online conference
- Starting your Reconciliation Journey
- Staff undertaking Masters in Educational Leadership

The majority of professional learning was conducted online during 2021 and during COVID and lockdowns a significant proportion was freely available to teachers especially through the various networks we belong to. As such we were able to access high quality professional learning without incurring any additional costs. It also provided the opportunity to engage with international speakers.

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2021	17
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$750

TEACHER SATISFACTION

This was the last year of our current SIP and during past four years there has been a significant emphasis on ensuring we were creating high performing expert teams. Our MACSSIS data demonstrates that as a staff we are performing significantly higher than the MACS positive response % average across all areas of the survey. This was especially evident in the areas of collaboration, school climate, collective efficacy, staff -leadership relationships, staff safety, instructional leadership and professional learning which were all above the 80% positive response rate. With our continuing work on feedback, the use of Peer to Peer observations and Learning Walks we hope to see further improvement in the areas of feedback and agency resulting in teachers feeling they can take ownership and risks with their learning.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	81.9%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	87.5%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	12.5%
Graduate	12.5%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	75.0%
Advanced Diploma	0.0%
No Qualifications Listed	12.5%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	21.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	15.7
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	13.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	9.1
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	1.0

School Community

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To foster a positive school community, which is actively engaged to inspire and improve student learning.

- That student learning and well-being is improved through strengthened partnerships between home, school and the wider community.

Achievements

During the 2021-year, St Columba's school community continued to prioritise parent-school - parish partnerships. Parents contribute in myriad ways to our community: classroom helpers, book week, assisting with excursions and incursions, Green Team, running club, school snow team and Resource Smart Schools. The list of ways parents participate in our school is exhaustive and cannot all be captured here. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions much of this was conducted online, postponed or cancelled. Our challenge for the year was to find other ways of connecting with our families and the broader community.

Parents continued to participate in the more formal settings of PFA and Parent Education Board. The PFA works tirelessly to connect parents socially and to raise money so that the school can purchase resources for the students. The Education Board works with parish and school to strengthen community relationships and assist the school to meet the school's improvement goals. During 2021 the capacity of the PFA to fundraise and to contribute to school life was inhibited by COVID restrictions. Nonetheless, they continued to find ways online to maintain community and then once restrictions were eased to bring our community together. These parents give their time and expertise to make the school an even better place. Our thanks go to them, and all parents, who work in, support and encourage the school.

The Before and After School Care service at St Columba's is very much a part of our community. In 2014 the school applied to become the service provider, taking over that role from the Parish. During 2019 and further discussion with Fr John we began the process of separating BASC from the school, meaning it would become its own entity- Andy's Before and Aftercare. The BASC provides a highly professional and engaging service for the community that is very much valued particularly by working parents. Run by a team of qualified staff, the morning session starts at 7am and the afternoon session finishes at 6.30pm. Two BASC staff also work part-time in the school in support staff roles, which creates wonderful links between the school and the service. BASC continues to provide a very much-needed service for our community and was operational throughout the lockdown period.

As a result of our school review in 2017 and subsequent survey data in the years since, our goal to foster a positive school community, which is actively engaged to inspire and improve student learning, has led to further changes in school practices during 2021. For instance, the Marqt and the Green Team initiatives. The Marqt was a wonderful community event that brought our community together just before the first lockdown of 2021. Our Green team parents are a remarkable group of people who continued to work tirelessly to help ensure sustainability is front and foremost in our school and together with our sustainability leader they have helped in setting up our kitchen garden program, applying for grant submissions and have assisted in the realization of our nature play area.

This is a wonderful expression of community spirit and commitment. It highlights the benefits of family - school partnerships which are so vital in assisting children to get the most out of their schooling. All these events are examples of our strong commitment to building partnerships that are based on mutual trust, respect, and shared responsibility for the education of the children at our school. At St Columba's family involvement plays an important part of the core business of our school.

We have a significant relationship with the Parish and work together for not only the Sacramental Programs but also for many community programs. In 2019, we started our playgroup with the assistance of the parish. This was initially to make connections with young families within our parish but has extended beyond this. This continued in 2021 but once again with COVID we could no longer offer playgroup. The parish also involve themselves closely with the school assisting with many of the school events and connecting with families at assemblies. And we reciprocate this by maintaining our strong connection with Sacred Heart Mission and the St Vincent de Paul arm of our parish.

During 2021 we continued to work with the Port Phillip Eco Centre to improve our school's sustainability and maintain our 5 star ResourceSmart school ranking. Leaders from the Eco Centre worked with teachers, our Year 3/4 Eco-warriors and parent Green Team members mostly via zoom after term one. With most of the year in lockdown it was challenging to participate in person, but we did make our presence felt in the community by participating online in a variety of initiatives and our Year 5/6 children participated in the 'Kids Teaching Kids' conference once again in 2021.

PARENT SATISFACTION

During 2021, we continued to focus on school - parent - parish- community partnerships. The emphasis we placed on this relationship saw our parent satisfaction continue to remain solid especially during Remote Learning. The feedback received in 2020 helped us to ensure we had clear processes in place for the return to remote learning. Anecdotally parents in 2021 were particularly positive about the school and the way remote learning and communication was conducted. The MACSSIS data supports this, and we can see the school is clearly above the MACSSIS average in the areas of communication, school climate, school fit and student safety.

Despite the lockdown we continued to place strong emphasis on strong family - school- parish - community connections by providing families with as many opportunities as we could to be involved in their child's learning, the school, teachers and parish. Despite MACSSIS data indicating a slight drop in engagement, we strongly believe this is because of the restrictions that were in place over the year and the impact of two years of remote learning.

In 2022, we look forward to welcoming families and parents back onsite and reversing this trend by placing more emphasis on Family Engagement - the degree to which families become involved with and interact with their child's school. Whilst family involvement is traditionally very high, we would like to see greater take up of families to become partners with us in their child's learning. We hope to be able to do this through encouraging the continued use of Seesaw (which was used during remote learning) as not only a learning platform but as a platform that enables progressive insight into children's learning. And by welcoming back parents to the

school and to participate in the many opportunities available for them to be involved in their child's learning and the life of the school.

Future Directions

MACS Reviewer recommendations:

As St. Columba's Primary School engages in the process of strategic thinking and planning, manifesting in the development of its School Improvement Plan for the next four years, the reviewer recommends that the school:

- Continue to focus on the establishment of the IB Primary Years Program with a particular emphasis on student learning growth in Mathematics through transdisciplinary Programs of Inquiry and in core subjects and STEM.
- Using the Pedagogy of Encounter and explicit RE Learning Intentions and Success Criteria embed a transdisciplinary approach to Religious Education so that students can make links between global issues, sustainability and social justice and the gospel message and catholic social teaching and tradition.
- Develop professional appraisal programs using the current peer-to-peer and learning walks programs with a focus on:
 1. Moving from supportive colleague to professional critical friend
 2. Increasing understandings of differentiation and personal learning for all students
 3. Authentic use of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria to support student understanding and learning outcomes
 4. Increasing student agency and engagement in curriculum co-design, planning and evaluation in a way that is age and stage appropriate.

Recommendations from the IB included:

- Continuing to broaden our assessment approaches and the giving of feedback
- Working with our specialist staff to plan subject specific units of inquiry that embrace PYP planning processes and principles
- Developing practices to better include students and parents in the planning of units of inquiry

School Improvement Plan 2022-2025

Priority One: Culture of Growth

Goals:

To develop the capacity for all stakeholders to critically reflect on practice

To embed student and teacher goal setting & feedback practices in the school

Intended Outcomes:

That there is a shared understanding & consistency of pedagogical approaches across the school

That teacher professional learning plans are aligned with the school improvement plan

That teachers are comfortable giving/receiving feedback

That students are using the language of feedback

Priority Two: Agency for Engagement

Goal:

To enable all stakeholders to have agency in the learning at the school

Intended Outcomes:

That students and staff are more confident, motivated and engaged learners who experience success

That all stakeholders have voice, choice and ownership

That student outcomes will show growth

Priority Three: Transdisciplinary Learning

Goal:

To provide the knowledge, skills, dispositions and understandings for students to participate in a contemporary world

Intended Outcome:

That students' understanding of their Catholic identity informs their actions

That transdisciplinary learning is reflected across the school

That there is a shared understanding of transdisciplinary learning amongst all stakeholders