



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

2023

Annual Report to the School Community



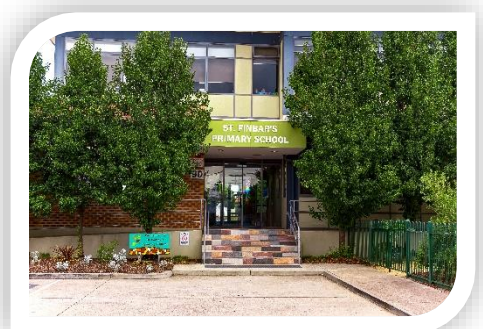
St Finbar's School

90 Centre Road, BRIGHTON EAST 3187

Principal: Michelle Hill

Web: www.sfbrightoneast.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 1221, E Number: E1111



Principal's Attestation

I, Michelle Hill, attest that St Finbar's School is compliant with:

- The minimum standards and other requirements for school registration and school boarding premises (if applicable) as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic).
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2023 school year under the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth) and the Australian Education Regulations 2023 (Cth).
- The Child Safe Standards as prescribed in Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises.

Attested on 28 Jun 2024



About this report

St Finbar's School is registered by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). The Annual Report to the School Community (ARSC), provides parents and the wider community with information about the school's activities and achievements throughout the year including information about various aspects of school performance. The Report is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the school community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students. Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can also be obtained from the [My School website](#).



Governing Authority Report

When Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) launched our inaugural strategic plan MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World just over a year ago, I spoke about the need for our whole organisation to reflect on the biggest challenges that confront us, and to work at speed to find practical, ambitious, student-centred solutions.

As a relatively new governing authority, 2023 set us on the path to achieving our first goals, as we focussed our efforts on building strong foundations for success. The four pillars of MACS2030 – Inspired by Faith; Flourishing Learners; Enabled Leaders; and Enriched Communities - serve to guide our work on how we achieve our strategic intent.

When we surveyed our teachers in late 2022, over 80 per cent told us that they want access to quality teaching and assessment resources. So in January 2023, we secured a system-wide licence for MACS primary and secondary schools to access the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) assessment suite. The inclusion of the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Survey allows schools to monitor the wellbeing of their students and target resourcing to specific areas of need. Together, these tools provide a coherent and systematic approach to student assessment.

In partnership with Ochre Education, we began work on F-6 Mathematics curriculum resources, being developed in a phased approach over three years, and delivered the first tranche for F-2. A key consideration in developing the materials is ensuring teachers retain autonomy to tailor curriculum implementation to meet the individual and local needs of students.

This is an exciting development for our MACS community, clearly demonstrating the commitment we all share to delivering the best possible education opportunities for our 120,000 students and supporting our 10,000 classroom teachers to be the very best that they can be.

Archbishop Peter commissioned a comprehensive review of Religious Education curriculum, the first in over a decade. It offers us some challenges, but fundamentally is a hope-filled report that invites a path of ongoing work to develop a new RE curriculum for all Catholic schools. We continued Working Together in Mission with Parish Priests throughout the Archdiocese, including through regular roundtable discussions.

Across greater Melbourne, one in five students attend a Catholic school and 2023 saw steady growth in enrolments across our system, demonstrating the value families place on a Catholic education and the high quality, holistic education MACS schools provide.

As a system of schools, we can be better together, reducing the administrative load on our schools and freeing our teachers and principals to focus on what they do best.

I would like to pay tribute to our MACS school and office colleagues who have worked so hard to achieve our goals. We look forward to further strengthening those partnerships as we work together to deliver an education that inspires young people to enrich the world.

Yours sincerely

Dr Edward Simons

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd



Vision and Mission

Vision Statement

St Finbar's is a Catholic Primary School Community which aims to provide a safe, supportive and dynamic learning environment in which each member is respected and nurtured.

Mission Statement

St. Finbar's is a school where:

- all members are nurtured to grow in their Catholic Faith and Spirituality with a focus on our Catholic Social Teachings and Social Justice.
- students are encouraged and supported to participate fully in an ever changing global community, supported by a curriculum which meets their individual learning needs.
- we value each member as an individual whilst nurturing their social and emotional wellbeing.
- structures and practices are put in place to ensure that all members of the community have the opportunity to grow.
- positive partnerships between school, home and parish are fostered to strengthen our relationships and promote active community involvement.

The school enacts its philosophy in its deeds and actions and through the curriculum.



School Overview

School Overview

St Finbar's Parish, Primary School is situated beside the historic St Finbar's Church on the corner of Centre Road and Nepean Highway, East Brighton.

Formerly known as St Patrick's Parish of Little Brighton, the church was opened in a newly erected weatherboard building on April 30, 1848, with Mass. The school shared this building with the church for three months and in June 1848, St Finbar's School was opened in another small, wooden building on the site.

With the development of plans for a Melbourne Cathedral, the Archbishop requested that the name Patrick be given to this project, hence St Patrick's Little Brighton took the name of St Finbar's - a truly Irish saint. The weatherboard church and school, 'the first Catholic Church erected in the suburban area of Melbourne' have long since disappeared and have been replaced by the present buildings. None of the original buildings remain as many of them were demolished during the 1970s with the widening of Nepean Highway.

The school was originally founded and staffed by lay teachers. Between 1906 and 1908, the Presentation Sisters taught in the school. They then returned to run the school in 1925 and remained until 1974. Due to decreasing numbers and a redefining of their mission, the Sisters handed on the tradition of quality education to a lay administration and teachers, and this legacy lives on today.



Principal's Report

It is my pleasure to present the Principal's Annual Report for the year 2023. 2023 was a year of great change for St Finbar's with myself, Michelle Hill, taking over as Acting Principal from August.

It was the 150th anniversary of education at St Finbar's in 2023, and we were proud to lead the procession into St Patrick's Cathedral for St Patrick's Day Mass. Our school production of Alice in Wonderland in August was an absolute highlight of the year. The professionalism of this production was a credit to all involved. This biannual event always brings the community together and is a highlight of the year. Other whole school events included our first Colour Run and Italian Day.

We officially farewelled our outgoing Principal Mr Pat Berlinger in November with a whole school celebration of his eight years at St Finbar's. This was an opportunity for staff, students and parents to thank Pat for his many contributions to the school.

We are fortunate to have a strong leadership team with a shared understanding of what constitutes high quality education practices. In 2023 our leadership focus was on growth for all students in reading, regardless of their starting point, and our involvement in the Southern Region's School Wide Improvement Forum helped to drive our work in this area. I need to make particular mention of Mr Steele Anderson and Mrs Peggy McDonald, our Deputy Principals who were, and continue to be, a tremendous source of support to me as I took on the role of Acting Principal.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for your contribution to our school. It is through your efforts that we continue to grow and succeed.



Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To develop the capacity of teachers to dialogue with students about matters of faith

Intended Outcomes:

That teachers feel confident initiating and leading discussions with their class about matters of faith.

Achievements

Religious Education is the Key Learning area unique to Catholic schools. The course content is outlined in documents produced by the Religious Education Department of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools and further developed by staff.

Students learn about the doctrine and traditions of the Catholic faith and are also provided with many opportunities to participate in Catholic practices. Liturgies are planned and celebrated to mark major Church seasons and events. Junior grades share in a Prayer Night, which involves the students, parents and teachers.

Sacramental Programs are central to the existence of St Finbar's as a Catholic school. Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation are whole school celebrations, which also aims to provide opportunities for parents to reflect on their own personal faith journey. Sacramental/Family nights are held prior to each of these celebrations. These nights, together with Family/Class Masses and Class Prayer Nights are intended to bring families together to support them on their faith journey.

Value Added

- The Religious Education Leader prepared a resource each week to assist teachers to discuss that week's Gospel with their classes

- Elio Capra was our keynote speaker at our staff conference, delivering an informative session on prayer.
- Regular attendance at the Religious Education Leader's Network Days.
- Whole-School Masses at the beginning and/or end of term
- Family Masses for each year level
- Year 6 Social Justice Leaders ran an active program, including St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal and Socktober
- Drew Lane helped us to celebrate our 175th anniversary with a full day program on St Finbar's Day, culminating in a whole school concert



Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To enhance the learning outcomes of all students by developing a consistent approach to a differentiated contemporary curriculum

To implement highly effective teaching strategies, using research-based teaching practices, to ensure that every student is engaged and challenged

Intended outcomes:

That there is an increased capacity of teachers to plan for high quality instruction in reading that moves across bands where necessary

That there is growth of all students in reading and students can articulate how they have been challenged and where they are at and where they move to next

Achievements

In 2023 our area of focus for professional development was in the area of Reading. All teaching staff participated in professional development with Mary Ann Rugg (MACS) on the the Simple View of Reading, Scarborough's Reading Rope and Seven Pillars of Reading.

Data analysis continued to be a focus during Literacy PLTs, using a combination of data sets (including PAT Data) with a focus on growth and teachers reflecting on patterns at the cohort and individual level. We introduced a digital data wall to track and monitor individual students' achievement over time. We introduced DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) assessment, including training for leaders and teaching staff

Three school leaders participated in the Response to Intervention program run by MACS, which allowed us to reflect on our data collection and how we use this data to best support our students.

Student Learning Outcomes

Our Naplan results in 2023 continue to be of a high standard with students in Year 3 and 5 performing above the State in all areas. Student progress is tracked through ACER Performance Analysis Testing - PAT Maths and Reading (November), and we use this to

track student growth over time. In 2023, 89.3% of our Year 3 children performing Strong or Exceeding in Reading

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	453	80%
	Year 5	520	80%
Numeracy	Year 3	430	79%
	Year 5	536	93%
Reading	Year 3	449	91%
	Year 5	536	89%
Spelling	Year 3	438	74%
	Year 5	527	95%
Writing	Year 3	443	91%
	Year 5	522	89%

*A school’s NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2023 due to participation not meeting these criteria or no students were assessed. Participants include students who were assessed, including non-attempt, or those exempted from the test.



Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To empower students to have self-efficacy and agency in their own learning.

Intended Outcomes:

That students will be able to articulate their learning goals and identify their strengths and challenges in each learning area (including Faith Development)

That teachers are providing regular opportunities for feedback and metacognition conversations

Achievements

Wellbeing continues to be a high priority for us at St Finbar's with a strong belief that children need to feel happy and safe at school, before they can be ready to learn. We introduced the Respectful Relationships program in 2023, which ran alongside the Resilience Project program that was already in operation. Once again the Wellbeing Team met regularly to discuss specific student concerns and wellbeing initiatives. We raised the profile of Harmony Day in 2023 with a whole school dress up day, parade and classroom activities. The Year 6 Wellbeing Leaders designed Child-Friendly versions of the Child Safe Standards which were displayed prominently around the school. In May students in Years 3 - 6 completed the Youth Resilience Survey and we discussed the results of this survey as a Wellbeing Team, and with classroom teachers in PLTs.

Value Added

Adoption of the Respectful Relations Program from Prep to Year 6

SEL lessons scheduled in every class on Mondays at 2:30pm

Celebration Week held in the first week of the school year with Relationship building a key focus.

School values prominently displayed in classrooms and corridors
Ongoing support for students, parents and staff through resourcing of a Student Wellbeing Leader and a Learning Diversity Leader.
Regular Student Wellbeing meetings with the Wellbeing Team.
Brighton Cluster Schools student day for Years 5/6.
Sex Education and Protective Behaviours Sessions
Year 6 student and teacher buddy program.
Articles promoting Student Wellbeing published weekly in the school newsletter
School Psychologist for students who require support
Term Program Support Meetings for students identified on the NCCD program (PSGs).
Continue to involve Year 6 students in public relations activities e.g. Assembly, Open Days, St Patrick's Cathedral - Catholic Education Week Mass.
Continuing the Year 6 playground mentor program and the Prep / Year 5 Buddy program.
Further enhancing the Year 5 Leadership day
Continuing the Student Representative Council (SRC) meetings for Years P-6

Teachers shared strategies for how they set goals with their children in PLTs and some teachers developed their professional learning goal around 'Student Goal Setting'.

Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction is above the MACS average in all areas with 69% of students reporting that they feel connected, safe and respected while at school and an overall positive endorsement of 69%.

Rigorous expectations 80%

School engagement 40%

School climate 76%

Teacher-student relationships 83%

School belonging 66%

Learning disposition 67%

Student safety 72%

Enabling safety 69%

Student voice 60%

Catholic identity 68%

Student Attendance

At St Finbar's we use the NForma program to monitor student attendance. Parents are notified via an automated email of any unexplained student absence. Classroom teachers reach out to families if there are absences of more than two days without parent contact. Repeat absenteeism is followed up by the Deputy Principal or Principal, and we follow MACS Attendance policies and guidelines for cases of chronic absenteeism.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	91.8%
Y02	90.1%
Y03	89.5%
Y04	92.6%
Y05	91.4%
Y06	88.8%
Overall average attendance	90.7%



Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

- To implement highly effective teaching strategies, using research-based teaching practices, to ensure that every student is engaged and challenged

Intended Outcomes:

- That professional development is in line with differentiated, high quality and evidence based pedagogy.
- That teachers are deliberate in their use of High Impact Teaching Strategies to cater for differentiation in all curriculum areas.

Achievements

Six members of the Leadership team attended the Southern Region's School Wide Improvement Forum each term

Regular fortnightly Leadership meetings

Refined Annual Review Process for teaching staff

All staff participated in Educator Impact program - eliciting feedback from self, students and peers and setting goals based on feedback places our school in a strong financial position.



Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
School Wide Improvement Forum (SWIF)	
Mandatory Reporting online modules	
Literacy professional development for all staff with Mary Ann Rugg (MACS)	
Participation in Graduate mentor program	
Emergency Management Training Student Wellbeing Network	
Regular attendance at Deputy Network	
Regular attendance at South Central Principal Network	
Catholic Identity and prayer with Fr. Elio Capra	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	38
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$395.00

Teacher Satisfaction

Results of the MACSIS survey show that relationships between staff and leadership are positive with Perceptions of the quality of relationships between staff and members of the leadership team at 96%. Our Collective efficacy is particularly high at 98%.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	14.8%
Graduate	14.8%
Graduate Certificate	14.8%
Bachelor Degree	44.4%
Advanced Diploma	7.4%
No Qualifications Listed	3.7%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	4
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	28
Teaching Staff (FTE)	24.3
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	15
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	11.6
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	1



Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals:

To be a community that encourages growth and nurtures student learning through opportunities and supportive partnerships with parents, parish and the wider community.

Intended outcomes:

That participation and engagement with parents and community will grow to benefit student learning outcomes.

Parents are aware of our approach to differentiation and feel that they are part of their child's learning.

Achievements

School colour run introduced as a P&F community event and fundraiser

Maintained Seesaw as a form of communication between home and school

Continued to build relationships with local kindergartens (Guardian, St Mary's, Hurlingham) and Aged Care Homes (Mayflower and Classic Residences)

Regular Family Masses on weekends and Family Faith Nights

Comprehensive transition and orientation program for Prep 2024 students to support incoming Prep students

Class Newsletters sent out each term

Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) program each morning and afternoon, on pupil free days and term holidays. Holiday program open to the wider community.

Onsite Uniform Shop.

Parent Satisfaction

Parent satisfaction was high in 2023, as evidenced by the positive results in the Family Domain of the 2023 MACSIS survey. Our results in the area of Family Engagement were particularly positive, compared to our 2022 results and compared to other MACS schools. 95% of parents indicated that they would recommend St Finbar's to prospective families.

Our 2023 Parent MACSIS Data is as follows:

Family Engagement - 65%

School Fit - 82%

School Climate - 88%

Student Safety - 79%

Communication - 80%

Catholic Identity 71%



Financial Performance

The school's financial performance information and a report of the financial activities of the school's boarding premises (if applicable) have 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.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at www.sfbrightoneast.catholic.edu.au

