Vision for Engagement

Flourishing Learners position statement

Supporting students to become resilient, confident learners

Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

Foreword from Archbishop Peter A Comensoli

Each Catholic school community works together to encourage the growth, flourishing and transformation of their students. 'We seek to draw out our students' gifts, address their challenges and enable them to experience fullness of life' (NCEC 2022, p. 8).

Faith, hope and love are manifest in the care of the school, in partnership with parents, families and faith communities.

As the journey of *Vision for Engagement* begins, I affirm to all members of the school community – students, parents and educators – that the task of providing an education for the children entrusted to the care of MACS schools is not only one of hope, but is a privilege and a joy, as well as a witness of tremendous faith.

When we know how to recognise the voice of God, we discover the joy and beauty of being in relationship with the Creator of the universe. When we know how to pray, our faith becomes lived and tangible, and a radiant witness to others.

'I praise you, for I am wonderfully made' (Psalm 139: 14).

Foreword from Dr Edward Simons, Executive Director

The MACS *Vision for Engagement* is our faith-inspired and evidence-informed system-wide commitment to nurturing calm, respectful, and inclusive learning environments where students are best supported to thrive academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

Developed as a companion to the MACS *Vision for Instruction*, it represents another leap towards delivering the Flourishing Learners ambition set out in our MACS 2030 strategy.

Firmly anchored in our Catholic faith and guided by contemporary educational research, the MACS *Vision for Engagement* focuses on upholding the dignity of every child in our care and reflects our enduring dedication to forming lives to enrich the world.

Motivated by the expectations of our parents and staff, MACS is harnessing international best practice to foster learning environments that are calm, settled and focused. Evidence shows that learning improves when students feel safe and expectations are clear. Respectful behaviour, consistent routines, and shared expectations contribute to better student engagement while enabling our staff to perform at their best. With 17,000 staff reinforcing the same high standards, all students are able to receive the care, attention and support they need.

Vision for Engagement is an authentically Catholic model of equity in action, where excellence is not just reserved for some, but expected for all. In a world of rising complexity and declining attention spans, MACS is intentionally treating student engagement as a core developmental focus. Behavioural norms and routines will be embedded like literacy and numeracy skills, through explicit teaching, consistent reinforcement and shared expectations.

In this context, our approach to classroom technology and device use is constantly evolving in the best interests of our students. Schools are already limiting unnecessary screen time to improve focus, reduce anxiety and restore the dignity of human connection. Especially in the early primary years, young and still forming minds require more screens to go down and more eyes to go up.

With the release of *Vision for Engagement*, MACS is focused on developing and deploying system-wide professional learning support, expanded resources, policy changes, and monitoring so that our teachers and leaders can create environments where students and staff feel safe, respected and empowered to flourish.

I commend the extensive research, consultation and care underpinning this work, and thank all our staff committed to embedding continual improvement across our system of nearly 300 Catholic schools.

Foreword from Dr Mary Oski, Director, Education Excellence

Vision for Engagement strengthens our commitment to improving learning outcomes for every student by building on the foundations established in *Vision for Instruction*. These two position statements are intentionally interdependent. They reflect a unified approach where high-quality teaching drives meaningful student engagement and recognise that the impact of such teaching cannot be truly realised without ensuring that students are fully engaged. Together, they provide a cohesive framing for the MACS 2030 Flourishing Learners strategic program and ensure all students have access to a rich, purposeful education.

Vision for Engagement directly supports the achievement of our two system goals:

- Goal 1 – Excellence: All MACS schools deliver a knowledge-rich, evidence-based teaching and learning program.
- Goal 2 – Equity: Every student, regardless of background, achieves literacy and numeracy proficiency.
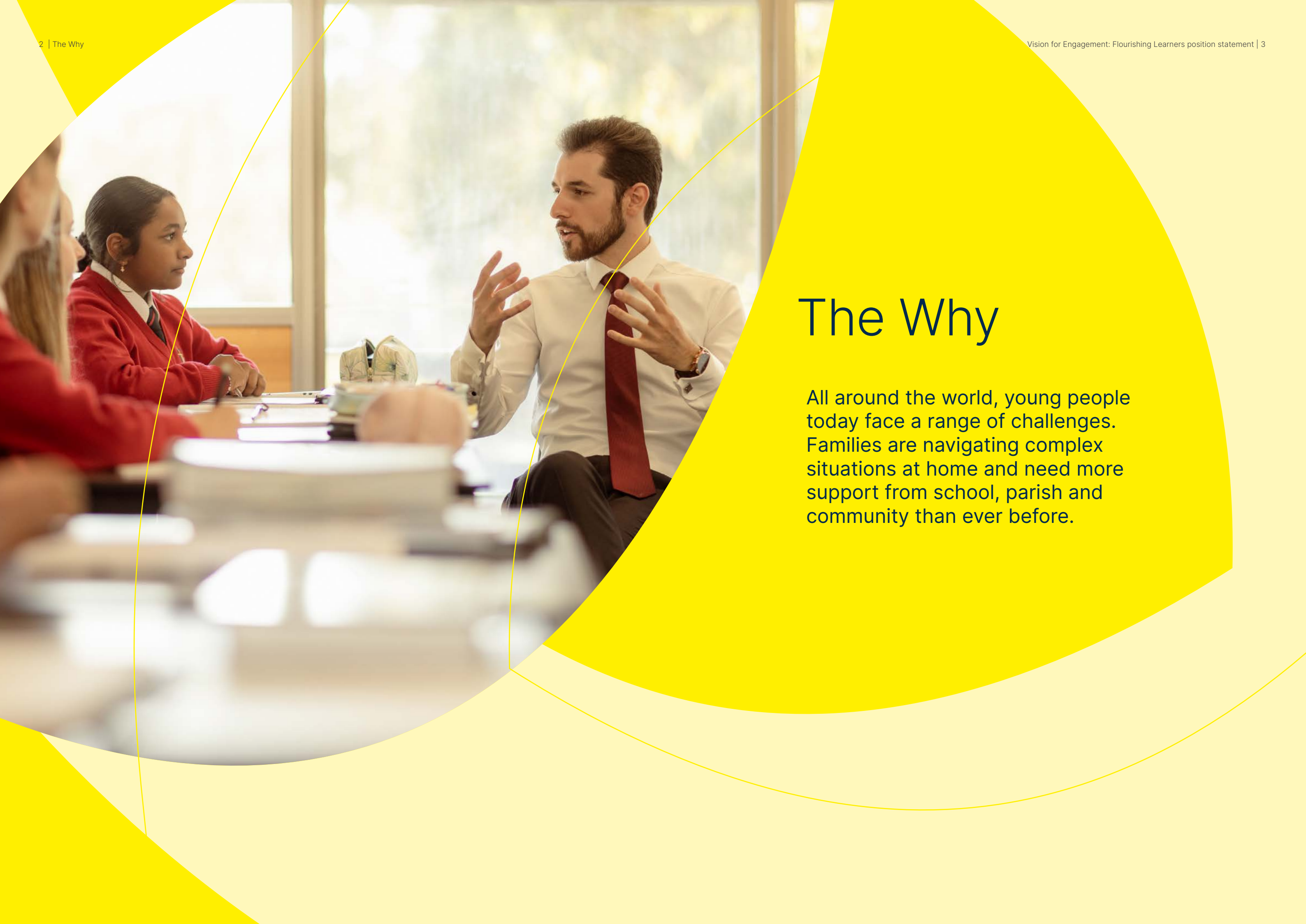
It reinforces an evidence-informed approach by supporting teachers and leaders with clear direction, impactful strategies, tools and resources to foster deeper engagement.

Vision for Engagement amplifies our shared objective: to create schools where all children and young people are welcome, and classrooms where every student is challenged, supported and inspired to reach their full potential. It encourages evidence-informed practices that have been shown to enhance student motivation, agency and connection – all contributors to effective and engaging learning in the classroom.

Ultimately, it is both a continuation and an expansion of our system-wide commitment to excellence and equity in education.

How
students
thrive

The Why

All around the world, young people today face a range of challenges. Families are navigating complex situations at home and need more support from school, parish and community than ever before.

The challenge

Engaging young people in their learning can be a significant challenge. For many students, simply attending school is the first hurdle. Across Australia, attendance rates struggle to return to pre-COVID levels. In 2019, national attendance rates were 91.4 per cent, whereas in 2024, they were 88.3 per cent (ACARA 2024).

There are increasing concerns about child mental health and resilience, both at school and at home. Increased use of technology and social media may have consequences for young people, impacting their skill development, socialisation with friends and risk of bullying and, with the research still emerging, this is a significant challenge (UNESCO 2023).

Students can also be preoccupied with issues that extend far beyond their control or the control of their school. Concerns about the cost of living, climate change, violence, safety, discrimination and inequality are prevalent among many young people in Victoria (McHale et al. 2024).

The challenges in our schools are calling us to further action. Australia was ranked 69th out of 76 countries in terms of disciplinary climate, indicating that our country's classrooms were considered among the most disorderly compared to other participating nations (OECD 2019). While school leaders are demonstrating high levels of resilience and commitment, they are facing increasing stresses including mental health concerns for their students and staff, threats to safety and challenging workloads (ACU 2025).

The current environment means that it is more important than ever for Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) to have consistent, system-wide, evidence-based strategies for improving student engagement, motivation and wellbeing in schools (Richardson et al. 2023).

Meeting these challenges is our shared work, inspired by our Catholic faith which is central to who we are and what we do, and foundational to the distinctive educational experiences we offer.

This *Vision for Engagement* is a commitment from MACS to work in partnership with students and their families to successfully navigate the issues of contemporary life so that together we may form 'lives of faith, hope and love in the light of Jesus Christ' (MACS 2023c, p. 7).

The vision

The MACS *Vision for Engagement* is for all students to be actively engaged in their learning, equipping them to thrive and make meaningful contributions to the world.

MACS is committed to excellence, where all schools deliver knowledge-rich, evidence-based programs within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) to ensure that all students can achieve excellence.

MACS strives for equity and works to ensure that every student, regardless of background or learning need, becomes proficient in literacy and numeracy.

MACS aims to create learning environments in which each student can grow in faith, hope and love, in ways that are tangible and cultivate the mind and heart of all students. We believe the Holy Spirit encounters each student with a hope for their development in such a way that every human gift is cultivated and every child celebrated. Our commitment to the Gospel and to the flourishing of every student is supportive and inclusive of all.

MACS upholds the dignity and inclusion of all students, with a particular openness to the most vulnerable and marginalised. As Pope Francis (2015) said, 'Catholic schools are called to foster *harmony in diversity*' and to '[s]trive to ensure that Catholic schools *are truly open to all*'.

Key resources

- MACS 2025: *Forming Hearts: MACS Faith Formation Framework*
- MACS 2024d: *Working Together in Mission: Charter for parishes and schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne*
- National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) 2024: *Life to the Full: The mission and purpose of Catholic schools in Australia*
- NCEC 2022: *Our Quest for Hope – The Gift of Faith: A discussion paper for families and schools in support of the journey of faith*

Our two system goals

Goal 1 – Excellence:

All MACS schools deliver a knowledge-rich, evidence-based teaching and learning program.

We believe in teaching excellence, where all teachers are empowered to implement evidence-based practices and deliver the knowledge that students need to become intellectual and moral citizens of the world.

Goal 2 – Equity:

Every student, regardless of background, achieves literacy and numeracy proficiency.

Our vision is that every student is inspired and enabled to flourish and enrich the world. The dignity and worth of each student is valued, which places the individual student at the heart of what MACS does. Our educators are dedicated to providing all students with fundamental literacy and numeracy skills, ensuring their active engagement in society while fostering lifelong learning.

Catholic principles for education in MACS schools

The five Catholic principles for education in MACS schools, as articulated in *Vision for Instruction* (MACS 2024c, pp. 6–7), are:

1 **MACS schools build communities of faith, hope and love in the light of Jesus Christ.**

2 **MACS schools are collaborative, inclusive, faith-filled communities.**

3 **MACS schools recognise the inherent dignity of every person as being created in the image of God.**

4 **The Catholic intellectual tradition emphasises the pursuit of knowledge and excellence.**

5 **We are inspired by the Gospel to act for a just society.**

The What

The MACS *Vision for Instruction* sets out how students learn. This *Vision for Engagement* describes how students thrive.

What is engagement?

At MACS, student engagement encompasses attendance, behaviour, belonging, learning, mental health and wellbeing, and motivation.

MACS recognises that improving engagement involves knowing our students academically, socially and emotionally so that teachers can attend to the needs of each student across the breadth of school life.

For students at MACS schools, engagement includes:

- ✓ attending school every day, on time
- ✓ feeling safe and connected at school
- ✓ receiving instruction that is targeted to need, and supports growth and achievement
- ✓ adopting classroom routines that ensure everyone understands expectations
- ✓ receiving a coordinated and effective system of increasingly intensive tiered interventions and supports across all areas of their learning
- ✓ feeling they belong in the school environment
- ✓ listening intently and paying attention
- ✓ persisting with complex tasks and being motivated to learn
- ✓ behaving respectfully towards others
- ✓ being supported with mental health and wellbeing
- ✓ being part of stronger partnerships between the school and family
- ✓ experiencing caring relationships with teachers and school staff.

Student engagement does not require:

- ✗ substituting challenging work for tasks that are easy and fun
- ✗ creating entertaining and fun activities in each lesson
- ✗ having all students be physically active in each lesson
- ✗ having only one mode of work, such as group or silent work
- ✗ consistently using media, like videos or games, in every lesson
- ✗ teaching students mainly about topics they already know or care about
- ✗ including student choice, inquiry or discovery learning in every unit.

Alignment with Vision for Instruction

Learning requires active engagement and sustained focus to move new information from working memory to long-term memory. *Vision for Instruction* outlines the evidence on how students learn and the instructional practices that are the foundation of great teaching. Students also need to feel safe and have a positive sense of belonging to sustain their attention in school, which helps them process and retain new knowledge more effectively (AERO 2023b).

Vision for Engagement works with *Vision for Instruction*. There are many overlapping areas of the two 'Visions' and this is purposeful. The starting point for student engagement continues to be high-quality classroom instruction for all, as outlined in *Vision for Instruction*. *Vision for Engagement* builds out practices for improving student outcomes on top of, and in combination with, how schools ensure students learn.

Vision for Instruction

Establishes high-quality instructional practices for all students

Vision for Engagement

Articulates practices that enable students to thrive

Overarching implementation expectations

Vision for Engagement describes practices which are derived from research on how students learn and thrive, as well as studies of the most successful teachers. These high-impact practices are designed to ensure all students at MACS schools flourish in our classrooms.

There are two overarching implementation expectations in all MACS schools to support student engagement:

Key resources

- Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) 2024a: Introduction to a multi-tiered system of supports
- Mccrea 2024: Alignment: The secret sauce of effective schooling?

Whole-school approach

Whole-school approaches to instruction and student engagement create a unified, consistent experience for students (De Nobile, El Baba & London 2016). When every teacher works together as part of a larger strategy, students benefit from a cohesive environment. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of community and shared purpose, where teachers can support each other, exchange ideas and implement best practices. Without this collective effort, instruction and engagement strategies might be fragmented, leading to gaps in learning and uneven student outcomes. A whole-school approach ensures that every student has equal opportunities to succeed, regardless of their teacher or classroom.

Tiered system of supports

Tiered systems of support, including an MTSS, provide a structured, flexible framework for addressing the diverse needs of all students, especially those with additional needs. By organising interventions into tiers – ranging from universal strategies for all students to more targeted, individualised support for those who need it – schools can ensure that every student receives the appropriate level of assistance. The evidence on tiered systems is robust for supporting literacy and numeracy, and is also evident in other areas, such as improving attendance and challenging behaviour. The purpose of using a tiered support system is to identify which practices are necessary for all students and which are more effective as targeted supports, based on evidence of the most at-risk students.

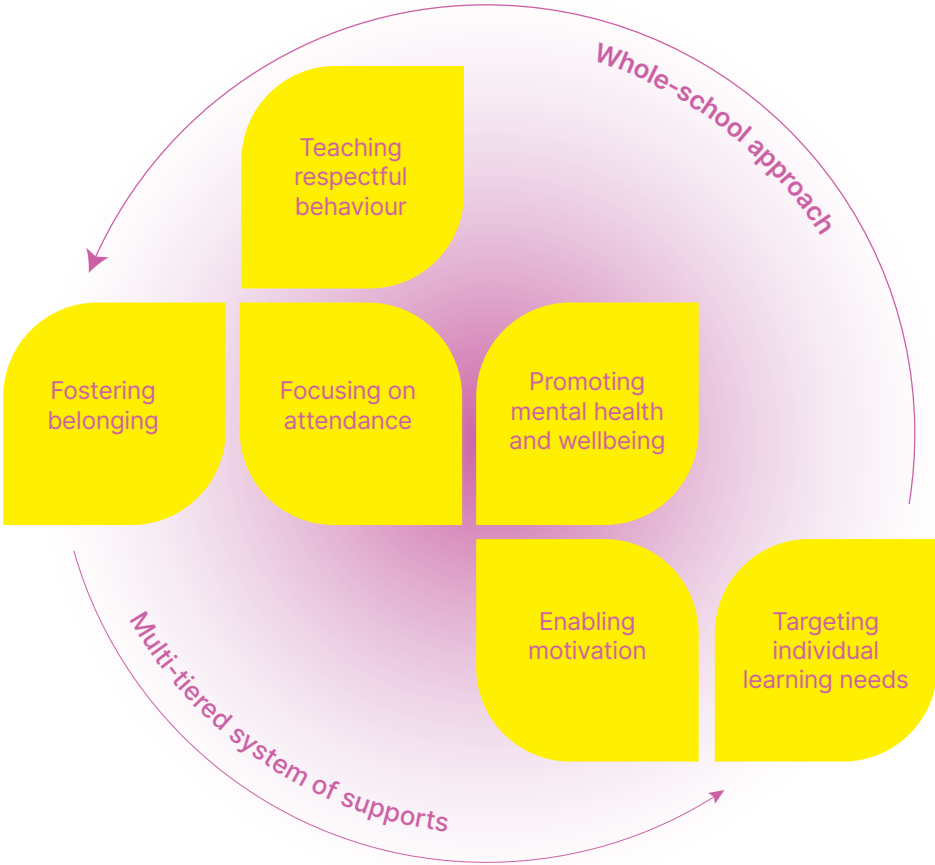These implementation expectations are required for each of MACS' engagement practices.

MACS' engagement practices

Six engagement practices are employed in all MACS schools. While each is presented as having a separate focus, they are intrinsically connected and should be considered holistically wherever possible. These engagement practices are:

- Teaching respectful behaviour
- Fostering belonging
- Focusing on attendance
- Promoting mental health and wellbeing
- Enabling motivation
- Targeting individual learning needs.

Teaching respectful behaviour

Setting and maintaining consistent school-wide expectations, and creating safe environments for all students and staff.

MACS is committed to creating safe, inclusive learning environments that promote growth and success for every student. We share a firm stance against bullying and build cultures where all students and staff are respected and safe from harm, and where concerns related to bullying of any kind are actively addressed. Our vision for student behaviour ensures safety, clarity of expectations and consistent efforts to meet those expectations daily. Fostering positive relationships is prioritised, as is mutual respect and recognition of expected behaviour, to empower students to thrive with the right support.

Key resources

- AERO 2025: Respectful interactions
- AERO 2023: Classroom management resources: User guide
- MACS n.d.: Positive behaviour for learning (PBL)
- Peddie, Kelly, Greengard, Whiting & Richardson 2024: Foundational Classroom Management Resources Handbook

What the evidence says

Behaviour is teachable and it is not fixed. Schools can approach behaviour from the same mindset as the academic elements of the MTSS. This approach is not only supported by the evidence, but also helps align the Tier 1 practices schools use for both academic and behavioural outcomes. Practices common to both academic and behavioural MTSS frameworks include providing opportunities to respond, using positive and corrective feedback or explicit instruction, and increasing the amount or intensity of instruction.

Schools create safe learning environments by establishing clear expectations for behaviour and routines, alongside consistent responses, modelling and guidance (AERO 2024b). MACS schools prioritise evidence-based strategies to enhance student engagement, focusing on school-wide frameworks for learning, teaching, behaviour and wellbeing.

Research on positive behaviour support in schools emphasises the importance of clear, consistent expectations and school-wide approaches (McDonald 2023). Successful schools establish a structured environment where rules are simple, communicated effectively and consistently enforced (De Nobile 2024). It is important to explicitly teach behaviour, similar to teaching academic content, ensuring students understand what is expected of them. Positive teacher–student relationships, combined with predictable consequences, create a climate where learning can thrive (Kern & Clemens 2007).

This climate also supports teachers to seek to understand why students might struggle to meet behavioural expectations, and provides opportunities to work with those students to increase regulation and overcome barriers.

Large-scale research reviews, such as those by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), suggest that proactive behaviour strategies are more effective than reactive approaches. Strategies such as establishing routines, using positive reinforcement and setting high expectations reduce disruptions and improve student engagement. The EEF notes that whole-school approaches, where leadership supports a shared vision of how schools respond to behaviour, are more effective than isolated teacher efforts (Rhodes & Long 2019). Positive behaviour programs have also shown that reinforcing desired behaviour, rather than focusing solely on consequences, leads to long-term improvements in school culture and student outcomes (Subban et al. 2020).

What MACS schools will do

The following key actions encourage respectful behaviour in our schools:

- ✓ **Focus on creating a safe and predictable culture:** All teachers use the same procedures and routines. MACS schools have a specific behaviour program or curriculum with a tiered prevention framework that uses evidence-based practices to develop safe and positive behaviours.
- ✓ **Establish high expectations for student behaviour:** Teachers demonstrate respectful behaviours and establish the norm that there is consistent adoption of classroom rules and routines, with scaffolds and adjustments for students who need additional or alternative supports (AERO 2024c).
- ✓ **Teach clear, predictable classroom routines:** Explicitly teach routines by explaining, modelling, practising and prompting behaviours. This builds a shared understanding of expectations. Some examples of routines in MACS schools include entry routines, gaining students' attention and starting learning, moving into pairs, getting equipment and transitioning between activities.
- ✓ **Reinforce positive behaviour:** MACS teachers use verbal and non-verbal cues to identify and reinforce positive behaviour. Some examples include providing specific or general acknowledgement, praise or behavioural feedback to students for engaging in positive behaviour.
- ✓ **Respond to behaviour instructionally:** Provide responses immediately following behaviour with respectful error correction and reorientation to the expected behaviour, as well as an opportunity to demonstrate that behaviour.
- ✓ **Implement consistent responses to behaviour:** School-based consistent consequences as a response to behaviour are required to support and uphold community expectations and norms. They signal to those who engage in behaviour of concern or experience such behaviour that it is taken seriously and does matter.

Fostering belonging

Creating an emotional climate for learning that activates students' ability to excel.

Belonging is the experience of being accepted, respected and connected. Research shows that a sense of belonging is beneficial for learning (Walton & Cohen 2011; Immordino-Yang, Darling-Hammond & Krone 2019). Classroom learning is not the only benefit MACS schools provide. Schools also serve as social institutions where students learn how to interact with adults and with their peers. MACS schools intentionally collaborate with families and the community to ensure every student has a strong sense of belonging in the school.

Key resources

- AERO 2023: Encouraging a sense of belonging and connectedness in primary schools
- Allen, Kern, Vella-Brodrick, Hattie & Waters 2016: What schools need to know about fostering school belonging: A meta-analysis
- Healey & Stroman 2021: Structures for belonging: A synthesis of research on belonging-supportive learning environments

What the evidence says

When students feel valued, respected and connected to their peers and teachers, they are more likely to participate actively in school life. Students – especially those from marginalised or vulnerable backgrounds – benefit significantly from actions that affirm their place in the school community, such as positive reinforcement, mentorship and targeted support (Hamre & Pianta 2005; Roffey & Quinlan 2021).

Establishing strong teacher–student relationships is backed by evidence, as positive interactions with teachers help students feel seen and supported (AERO 2023c). Sustaining partnerships with families involves the whole school community working to establish an environment similar to a family setting, characterised by trust and openness, which encourages parental participation in the school's faith formation and learning activities (NCEC 2022).

What MACS schools will do

The following key actions foster belonging in our schools:

✓ **Reflect a shared MACS identity:** All MACS schools intentionally embody Catholic principles and, in doing so, foster an inclusive community where all can belong.

✓ **Foster student–teacher relationships:** Teachers can impact students' life outcomes, not only through academic achievement, but through relationships that improve social capital, aspirations and life decisions (Kraft, Bolves & Hurd 2023). In MACS schools, teachers recognise students' faith, physical, social and intellectual development, while valuing the diversity of linguistic, cultural, religious, personal and socioeconomic backgrounds.

✓ **Build relationships with families:** MACS schools welcome families as educational partners with valuable expertise. Educators work in partnership with families to help children understand that loving God wholeheartedly begins with self-love and extends to loving others equally. This principle drives our commitment to fostering engagement in both learning and life in our Catholic faith communities.

✓ **Offer experiences beyond the classroom:** 'The mission of Catholic schools is centred around the integration of faith, learning, life and culture' (NCEC 2024, p. 5). MACS schools are integrated with the parish and broader community to create deep and meaningful relationships to support students. Our schools offer a range of experiences so that each student can explore their passion. From art to sport, music to debate and coding – every student at a MACS school will be able to join a group where they belong and thrive.

Focusing on attendance

Consistent attendance is critical for academic achievement and students' sense of belonging, connection and self-efficacy.

School attendance is crucial because each day missed by a student means valuable learning time is lost. MACS schools design strategies to engage students in learning, address personal and external barriers, and maintain high expectations with clear, supportive pathways for families facing challenges in ensuring their children attend school.

Key resources

- AERO 2025: Effective strategies for strengthening school attendance
- Attendance Works n.d.: Toolkits

What the evidence says

School attendance is best managed within an MTSS, where Tier 1 practices are used for all students in a school, Tier 2 practices are for students at risk of attendance issues and Tier 3 practices are more intensive interventions for students with chronic absenteeism (Melvin et al. 2025). Research on what works for improving attendance can be categorised into the tiered system.

Tier 1 practices for all students promote attendance and can include shared expectations of attendance across the community, building stronger family–teacher relationships by having a school-wide system of responding to absences quickly and efficiently.

Tier 2 practices quickly identify and support students at risk of attendance problems, and can include a school's attendance review team, which would use weekly data to identify students at risk of declining attendance and plan interventions. They could also include mentoring programs to foster connections, providing access to supports for students who have school anxiety, school reluctance or other support needs, and creating incentives for at-risk students and families to encourage attendance.

Tier 3 interventions are more resource-intensive and implemented for students experiencing significant problems with school attendance. They can include designated attendance support officers, who may assist staff in case management and communication with families, and targeted school support, including working with families to engage appropriate supports.

What MACS schools will do

The following key actions improve attendance in our schools:

- ✓ **Focus on attendance first and then absence:** The aim is to improve attendance and have this as the central message. Focusing on absence places the burden for change on the child or family, whereas focusing on attendance makes the school an active partner.
- ✓ **Review response to absences:** Ensure that there is a shared understanding and actions for all elements of absences, including recording them, thresholds for interventions and communications with families.
- ✓ **Maintain inclusive environments:** Establish an inclusive atmosphere so that every student, and their family, feels a sense of belonging and acceptance.
- ✓ **Ensure ongoing monitoring:** Monitor attendance regularly to identify students who require Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions.
- ✓ **Intervene early:** Engage with additional support as soon as attendance issues are identified, which is usually after three days of absence (without evidence of a reason for the absence).

Promoting mental health and wellbeing

Implementation of school-wide social and emotional learning programs that enhance self-awareness and self-regulation, and foster positive inclusive environments.

MACS prioritises the holistic wellbeing of every student by fostering nurturing environments where they feel valued, supported and empowered to thrive. The MACS vision recognises that wellbeing and academic growth reinforce each other.

Key resources

- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) 2022: Spotlight – Wellbeing in Australian schools

What the evidence says

There is evidence that whole-school approaches which foster school–family relationships, plan for early intervention and provide strong pastoral support can improve student wellbeing and mental health. Early identification of mental health concerns – through family communication and links to support services – can help prevent minor issues from escalating into more serious conditions (ARACY 2013; AITSL 2022).

Evidence is beginning to point to the harmful social and mental health effects of students using mobile phones, screens and devices, especially in relation to use of social media and other communications. Reducing the time spent on digital devices may support better personal wellbeing and mental health for students (Lee & Zarnic 2024).

Schools can also enhance student wellbeing by fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where students feel safe and valued. Teaching students how to keep themselves safe, having trusted adults to talk to, promoting peer support networks and ensuring access to professional mental health services are key strategies (Butler et al. 2022).

What MACS schools will do

The following key actions promote mental health and wellbeing in our schools:

✓ **Know and proactively provide support for each student:** Know and respect each student's identity along multiple dimensions, so that every student feels understood, cared for, and known as a person and a learner in the school. Implement proactive measures to identify and address wellbeing concerns early, ensuring timely and effective intervention and support.

✓ **Explicitly teach for wellbeing:** Implement a wellbeing learning program that includes social and emotional learning, self-regulation skills, understanding of self and others, and help-seeking behaviours.

✓ **Develop positive relationships with families, parishes and communities:** Foster strong, respectful relationships between students, staff, parish and the broader community to build a supportive and collaborative network.

✓ **Minimise reliance on phones, screens and devices:** Monitor the use of devices and focus on times when absolutely necessary for learning, health or communication.

✓ **Support student empowerment:** Support students to take an active role in their wellbeing, providing them with the tools and resources to make informed decisions about their health and happiness.

Enabling motivation

Motivation influences behaviour, persistence, learning and wellbeing.

Improving student motivation is crucial for fostering a productive and engaging learning environment. Motivation drives students to put in the effort, engage with the material and persist through challenges. Without motivation, students are less likely to actively participate in class, complete assignments or take ownership of their learning. When students are motivated, they are more likely to retain information, build positive habits and develop a love of learning that lasts beyond their school years.

Key resources

- Lemov 2021: Building a culture of error
- Mccrea 2020: Motivation for learning
- Willingham 2009: Why don't students *like* school?

What the evidence says

Motivation is related to greater learning, as research shows that motivation predicts school achievement and test results (Kriegbaum, Becker & Spinath 2018). There is also no such thing as an unmotivated student, since we cannot classify students as 'unmotivated' or 'motivated'. Student motivation changes based on factors such as the task they are undertaking or their emotional state. Some students may be motivated in certain contexts and less motivated in others.

The things we teach in school are often not what we are naturally motivated to learn. This is because school focuses on knowledge that most students cannot learn without being formally taught. Many things that students are naturally motivated to learn do not need to be taught in school because students will learn them on their own.

While motivation supports learning, achievement also promotes motivation and enjoyment (van Bergen et al. 2023). Academic struggle can be highly demotivating, so effective teaching is an important link in the engagement chain. Teachers play a pivotal role in motivating students by ensuring that they are teaching explicitly and progressively, and cumulatively building their students' knowledge and skills.

What MACS schools will do

The following key actions increase motivation in our schools:

✓ **Establish norms focused on learning excellence:** Schools can create an enabling environment where motivation thrives by setting school-wide norms focused on excellence and learning. Students are motivated in schools that create a strong learning culture where challenges are sought.

✓ **Focus on effective instruction for all:** Students are motivated when they experience greater success and are able to progress in learning. Having a school-wide approach to explicit teaching where teachers ensure students experience success can help develop motivation.

✓ **Show students how they have improved:** Create ways for students to see their progress, even if the change is small. For example, have students track their own progress against various learning objectives so they can see changes over time.

✓ **Build a learning culture where it is okay to make mistakes:** Teachers establish trust and psychological safety to encourage students to take intellectual risks. Teachers communicate that mistakes are opportunities to learn.

✓ **Develop self-regulation skills:** Schools can explicitly teach students to reflect on their own behaviours which best support learning. Teaching skills such as how to set goals, how to identify where they need more practice and how to seek help can support students in their learning (AERO 2024d).

Targeting individual learning needs

Understanding individual learning needs, and designing and implementing instruction and adjustments that support mastery and growth.

MACS is committed to ensuring that every student has access to, and fully participates in, a quality education across the breadth of the curriculum and there is a consistent focus on growth.

Key resources
- AERO 2025: Communication needs: Supporting students' diverse needs
- MACS 2023: Student Learning Team Guidelines

What the evidence says

Students' academic, behavioural and wellbeing needs evolve over time, often fluctuating even within a single day. Some students require ongoing support tailored to their developmental stage, while others need short-term adjustments.

Research supports an MTSS as a multi-level prevention framework for the organising of adjustments to address the diverse learning needs of students through a structured, data-driven approach (Schumann et al. 2020). Studies show that an MTSS, which includes tiered levels of intervention at increasing levels of intensity, helps schools provide targeted support based on students' academic and behavioural needs (de Bruin et al. 2023). The first tier involves high-quality, evidence-based instruction for all students, while the second tier offers more focused interventions for those who need additional support. The third tier provides intensive, individualised interventions for students with significant learning challenges.

Students are not included in Tier 2 or Tier 3 in isolation, but in addition to Tier 1. For example, students who need Tier 2 support also receive Tier 1 instruction (AIR 2020). Research indicates that an MTSS improves student outcomes by ensuring early identification of learning difficulties, reducing the need for more intensive supports and promoting a more inclusive school environment.

What MACS schools will do

The following key actions target individual learning needs in our schools:

✓ **Implement accessible learning:** MACS schools plan instruction that is accessible to all, aligned with how students learn as outlined in *Vision for Instruction*. It is most important for schools to ensure strong Tier 1 instruction in every classroom for every student. Progress monitoring and regular formative assessment ensure that interventions can be made in a timely manner.

✓ **Approach learning needs from a holistic viewpoint:** Schools address individual needs, adopt strategies and make adjustments to ensure students with diverse needs fully participate in learning. This may also mean supporting students' social–emotional and behavioural needs from a strength-based perspective to maximise learning achievements.

✓ **Maintain inclusive classroom environments:** Schools foster an inclusive environment that promotes engagement and full participation through targeted teaching and support. MACS teachers plan culturally sensitive adjustments to curriculum, pedagogy and assessment through Personalised Learning Plans, Behaviour Support Plans, Health Support Plans, Student Safety Plans and risk assessments.

✓ **Ensure access and participation:** The system is committed to maximising learning and improving learning outcomes for all students. MACS office staff provide schools with consultancy, advice and implementation strategies to support equitable access and participation in relation to learning, behaviour, health, mobility, communication, sensory supports and engagement.

✓ **Have data-informed interventions:** Analyse student data to identify specific needs and match them to evidence-based interventions and targeted supports. Teachers use screening and assessment data, and progress monitoring to identify and determine student needs to design and implement targeted interventions and supports for all students requiring adjustments at both ends of the spectrum.

✓ **Use targeted teaching and make adjustments as required:** Design and implement targeted supports and adjustments in teaching and learning that are based on formative assessment data and established student learning goals.

The How

Flourishing Learners: connecting to Vision for Instruction

There is a strong connection between *Vision for Instruction* and *Vision for Engagement*. They form the basis for the Flourishing Learners strategic program across all MACS schools, have a shared commitment to excellence and equity, and are designed to improve student outcomes.

To support aligned and authentic implementation across the breadth of work, the implementation model and approaches are shared by both position statements, and will use MACS' processes and approaches.

Implementation approach

Shared implementation principles, processes and enablers will be used to mobilise evidence-based practices and ensure the MACS *Vision for Engagement* supports student learning and engagement in every classroom.

Implementation science research highlights the complexity of the implementation process and reveals the specific practices that can make school-level change journeys more successful. The research suggests using 'a deliberate and structured approach to implementation' (AERO 2025, p. 1). The MACS implementation approach is built on research-informed practices and effective professional learning models.

4E implementation process

The MACS implementation process offers a systematic approach to introducing, adapting and sustaining evidence-based practices in educational settings. It also recognises that many of the practices articulated in *Vision for Engagement* are already in place across schools.

A school-based implementation journey can follow a four-stage implementation process:

1. Exploring → **2. Experimenting** → **3. Expanding** → **4. Embedding**

As progress is rarely straightforward or predictable, schools will collectively act, monitor and adjust throughout their journeys (Sharples et al. 2019). Ongoing evidence-informed monitoring, professional learning for leaders and teachers, reflection and adaption are crucial across each of the four stages of implementation. Early monitoring provides insights into the efficacy, impact and understanding of early trials. During later stages, there will be a growing focus on monitoring the fidelity and consistency with which initiatives are implemented, as well as the outcomes for learners.

The 4E model can be applied to make small changes to specific practices, such as refining current explicit teaching of behavioural expectations, or larger whole-school transformations, such as implementing an MTSS model for attendance monitoring.

On the path towards full implementation of the Flourishing Learners strategic program, schools will likely work through the 4E process multiple times, as they collectively build knowledge, and change instructional habits and school processes across different prioritised focus areas.

Principles of effective implementation

The following research-informed principles continue to guide implementation work for MACS office and school-based teams. By using these principles, schools can employ design approaches with a higher likelihood of success and sustainable impact to avoid common implementation pitfalls.

Principle	Description
Humans at the centre Understand that human experience is at the heart of change.	Humans and empathy are at the heart of quality implementation processes in the complex relational world of schools. Leaders focus on the experiences and local context of those who are implementing on the ground. For effective collaboration, it is important to gain a deep understanding of the problems, barriers and strengths of the people within the team. Implementation effectiveness is highly dependent on context and readiness for change. It is crucial to learn about the constraints and opportunities of the environment in which practitioners are working.
Building knowledge Knowledge is foundational to school improvement.	Effective implementation requires deep knowledge of the practices being implemented (Robinson 2010). It is important to continuously strengthen school leader and teacher knowledge. Successful implementation often requires changes to educators' mental models and beliefs, which can be influenced by the way information and knowledge are presented (Holtrop et al. 2021). Knowledge building is ongoing throughout the implementation process.
Rigorous adaptation Balance on-the-ground adaptations with ensuring fidelity to evidence-based practices.	It is easier to implement a new evidence-based practice or program if it is clear which features need to be adopted closely (that is, with fidelity) to achieve the intended outcomes. Specify what is most important (where to be 'firm') and what elements are adaptable (where to be 'flexible').
Lean monitoring Collect and respond to data at each stage.	Establish regular monitoring and feedback loops to quickly learn and adjust through cycles of action and reflection. Implementation is complex and messy. Errors, mistakes and misjudgements will be a natural part of any collective learning process. Monitor fidelity of implementation, teacher knowledge and cognitive load, and outcomes, including student learning and engagement.

.

System enablers

The implementation of *Vision for Engagement* will build upon and enhance the system enablers used to support the *Vision for Instruction* program.

Wherever possible, shared processes will be developed and efficiencies for schools will be created. Current MACS' structures and processes, such as the School Improvement Framework and annual action planning, will be further refined to support schools to attend to the implementation expectations and engagement practices.
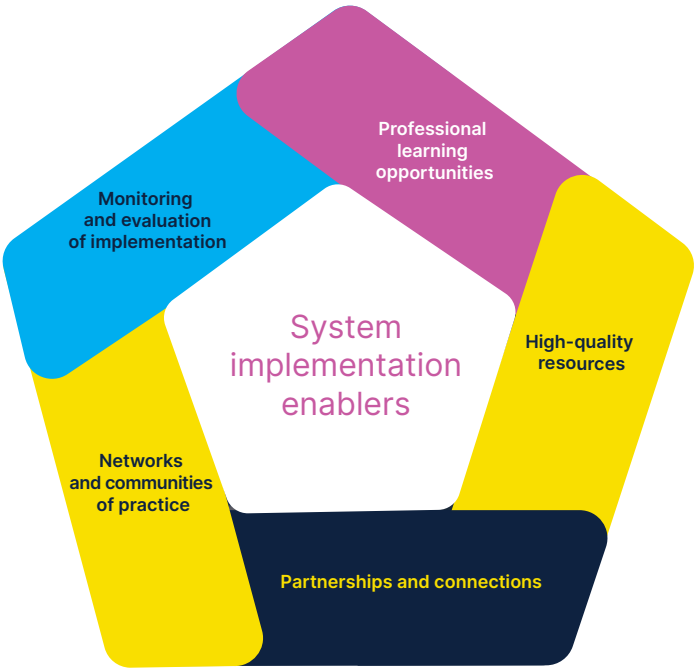
Monitoring and evaluation of implementation

Striving for continuous improvement.

MACS uses data, evaluation and monitoring to identify lead indicators of change and improvement in student learning. When looking at student engagement data, this includes system-wide opinion surveys, school attendance, behavioural incidents and other local datasets.

System and school leaders identify areas for sustained focus and indicators of impact, and capture evidence of improvement to guide changes in practices and routines to support key improvements over time.

Networks and communities of practice

Coherence and connection across schools.

MACS office staff partner with school leaders through existing and emerging networks, and establish focused communities of practice to ensure alignment and deliver system support.

The networks and communities of practice bring schools together to deepen and share knowledge and best practices, implementation advice and resources. MACS office staff support school leaders to enhance their approaches to student engagement and build capacity in implementing all elements of *Vision for Engagement*.

Diagram: System implementation enablers — Professional learning opportunities, High-quality resources, Partnerships and connections, Networks and communities of practice, Monitoring and evaluation of implementation.

Partnerships and connections

Intentional relationships with families, parishes and communities.

School leaders and teachers play a critical role in fostering effective relationships with parents, families and the broader community. Strong relationships centred on the child allow schools to focus on learning, while ensuring any supports and strategies can be implemented in a holistic way.

Working Together in Mission provides a blueprint to support schools to work cohesively and effectively with parishes 'to provide the young with the best kind of education possible, one that fosters a formation of the whole person that is deeply and enduringly humanising' (MACS 2024d, p. 3).

MACS office staff work closely with school leaders to develop effective whole-school approaches to strengthening these key relationships.

Professional learning opportunities

High-quality professional learning and on-demand resources.

Schools are provided with an extensive range of high-quality professional learning opportunities to support leaders and teachers to understand and implement MACS' engagement practices within a whole-school, MTSS model.

Through access to this professional learning suite, leaders and teachers will be able to build knowledge across a range of practices, develop an understanding of their areas of need and actions, and share best practices and ideas.

High-quality resources

Supporting leaders and teachers with targeted resources.

MACS office staff support school leaders and teachers with high-quality, comprehensive resource materials, which enable them to understand their students across the domains of learning, behaviour, and health and wellbeing, and to target their work to their students' needs. These include both bespoke system resources and curated materials from trusted partners and field leaders.

This approach promotes equity and excellence across MACS schools, ensuring all leaders and teachers have access to evidence-based resources to support students in every classroom.

Glossary of terms

This glossary features essential terms and concepts related to evidence-based student engagement practices and the MACS *Vision for Engagement*. It provides concise definitions of each term.

Term	Definition
Attendance	A student attends school when on site, in MACS-approved remote learning, or involved in an offsite curriculum program or other activity organised by the school (e.g. an excursion or camp) (MACS 2023a).
Behaviour	The way in which one acts or conducts oneself, especially towards others. In general terms, behaviour can be anything we say or do (MACS 2023e).
Belonging	The experience of being accepted, respected and connected. This sense of belonging helps to create supportive and engaging learning environments, fostering students' overall wellbeing and academic success (Immordino-Yang, Darling-Hammond & Krone 2019).
Bullying	Repeated unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person that creates a risk to health and safety. It occurs when an individual or group deliberately upsets or hurts another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. Bullying can be direct (physical or verbal) or indirect (MACS 2023b).
Diversity	People's differences which may relate to their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion, mental and physical ability, class and immigration status (UNESCO 2017).
Enabling environment	A rich and varied space where risks are minimised and well managed, and children are protected from harm and abuse (Early Years Alliance n.d.).
Engagement practices	Six engagement practices are employed in all MACS schools: • Teaching respectful behaviour • Fostering belonging • Focusing on attendance • Promoting mental health and wellbeing • Enabling motivation • Targeting individual learning needs.
Equity	A state of fairness in which all children and young people can participate freely and equally in areas of life, regardless of their background, characteristics or beliefs. This means their safety is not dependent on their socioeconomic, family or personal circumstances (Victorian Government 2024).

Term	Definition
Inclusion	The right to access and receive a full and engaging education. MACS schools welcome all members of the community as equal, embracing diversity as a means for dialogue, engagement and deeper understanding of self, others and God. The uniqueness and sacred dignity of each person is celebrated, driven by the Gospel message of love and justice. These convictions guide the encounters, actions and pedagogical approaches that enable all children to learn and thrive (MACS 2023d).
Inclusive environment	Where all students, and their families, feel personally accepted, respected, included and supported by others in the school (Nix, Pendergast & O'Brien 2022).
Learning	A change in long-term memory (MACS 2024b).
Learning environment	The setting and conditions in which learning takes place, and influences student engagement and success (OECD n.d.).
Mental health	A state of mental wellbeing that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well, work well and contribute to their community (WHO n.d.). Mental health can be influenced by environmental, emotional, biological and social factors, and can change regularly (Victorian Government 2022).
Modelling	Teachers verbalise the strategic thinking used to solve a problem (MACS 2024b).
Motivation	A student's willingness, need, desire and compulsion to participate, and be successful, in the learning process; motivation seeks to increase the factors that move a student towards becoming more involved in the class and the subject matter (Bomia et al. 1997).
Multi-tiered system of supports	A three-tier framework to support intervention at increasing levels of intensity (AERO 2024a).
Student engagement	Encompasses attendance, behaviour, belonging, learning, mental health and wellbeing, and motivation. Engagement supports students to feel a sense of belonging and purpose as a learner. It encompasses students' behavioural, emotional and cognitive engagement – essentially, how students behave, feel and think as they undertake learning activities. The influence of teachers is pivotal to students' engagement (AERO 2023a). Engagement is different for each student. It will not look the same for all students or be replicated in each classroom in the same way (Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris 2004).
Vision for Instruction	A key document aligned with the MACS 2030 strategic plan, *Vision for Instruction* has been crafted to communicate MACS' preferred system-wide approach to achieving teaching and learning excellence. It is firmly grounded in the evidence of how students learn most effectively and efficiently, offering explicit guidance for MACS schools on instructional best practice (MACS 2024a).
Wellbeing	The development of the capabilities necessary to thrive, contribute and respond positively to the challenges and opportunities of life. Elements that support student wellbeing include: • a safe environment • connectedness to peers, school and community • learning where progress is experienced (Victorian Government 2022).

References

American Institutes for Research (AIR) 2020, 'Tier 2 identification procedures', MTSS Center, accessed 15 April 2025 https://mtss4success. org/resource/tier-2-identification-procedures.

Australian Catholic University (ACU) 2025, 'Principals navigate growing challenges as anxiety, depression increase', 31 March 2025, ACU, accessed 14 April 2025 www.acu.edu. au/about-acu/news/2025/march/principals-navigate-growing-challenges-as-anxiety-depression-increase.

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) 2024, 'Student attendance', *National Report on Schooling in Australia*, ACARA, accessed 14 April 2025 https://dataandreporting.blob.core.windows. net/anrdataportal/ANR-Documents/ANR2024/ nationalreportonschoolinginaustralia_2024_ Chapter4_Section2.pdf#page=1.

Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) 2025, 'Taking an evidence-informed approach to implementation', *Implementing Evidence-based Teaching Practices in Schools explainers*, AERO, accessed 14 April 2025 www. edresearch.edu.au/sites/default/files/2025-03/ taking-evidence-informed-approach-to-implementation-aa.pdf.

Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) 2024a, 'Introduction to a multi-tiered system of supports', AERO, accessed 16 April 2025 www.edresearch.edu.au/summaries-explainers/explainers/introduction-multi-tiered-system-supports.

Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) 2024b, 'Rules and routines', *Teaching for How Students Learn practice guides*, AERO, accessed 14 April 2025 www.edresearch. edu.au/sites/default/files/2024-02/rules-and-routines-aa.pdf.

Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) 2024c, 'Scaffold practice', *Teaching for How Students Learn practice guides*, AERO, accessed 14 April 2025 www.edresearch.edu. au/sites/default/files/2024-11/AERO-practice-guide-scaffold-practice-aa.pdf.

Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) 2024d, 'Supporting self-regulated learning', *Teaching for How Students Learn practice guides*, AERO, accessed 14 April 2025 www.edresearch.edu.au/sites/default/ files/2024-02/supporting-self-regulated-learning-aa.pdf.

Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) 2023a, 'Engaged classrooms through effective classroom management', AERO, accessed 16 April 2025 www.edresearch.edu. au/research/projects/engaged-classrooms-through-effective-classroom-management.

Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) 2023b, *How Students Learn Best: An overview of the learning process and the most effective teaching practices*, AERO, accessed 14 April 2025 www.edresearch.edu.au/sites/default/ files/2023-11/how-students-learn-best-aa_0.pdf.

Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO) 2023c, 'Positive teacher–student relationships: Their role in classroom management', AERO, accessed 14 April 2025 www.edresearch.edu.au/summaries-explainers/explainers/positive-teacher-student-relationships-their-role-classroom-management.

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) 2022, 'Wellbeing in Australian schools', *Spotlights*, AITSL, accessed 14 April 2025 www.aitsl.edu.au/research/ spotlights/wellbeing-in-australian-schools.

Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY) 2013, 'The Nest wellbeing framework', ARACY, accessed 14 April 2025 www.aracy.org.au/the-nest-wellbeing-framework.

Bomia, L, Beluzo, L, Demeester, D, Elander, K, Johnson, M & Sheldon, B 1997, 'The impact of teaching strategies on intrinsic motivation', Opinion Paper, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), accessed 16 April 2025 https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED418925.

Butler, N, Quigg, Z, Bates, R, Jones, L, Ashworth, E, Gowland, S & Jones, M 2022, 'The contributing role of family, school, and peer supportive relationships in protecting the mental wellbeing of children and adolescents', *School Mental Health*, 14 (3), 776–88.

de Bruin, K, Kestel, E, Francis, M, Forgasz, H & Fries, R 2023, *Supporting Students Significantly Behind in Literacy and Numeracy: A review of evidence-based approaches*, Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO), accessed 15 April 2025 www. edresearch.edu.au/sites/default/files/2023-05/ aero-supporting-students-significantly-behind-literacy-numeracy.pdf.

De Nobile, J 2024, *Positive Learning Environments: Establishing & sustaining productive classrooms,* 3rd edn, Cengage Learning Australia, South Melbourne.

De Nobile, J, El Baba, M & London, T 2016, 'School leadership practices that promote effective whole school behaviour management: A study of Australian primary schools', *School Leadership & Management*, 36 (4), 419–34.

Early Years Alliance n.d., 'Enabling environments', Early Years Alliance, accessed 16 April 2025 www.eyalliance.org.uk/enabling-environments.

Francis (Pope) 2015, 'Address to the Association of Catholic School Parents (AGESC)', 5 December 2015, The Holy See, accessed 14 April 2025 www. vatican.va/content/francesco/en/ speeches/2015/december/documents/papa-francesco_20151205_agesc.html.

Fredricks, JA, Blumenfeld, PC & Paris, AH 2004, 'School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence', *Review of Educational Research*, 74 (1), 59–109.

Hamre, BK & Pianta, RC 2005, 'Can instructional and emotional support in the first-grade classroom make a difference for children at risk of school failure?', *Child Development*, 76 (5), 949–67.

Holtrop, JS, Scherer, LD, Matlock, DD, Glasgow, RE & Green, LA 2021, 'The importance of mental models in implementation science', *Frontiers in Public Health*, 9, accessed 14 April 2025 www.frontiersin.org/journals/public-health/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2021.680316/full.

Immordino-Yang, MH, Darling-Hammond, L & Krone, CR 2019, 'Nurturing nature: How brain development is inherently social and emotional, and what this means for education', *Educational Psychologist*, 54 (3), 185–204.

Kern, L & Clemens, NH 2007, 'Antecedent strategies to promote appropriate classroom behavior', *Psychology in the Schools,* 44 (1), 65–75.

Kraft, MA, Bolves, AJ & Hurd, NM 2023, 'How informal mentoring by teachers, counselors, and coaches supports students' long-run academic success', Working Paper 31257, National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), accessed 14 April 2025 www.nber.org/papers/ w31257.

Kriegbaum, K, Becker, N & Spinath, B 2018, 'The relative importance of intelligence and motivation as predictors of school achievement: A meta-analysis', *Educational Research Review*, 25 (1), 120–48.

Lee, J & Zarnic, Z 2024, 'The impact of digital technologies on well-being: Main insights from the literature', *OECD Papers on Well-being and Inequalities*, Working Paper No. 29, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), accessed 14 April 2025 www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/ publications/reports/2024/11/the-impact-of-digital-technologies-on-well-being_848e9736/ cb173652-en.pdf.

McDonald, T 2023, 'Teaching behaviour: How classroom conduct can unlock better learning', Analysis Paper 55, The Centre for Independent Studies, accessed 14 April 2025 www.cis. org.au/publication/teaching-behaviour-how-classroom-conduct-can-unlock-better-learning.

McHale, R, Brennan, N, Boon, B, Richardson, E, Rossetto, A & Christie, R 2024, *Youth Survey Report 2024: Victoria sub-report*, Mission Australia, accessed 14 April 2025 www.missionaustralia.com.au/publications/ youth-survey/state-reports-2024/3564-youth-survey-2024-vic-sub-report/download.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) 2024a, 'Vision for Instruction', CEVN, accessed 14 April 2025 https://cevn.cecv. catholic.edu.au/Melb/Learning-Teaching/vision-for-instruction.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) 2024b, 'Vision for Instruction: Annotated glossary of terms', CEVN, accessed 16 April 2025 https://cevn.cecv.catholic. edu.au/getmedia/8ae77f15-bd97-4924-8325-03136d7fc12d/Vision-for-Instruction-Annotated-Glossary-of-Terms-FA-(002).pdf.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) 2024c, *Vision for Instruction: Flourishing Learners position statement*, MACS, accessed 14 April 2025 www.macs.vic.edu. au/MelbourneArchdioceseCatholicSchools/ media/Documentation/Documents/Vision-For-Instruction-Position-Statement.pdf.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) 2024d, *Working Together in Mission: Charter for parishes and schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne*, MACS, accessed 14 April 2025 www.macs.vic.edu. au/MelbourneArchdioceseCatholicSchools/ media/Documentation/Documents/SAC/MACS_ Working-Together_WEB1.pdf.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) 2023a, 'Attendance policy for MACS schools', MACS, accessed 16 April 2025 www.macs.vic.edu.au/ MelbourneArchdioceseCatholicSchools/ media/About-Us/Policies/Attendance/MACS-Attendance-Policy.pdf.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) 2023b, 'Bullying prevention policy for MACS schools', CEVN, accessed 16 April 2025 https://cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Melb/ Document-File/Compliance/Policies/MACS-Policies/student-welfare/bullying/bullying-prevention-policy.pdf.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) 2023c, *MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World*, MACS, accessed 14 April 2025 www.macs.vic.edu.au/ MelbourneArchdioceseCatholicSchools/ media/About-Us/Documentation/MACS-2030-Strategic-Plan.pdf.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) 2023d, 'Pastoral care policy for MACS schools', MACS, accessed 16 April 2025 www.macs.vic.edu.au/ MelbourneArchdioceseCatholicSchools/media/ About-Us/Policies/Pastoral-Care/Pastoral-Care-Policy.pdf.

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) 2023e, 'Student behaviour policy – template for schools', CEVN, accessed 16 April 2025 https:// cevn.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Melb/Document-File/ Compliance/Policies/MACS-Policies/student-welfare/student-behaviour-policy.docx.

Melvin, G, McKay-Brown, L, Heyne, D & Cameron, L 2025, *Interventions to Promote School Attendance and Address Student Absence: Rapid literature review*, Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO), accessed 14 April 2025 www.edresearch.edu. au/sites/default/files/2024-12/interventions-promote-school-attendance-address-student-absence-aa.pdf.

National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) 2024, *Life to the Full: The mission and purpose of Catholic schools in Australia*, NCEC, accessed 14 April 2025 https://ncec.catholic. edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Life-to-the-full.pdf.

National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) 2022, *Our Quest for Hope – The Gift of Faith: A discussion paper for families and schools in support of the journey of faith*, NCEC, accessed 14 April 2025 https://ncec. catholic.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/ Our-Quest-for-Hope-Parent-Discussion-Paper_ final.pdf.

Nix, T, Pendergast, D & O'Brien, M 2022, 'Belonging in school – the effect of teacher-student relationships: A systematic quantitative review of the literature', *Education Thinking*, 2 (1), 63–90.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) n.d., 'Learning environment', OECD, accessed 16 April 2025 www.oecd.org/en/topics/learning-environment. html.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2019, *PISA 2018 Results (Volume III): What School Life Means for Students' Lives*, OECD, accessed 14 April 2025 www.oecd.org/en/publications/pisa-2018-results-volume-iii_acd78851-en/full-report. html.

Rhodes, I & Long, M 2019, *Improving Behaviour in Schools: Guidance report*, Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), accessed 14 April 2025 https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront. net/production/eef-guidance-reports/ behaviour/EEF_Improving_behaviour_in_ schools_Report.pdf?v=1744126398.

Richardson, S, Kelly, M, Whiting, C & Peddie, B 2023, *Effectively Managing Classrooms to Create Safe and Supportive Learning Environments: Discussion paper*, Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO), accessed 14 April 2025 www.edresearch.edu. au/sites/default/files/2024-01/effectively-managing-classrooms-create-safe-supporting-learning-environments-aa.pdf.

Robinson, VMJ 2010, 'From instructional leadership to leadership capabilities: Empirical findings and methodological challenges', *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 9 (1), 1–26.

Roffey, S & Quinlan, D 2021, 'Positive education with disadvantaged students', in ML Kern & ML Wehmeyer (eds), *The Palgrave Handbook of Positive Education*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 645–74.

Schumann, J, Rose, T, Collins, K & Koehler, K 2020, 'MTSS: A research-based system to ensure equity and access for learning', *The East Asia Regional Council of Schools (EARCOS) Triannual Journal*, Winter 2020, 36–8, accessed 15 April 2025 https://issuu.com/earcosorg/ docs/et-winter-2020.

Sharples, J, Albers, B, Fraser, S & Kime, S 2019, *Putting Evidence to Work – A School's Guide to Implementation: Guidance report*, Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), accessed 14 April 2025 https://d2tic4wvo1iusb.cloudfront. net/eef-guidance-reports/implementation/EEF_ Implementation_Guidance_Report_2019.pdf.

Subban, P, Sharma, U, Leif, E & Patnaik, S 2020, 'Five ways to use positive behaviour support strategies in your classroom', *TeachSpace*, 9 September 2020, Monash University, accessed 14 April 2025 www.monash.edu/education/ teachspace/articles/five-ways-to-use-positive-behaviour-support-strategies-in-your-classroom.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2023, *Global Education Monitoring Report 2023: Technology in education – A tool on whose terms?*, UNESCO, accessed 14 April 2025 https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/ pf0000385723.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2017, *A Guide for Ensuring Inclusion and Equity in Education*, UNESCO, accessed 16 April 2025 https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/ pf0000248254.

van Bergen, E, Hart, SA, Latvala, A, Vuoksimaa, E, Tolvanen, A & Torppa, M 2023, 'Literacy skills seem to fuel literacy enjoyment, rather than vice versa', *Developmental Science*, 26 (3), accessed 14 April 2025 https://onlinelibrary. wiley.com/doi/10.1111/desc.13325.

Victorian Government 2024, 'Schools – diversity and equity guidance', Victorian Government, accessed 16 April 2025 www.vic.gov.au/ schools-diversity-equity-guidance.

Victorian Government 2022, 'Understanding mental health and wellbeing in a school setting', Victorian Government, accessed 16 April 2025 www.vic.gov.au/understanding-mental-health-and-wellbeing-school-setting.

Walton, GM & Cohen, GL 2011, 'A brief social-belonging intervention improves academic and health outcomes of minority students', *Science*, 331 (6023), 1447–51.

World Health Organization (WHO) n.d., 'Mental health', WHO, accessed 16 April 2025 https://www.who.int/health-topics/mental-health#tab=tab_1.

NEALS