

SACRED HEART PRIMARY SCHOOL, SANDRINGHAM

INDEPENDENT REVIEWER - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sacred Heart, Sandringham is a welcoming and inclusive school. The friendliness and cooperation of staff, students and parents was clearly evident during the review, reflecting the values the school upholds. The school prioritises the individuality of all students, whilst aiming to develop their physical, social, intellectual, ethical and spiritual capabilities. The principal and executive leadership team welcomed the timing of the review in order to reestablish school priorities and goals outlined in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) 2022-25. The school executive saw the review as an opportunity to continually challenge itself. School improvement against the SIP has been measured by the maintenance of high levels of staff data in the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools – School Improvement Survey (MACSSIS). In particular around the exceptionally high staff domains of **school climate** (99%), **staff-leadership relationships** (99%), **collective efficacy** (98%) and **collaboration around an improvement strategy** (100%). The Catholic identity of the school was visible during the review, not just physically, but evidenced via feedback provided to the reviewer from staff, students and families. Key religious dimensions are evident across all levels, including scripture, prayer, reflection and the sacraments at relevant year levels. Whilst Religious Education (RE) is explicitly taught, the school is aiming to deliver the RE curriculum in a contemporary, authentic and relevant context in the eyes of students. This intent is still evolving. RE curriculum leaders are encouraged to continue this intent, whilst building teacher capacity via targeted professional learning to plan, deliver and assess the RE curriculum.

Across the school, there is evidence of high-quality, consistently applied instructional practices being delivered in classrooms. These practices form part of a collaboratively agreed, whole school learning and teaching approach based on MACS Flourishing Learners Position Statement: Vision for Instruction that identifies practices with the highest impact on student learning outcomes. These instructional practices have had a positive impact on students' academic performance. The school is encouraged to further embed these practices over the next review period. Student achievement data, National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) 2023-25, indicates superior student performance against state and like school benchmarks for reading, writing and numeracy. The literacy program is exemplary with teacher focus groups indicating confidence and expertise in the teaching of reading and writing. Some teachers stated a desire to enhance mathematics via additional intervention supports, similar to the literacy program. The school's daily reviews and students' use of mini whiteboards assists teachers to deliver effective formative assessment practices including checking for student understanding of the lesson objective.

Parents and staff view the school's leaders as visible, supportive, accessible and committed to delivering quality evidence-based instruction. Focus groups informed the review that support from leadership manifests both in a pastoral and educational sense. Staff, students and families see student wellbeing as a school strength. Student focus groups reported their close connection to the school, their teachers and their fellow students. Staff and students were able to articulate a range of recently introduced wellbeing programs and initiatives within the weekly curriculum. Parents acknowledge that Sacred Heart has a reputation for being a community with a strong sense of connectedness. This connectedness includes close ties between school and parish. Parents acknowledge the school's high academic performance and cultivating a culture of pastoral care. The school's evidenced-based explicit instruction model was clearly articulated to the school community. Parents understood the school's instructional approach and the positive impact on their child's learning.

Strengths

- Students are at the centre of all school improvement initiatives and decision-making processes.
- School leaders have created and actively supported a positive and harmonious learning environment.
- The school enjoys a positive reputation within the local area based on high academic performance and a commitment to contemporary evidence-based instructional practices.
- There are high levels of collective efficacy and trust amongst the staff, with a shared belief that as a collective, they can have a positive impact on student outcomes.
- The school's literacy program is **exemplary** in all facets.

Opportunities for improvement

- Bridging visibility and connection to ensure the school's Catholic identity is seen and owned by all.
- Continue to develop consistent whole school approaches ensuring all students are stretched and challenged at their point of learning need.
- Increased opportunities for Learning Support Officers to access targeted professional learning aligned to the additional needs of students they support.