



# St Patrick's School

## St Arnaud

### 2021

## Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 227

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## Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Daniel Patton, attest that St Patrick's School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in *the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2021 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in Schools.

31/03/2022

**NOTE:** The School's financial performance information has been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au)

## Governing Authority Report

The governance of fifty-six schools in the Diocese of Ballarat was transferred to Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) on 01 January 2021. Thus, beginning an exciting and challenging first year of governance under DOBCEL and continuing the long partnership between all schools of the Diocese and Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) of continual improvement of learning outcomes for the students in the schools of the Diocese.

COVID-19 continued to cast a long shadow over the communities in the Diocese. Our students, their families and our dedicated staff are to be commended for their ability to move from one mode of learning to another with very short notice. The true impact on learners may not be known for years. We may well reflect on the 'challenging and uncertain times of COVID' in a similar way to the those reflected on the Spanish Flu a century ago. We will remember with awe the commitment of our school communities, those who lead them and their staff. We will also speak of the resilience of the children of this generation in meeting a 'new normal' and often leading our wider communities in an optimistic response.

In 2021, our school communities and CEB have maintained a strong focus on reviewing and updating policies, procedures and practices that reflect the new governance model and continuing their commitment to providing safe, learning environments for all learners.

I thank the priests of our school communities for their ongoing pastoral care and ministry, without the demands of Governance resting on their shoulders. I acknowledge and thank the Principals of our schools for their committed leadership, care and support of their school community.

I commend this Annual Report to the School Community as a summary of the many achievements in supporting the learning needs of our students.

Tom Sexton

Executive Director

Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited

## Our School Vision & Mission

### Vision

As partners with parents in Catholic Education and open to God's presence, St Patrick's school pursues fullness of Life for all its students and the school community.

The school ensures the care, safety, wellbeing and protection of its students in keeping with the catholic tradition, which celebrates the sanctity and unique dignity of each person.

### Mission

We journey towards this vision through:

- proclaiming and witnessing to the Good News of Jesus Christ
- ensuring quality learning that promotes excellence and fosters the authentic human development of all
- living justly in the world, in relationship with each other and in harmony with God's creation
- exploring, deepening and expressing our Catholic identity in diverse ways
- enabling each one of us to reflect more fully the image of God
- ensuring that the dignity of each person is a priority through effective stewardship of the school environment and its procedures and practices

## School Overview

St Patrick's Primary School is a Catholic school offering a faith-based education for primary aged children. We are constantly monitoring our literacy and numeracy practices and are excited by the growth that we are seeing in our children. Our school values wellbeing above all other facets of school life. We employ restorative practices in order to foster and maintain positive relationships among all members of the school. Our afternoon program, along with rotations on Tuesdays and Fridays, ensures that all our students have the opportunity to develop their sporting, artistic and musical talents.

Ours is a Faith Community, which includes our Parish Priest, Father Gerry Prunty, and parents, as well as the staff, students and volunteers that work with us. We are proud of our catholicity, but we welcome all students regardless of their religious status. Our Christian Values support parents in raising children who are capable of making positive behavioural choices.

The staff at our school prepare academic, sporting, artistic, social, musical and spiritual experiences for our kids. We aim to teach the core curriculum in a variety of ways in order to cater for different learning styles. Our classroom floor plan enables variable group learning. A typical day's experience at St.Pat's will include whole group learning, small focus groups, the use of technology, social opportunities, sporting or other physical challenges, creative tasks, and some reflective/spiritual time.

The school has excellent facilities. We have added wonderful play and sheltered areas to our grounds, providing all-weather access for both sport and recreational play.

## Principal's Report

The 2021 school year was remarkable in many ways, including how normal everything turned out to be. We were reminded of the importance of being 'opportunistic', allowing us take advantage of any opportunity that presented itself throughout the year.

In Term 1, we welcomed 24 preps, including 16 new families to the school. These little people have quickly grown into integral parts of our community. They were able to work with several different teachers and enjoyed making new friends as the year progressed.

Our one big family event was the School Fête where we welcomed people on to the school grounds in a controlled manner. This was the first event since we have had the use of our new covered over area and the majority of our families and extend community were able to come and enjoy the jumping castle, fairy floss, parlour games and dress-up activities that the fête provided.

2021 was more restricted than we hoped. Rather than sit and wait for the pandemic to pass, schools adapted to the circumstances and delivered education to a high standard. We felt more prepared for such a task, with our teachers quickly adapting to delivering similar lessons 'online' via video conferencing.

The online schedule was adapted as we went and the lessons were supported by work booklets that were quickly planned, designed, printed and delivered to each family. In order to 'connect' with families and students who were feeling isolated and to keep the school work relevant, it was critically important that the work was corrected and returned to the students. It is a credit to our teachers and support staff for providing education throughout these lockdown periods.

Lockdown offered the opportunity to improve our facilities. The lack of school students in the yard allowed us to 'hotmix' the main playing surface, making it smoother, safer and more appealing. Our other main project included improving the wellbeing centre to give us a space for cooking and washing and drying clothes.

Our senior Yr 4-6 students went on camp to the YMCA in Anglesea. This was an outstanding opportunity for the students to stay together in a safe and remote area. The students were presented with a range of opportunities such as surfing, hiking, biking, climbing and dining together. The other year levels enjoyed accessing similar activities closer to home.

## Catholic School Culture

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To connect our classroom RE classes to the parents. Our SRC data indicated that the parents don't value the teaching of RE as highly as the students and staff appear to value it. We therefore have a need to engage the parents more in the subject.

### Achievements

- In 2021, we welcomed Father Gerry Prunty into the community. Gerry enjoys working with schools and has been really accessible to St Patrick's
- Three of our staff are studying for their RE accreditation. All of our teaching staff will be fully accredited to teach RE in Catholic schools by the end of 2022.
- Our students continue to connect with our RE classes and talk positively about the activities associated with the subject.

### VALUE ADDED

Although having crowds was either impossible or very limited, we were able to remain busy throughout 2021.

#### Student-led activities

- Raise money for Caritas via a school fête
- Yrs 4-6 students attended a Caritas education day
- Fund-raising colour run
- Fund-raising and awareness bike ride for the planet

#### Masses for

- Opening Mass/ badge ceremony
- Celebrated St Patrick's
- Ash Wednesday
- Mid-year class Masses
- School Graduation

#### Liturgies for:

- ANZAC Day
- Mother's Day

- Father's Day
- Sacraments
- Eight children participated in Confirmation

# Community Engagement

## Goals & Intended Outcomes

Initially, our goal was to engage the community and form the strongest links possible during the restrictions and limitations of living under lockdown.

## Achievements

Our main strategy during the pandemic was to run school activities as normal as possible for the children. These included athletics, a cross-country, school fêtes, student meetings, buddy activities, book week, among others.

Given that parents were not able to be on-site, we assigned staff to document and promote activities online. This was made done publicly (Facebook, group messaging, etc) and by private texts, emails and Face-time to certain parents, especially for significant milestones and achievements.

Physically, we were able to alter events so that they were held in COVID-safe environments. These included connecting with the prep families for important transition activities and for the likes of the graduation which was a more intimate occasion than normal.

### PARENT SATISFACTION

- We completed SRC surveys in 2021, making our data relevant and recent.
- Our community continues to feel engaged and connected to the school according to our latest survey results, coming out at the 88th percentile of school satisfaction.
- We continue to attract more than 50% of the market for new prep students and families. 17 preps started in 2021 from less than 30 kinder children in the local kinder. This is a slight decrease on previous years.
- The parents indicated an improved perception of student behaviour. Our 2021 result moved us from the 50th percentile to the 71st.

# Leadership & Stewardship

## Goals & Intended Outcomes

Our school has been consciously decentralising the decision-making and formalising a leadership structure and team, rather than having all decisions made by the Principal. As we move from being a school of less than 30 students to a bigger organisation with 110, we needed another structure. In 2021 we moved to having a Principal supported by two Acting Principals with other leadership roles.

## Achievements

The school was able to utilise its new leadership structure and allow the school to function without the Principal on-site. This was needed for professional development and professional leave necessities along with other occasions when the Principal was not available.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	
Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2021	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our school professional development budget was not utilised as much as usual. We were hoping to attend a number of on-site professional development that was moved online.</li> <li>• Our new RE leaders were able to attend their cluster meetings and their professional development, mostly in online forums.</li> <li>• We had other staff choose to study online through universities for their RE accreditation. These courses were largely unaffected by the pandemic restrictions.</li> </ul>	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2021	9
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$600

TEACHER SATISFACTION
<p>We completed SRC surveys in 2021, making our data relevant and recent. The teachers indicated that, for Student Management and Pastoral Care, we are in the higher 25% of schools. For Curriculum Processes, we were a little lower, coming out at the 50th percentile.</p> <p>For staff wellbeing, the results were all at or above the 50th percentile. All areas were a little lower than the results from the previous survey.</p> <p>We continue to have a very low turnover of staff. We had one teacher relocate overseas at the end of 2021 and had a long term LSO retire at the end of the year.</p>

<b>TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE</b>	
Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	95.0%

<b>ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE</b>	
Staff Retention Rate	94.4%

<b>TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS</b>	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	14.3%
Graduate	0.0%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	71.4%
Advanced Diploma	28.6%
No Qualifications Listed	14.3%

<b>STAFF COMPOSITION</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	11.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	8.2
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	11.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	10.1
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

## Learning & Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Our Teaching and Learning Structure was changed significantly for the 2021 school year. Our 7 classes were broken into three different areas (Yrs Prep/ One, Two-Four and Five/ Six). This was intended to allow greater flexibility for students to work in small groups and for teachers to work with each other in a more collaborative environment. These were goals from our 2019 review.

### Achievements

Our teachers reported that the new planning opportunities and meeting structures are an improvement on how we managed curriculum development in the past.

#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

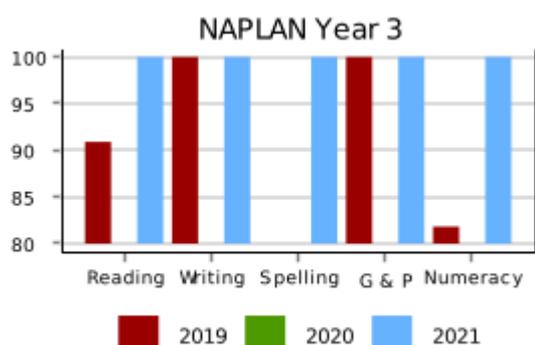
Our NAPLAN results improved quite significantly in 2021. This is following significant growth in our own PAT-R and PAT-M data.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2019 %	2020 *	2019 – 2020 Changes *	2021 %	2020 – 2021 Changes *
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Numeracy	81.8	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Reading	90.9	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Spelling	72.7	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Writing	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	76.2	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Numeracy	90.5	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Reading	90.5	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Spelling	90.5	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Writing	95.2	-	-	100.0	-

\* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

\*\* Data cannot be reported for this year as the number of students that sat the test was below 5 and the data has been suppressed for privacy reasons in accordance with the ACARA NAPLAN data reporting provisions.

\*\*\* No students sat the NAPLAN tests in this year level and in one or both of the relevant years.



## Wellbeing

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Our intention was to:

- Support our students through online learning
- Provide support for vulnerable families and unsupported families in our school community
- Connect with the school families in some way

### Achievements

In 2021, we completed our wellbeing centre. The building has facilities for storing food, washing clothes and has furniture designed for students to rest in.

The building is utilised for a range of needs. Some students require breakfast while others use it for explicit social activities, designed to teach children to form and maintain relationships.

Several staff have been assigned wellbeing tasks as part of their role at school. We have two LSOs that monitor breakfast and uniform/tidiness. A teacher has part of his role to run wellbeing sessions for small groups of selected students.

### VALUE ADDED

We found that the pandemic presented many challenges and opportunities to connect with the families through that tricky time.

Activities that we ran included:

- Provided work packs and delivering to houses
- Using Zoom classes during lockdowns as a chance to connect to families
- Running designated wellbeing sessions online
- Connecting families with other families in order to support community connection
- Inviting vulnerable families to school
- Supporting families with food/goods through times of particular grief.

### STUDENT SATISFACTION

Our student SRC data appears to indicate that the students are reasonably satisfied. Of 25 questions, our students responses were lower than the 50th percentile in only four areas. Of particular concern was cyberbullying which we have responded to in our 2022 planning.

**STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Our office staff were responsible for school attendance record collection. Any low attendance was noted and the Principal liaised with the families of concern.

Our attendance records were kept in line with the guidance from Catholic Education Ballarat. During the lockdown periods, students that participated in online Zoom classes were considered to be at school.

**AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL**

Y01	94.7%
Y02	92.4%
Y03	93.4%
Y04	89.8%
Y05	91.9%
Y06	95.8%
Overall average attendance	93.0%

## Child Safe Standards

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

St Patrick's continued to assess its Child Safe culture in 2021 and support families by:

- Opening classrooms and ensuring that we have a culture of being open and visible at all times
- Supporting families by improved communication and connection
- Continuing to educate our staff through online professional development and professional conversations

### Achievements

- We have designed and applied for funding for a much more purpose-built Child Safe toileting facility.
- We ensured that Child Safe issues were incorporated on our staff meeting agenda.
- We have improved our Handbook and our staff induction process to ensure Child Safe behaviours are understood and are part of the culture of the school.
- We've installed extra video cameras around the school and advertised their use and presence.

## Future Directions

The school will now need to consider employment of teaching and leadership staff. As always, we will need consider the staff that we are currently serviced by and structure the school accordingly.

The school also has a Masterplan that considers the toileting arrangements and the school's lack of a gathering space for the whole community.