



2024

Annual School Report



Mary MacKillop
Memorial School

we care

The Australia Government requires each Australian school to provide an annual report to its community. This report is a requirement of the Australian Education Act 2019. Below is the 2024 Annual Performance Report for Mary MacKillop Memorial School.

School Context

Mary MacKillop Memorial School is situated in the South East of South Australia. It is a Reception to Year 6 co-educational school in Penola. In 2024 the enrolments are 73 students ranging from Reception to Year 6.

Mary MacKillop Memorial School has been serving the Penola and surrounding communities since 1866. Throughout its long tradition of outstanding educational practice, the mission of the school has been to provide an education of excellence and care, in an environment of shared partnership with families. Mary MacKillop Memorial School is accessible for all based on the philosophy of the Josephite Sisters - "In All Things Love".

Generations later the traditions and beliefs of the Josephite Sisters are still at the heart of our community. In addition, we are challenged to prepare our students for a rapidly changing and complex future.

The school's Vision and Mission Statement emphasises that Mary MacKillop Memorial School is a Catholic school conducted in the Josephite Tradition. Our school is centred in the Gospels: the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Sisters of St Joseph were founded in Penola and lived among the community, sharing daily life and responding to the needs of others. At Mary MacKillop Memorial School we respond to the call of others and 'Never see a need without doing something about it.' Our values emulate the life and work of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop where love, service, presence, and courage are lived out in our words and actions.

Our Religious Education program complements and facilitates student led social justice activities which aim to form our children to become responsible global citizens and leaders for the world which God desires.

We see every child as capable and competent and as an active learner who feels empowered to seek meaning about the world in which they live. We have a strong focus on social justice, wellbeing and our work in environmental sustainability. Academic excellence is delivered through a comprehensive curriculum which caters for each individual's needs as a learner, so that every child with timely support, extension and challenge will meet their full potential.



In 2024 we implemented authentic learning with a focus on student agency and co-construction. Our school priorities for 2024:

- Every student has one years growth + for one year at school : data informed
- School values: communicated, identified and taught
- Literacy Block
- Implementation of Mary MacKillop Memorial School Writing Agreement
- Introduction and implementation of InitialLit in Literacy learning for Reception/Year 1 students
- Numeracy Block - Review and update Mary MacKillop Memorial School Numeracy Agreement

Overarching our priorities was a deliberate intention to be a high performing team!

Specialist teachers foster and nurture student learning in The Arts – music, dance, drama, visual and media arts, Science and PE/Health, alongside a comprehensive gardening and cooking program. (Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program)

Mary MacKillop Memorial School is deeply committed to providing an education of excellence and innovation.

Projects currently in progress are:

- An outdoor learning space for the Early Years’ and children who attend Playgroup, Occasional Care and Joeys Jumpstart Transition to School programs.
- A commitment to growing school enrolments.

Staffing 2024

Reception/Year 1	Danielle Heazlewood
Year 2/3	Kellie O'Neil
Year 4	Rebecca Ansell and Kaitlyn Lusty
Year 5/6	Amy Boyd
The Arts	
Music/Dance/Drama	Kaitlyn Lusty
Visual/Media Arts	Kaitlyn Lusty
Science	Kaitlyn Lusty
PE/Health	Sasha Reilly
SAKG Program	Jen Eckermann, Kaitlyn Lusty
Early Learning Coordinator	Leah Kuiper and Ebonie Moulton
Principal	Nicole Coote
Religious Education Coordinator	Sam Baxter
Leader of Learning	Sam Baxter

Finance Officer / Admin

Janice Coote

Education Support Officer / WHS/
Library

Jen Eckermann

Education Support Officer / Sport

Rachel Manninen

Education Support Officer

Leah Kuiper
Jack Muhovics
Ebonie Moulton
Mia Grant

IT Support

Ryan Agnew

School Counsellor

Rebecca Baker

School Board 2024

President of School Board:

Fr Peter Zwanns

Principal:

Nicole Coote

Chair of Board:

Tom Pearce

Deputy Chair:

Glenn Tucker

Chair of Finance:

Leticia Gosse

Secretary:

Amanda Flint

School Representatives:

Danni Heazlewood

School Community Representatives:

Cath Kidman, Tom Giles, Liz
Rymill, Jess Malone, Jodi
Strother and Miko Gruetzner

Appointed Member:

Sr Loreto O'Connor

SCHOOL FEATURES

School ICSEA (Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage)	1044
School Type	Catholic
Year Range	Reception - Year 6
Student Enrolments	73 Students
Student Numbers by Year Level	(August 2024)

	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Numbers	7	7	10	6	16	10	17

Percentage of Indigenous enrolments	0%
Percentage of Language background other than English	0%
Percentage of students with disabilities	55.6% (NCCD data)

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The average student attendance per year level in 2024.

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
81.5	90.1	90.8	91.7	90.6	89.9	85.1

As a school, we monitor the attendance of children daily. It is discussed with families at enrolment and also families are reminded regularly throughout the year via the newsletter. Where students are away regularly or for lengthy periods, teachers contact parents and carers to discuss the issue. Where significant absences are observed, families are asked to meet with the Principal. Occasionally we have some children who require significant monitoring and with these children we always call the families if they do not arrive at school.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

NAPLAN Results

In March Year 3 and 5 students participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy Tests. (NAPLAN Online) The aim of these tests is to provide information that adds to the comprehensive picture of student achievement that is developed by teachers using a broad range of assessment tools throughout the year. It also helps to track trends in learning so that we can identify areas where children are being successful and where teachers need to focus on more closely in the future. Our students and teachers are to be congratulated on the results of the 2024 NAPLAN tests.

At MMMS staff spend time analysing these results along with PAT (Progressive Assessment Tests) testing, classroom assessments, using rubrics and observations to inform their teaching and learning. Our practice is very much individualised for each student so that they have the opportunity to flourish. However, it is very pleasing to see the continued trend of being above the average mean score when compared with the mean score of Australian schools in the majority of areas. The analysis also helps us to identify the areas that require growth for our students and the areas that we need to focus on to build teachers capacity. Keeping in mind that both cohort of students – Yr 3 and Yr 5 are at or below 10 students, and therefore this impacts the reliability of the data. It does allow us to look closely at individual results and plan accordingly.

Year Level	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Yr 3 MMMS	459	473	424	478	470
Yr 3 National	401	424	406	404	401
Yr 5 MMMS	494	474	477	504	444
Yr 5 National	484	484	487	488	480

Year 3

School Mean Scores - Proficiency Standards

Component	Mean Score			Proficiency Level		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Reading	-	423.4	458.6	-	Str	Str
Writing	-	408.2	-	-	Str	-
Spelling	-	409.9	423.8	-	Str	Str
Grammar and Punctuation	-	427.4	477.8	-	Str	Str
Numeracy	-	432.3	469.8	-	Str	Str

NOTE:

Aggregate values are not reported for schools with less than 5 students contributing to the aggregate of interest. Proficiency Level: Exceeding (Exc), Strong (Str), Developing (Dev), and Needs additional support (Nas).

Year 5

School Mean Scores - Proficiency Standards

Component	Mean Score			Proficiency Level		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Reading	-	517.3	493.7	-	Str	Str
Writing	-	430.4	474.2	-	Dev	Str
Spelling	-	483.7	477.2	-	Str	Str
Grammar and Punctuation	-	497.5	504.5	-	Str	Str
Numeracy	-	509.8	443.6	-	Str	Dev

NOTE: Proficiency Level: Exceeding (Exc), Strong (Str), Developing (Dev), and Needs additional support (Nas).

Phonics Screening Check

The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check is conducted once a year in line with the Department for Education schedule (DfE). The PSC is provided through a non-exclusive licence with DfE.

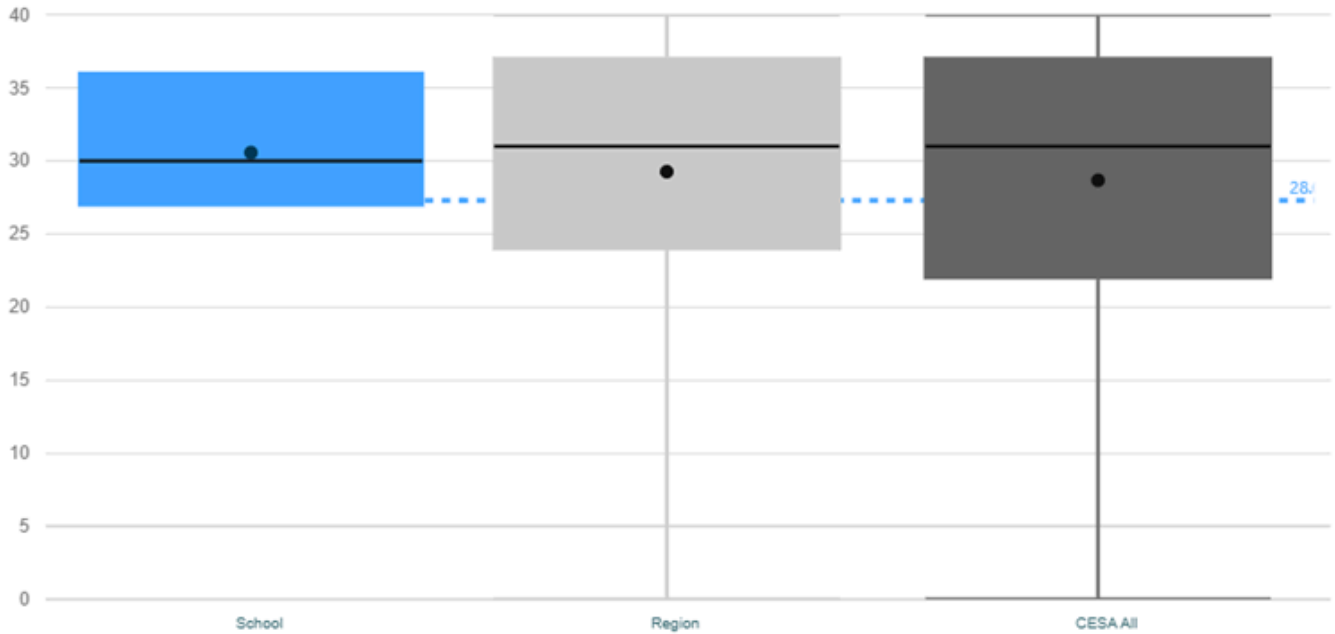
The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check (PSC) was mandated for all Diocesan Schools in 2021. Phonics is understood to be an integral part of reading, spelling and writing.

The PSC was implemented to provide an assessment which could confirm if children are developing the phonic knowledge they need to be successful as readers, writers and spellers.

Analysis

The most valuable use of the Phonics Screening Check results are at the classroom level. The expected achievement level of 28 out of 40 items provides teachers with a sense of what is reasonable to expect for Year 1 children, given the time of the year and the requirements of the Australian Curriculum. The score is an indication of what a child might achieve if their phonics learning is progressing as expected.

	School	Region	CESA
Average Score (out of 40)	30.6	29.3	28.7
% of students above the expected achievement score of 28 correct response out of 40	71.4%	65.2%	62.5%



POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

At the end of 2024, 14 Year 6 students transitioned to Tenison Woods College, Mount Gambier. One student transitioned to St Martin's Lutheran School, Mount Gambier, and two students to Penola High School.





STAFF PROFILE

Workforce Composition

Number of staff who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Staff Islander	1
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Teaching Staff

Number of staff	8
Full time Equivalent	6.2

Non-teaching staff

Number of staff	8
Full time Equivalent	4.6

In addition, all staff are required to complete mandatory Responding to Abuse and Neglect training and hold a current First Aid certificate. All teachers are registered with the South Australian Teachers Registration Board.

Two teachers are currently enrolled in their Graduate Certificate in Catholic Studies.

Teacher Qualifications

Masters	Bachelor Degree	Graduate Certificate	Diploma
10%	90%	33.3%	0%

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

In 2024 we promoted reflective, collaborative and collegiate practice, under the umbrella of our strategic planning for 2021-2024 – Future Directions and Priorities of Mary MacKillop Memorial School. This focus was closely aligned with the CESA Living, Learning, Leading Framework and Standards.

The focus of professional learning days included Numeracy, Literacy – Writing, Gifted and Talented and Life Buoyancy Institute – Resilient Impact Training (wellbeing).

MASA: Mathematical Association of South Australia

The Remote and Rural Schools Mathematics Program (RRSMP) allows MASA to reach remote and rural schools to offer professional learning face to face and online. The program focuses on mathematics teachers, personalising for each site.

Professional Learning undertaken by staff included:

- Salt Learning Manager
- First Aid – Senior and CPR refresher
- Life Buoyancy Institute – Resilient Impact Training
- MASA Professional Learning
- Gifted and Talented Professional Learning
- High Performing Teams – HPT: Flourishing Schools Professional Learning
- Clarity – Lyn Sharratt
- Key Capabilities – LLL Framework
- Crossways and MITIOG (Religious Education Curriculum)
- SEQTA (learning management system)
- Student Dashboard
- Learner Achievement and Progress System - LAPS
- Faith and Spiritual Formation
- Retreat Day
- NCCD
- SACPPA
- Leader of Learning: Explicit Instruction/Science of Reading
- Leader's Forum

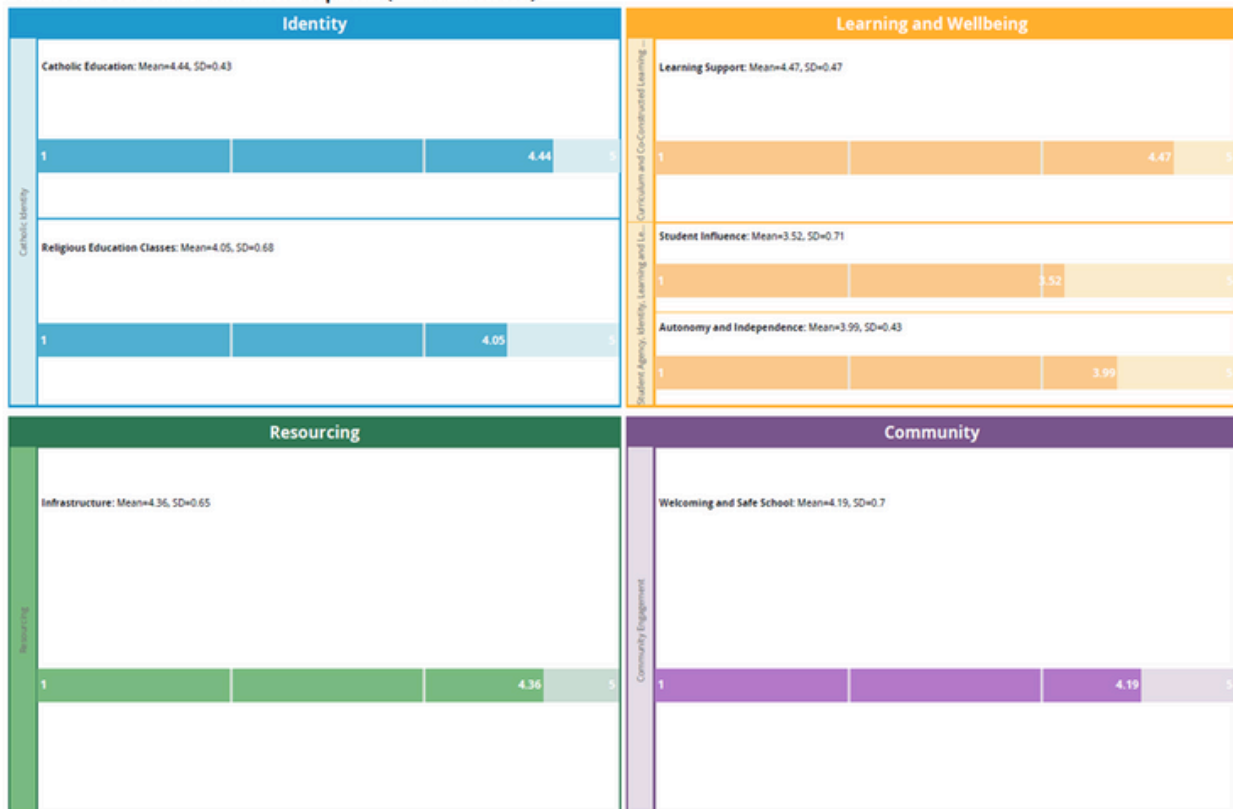


STUDENT, PARENT AND TEACHER ENGAGEMENT

In 2024 Mary MacKillop Memorial School engaged in the Living Learning Leading surveys where stakeholders of the school were asked to complete a number of questions. Results of the surveys is below.

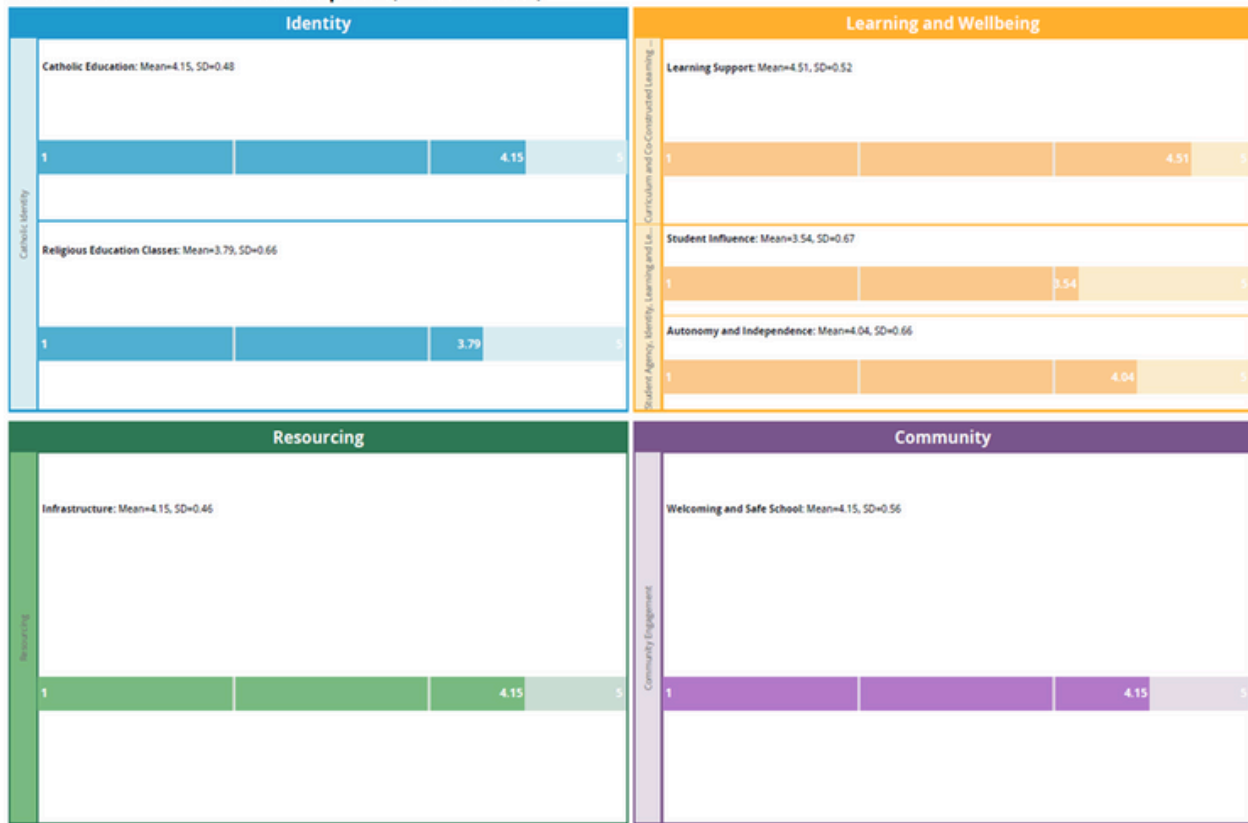
Year 2 - 4

Balanced Score Card: Student Perceptions (LLL Framework)



Year 5 - 6

Balanced Score Card: Student Perceptions (LLL Framework)



What the children are saying:

Generally, students are satisfied with their connection to school, the attention to their wellbeing, the support that they receive for learning and the feeling of being a part of a welcoming and safe community.

When analysing the results, it is important to celebrate what we are doing well, and to look at areas of growth. When any scale score is above three it is an area of strength for our school. All areas were above three.

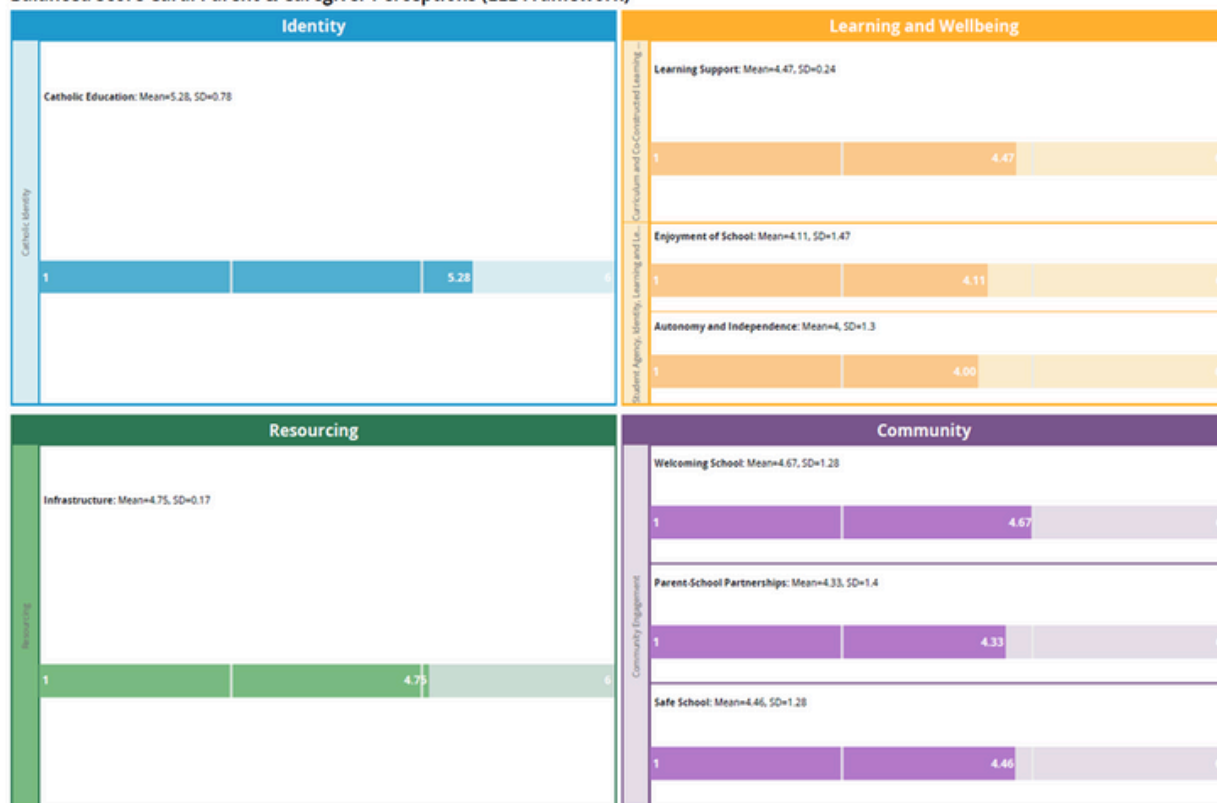
Learning and Wellbeing (orange) – Curriculum and co-constructed learning design – learning support. The extent to which students feel that their teachers support their learning is an area of strength for Mary MacKillop Memorial School, along with autonomy and independence. Community – welcoming and safe school – The extent to which students feel that the culture of the school is welcoming and that they are safe when they are at school is also a strength.

Learning and Wellbeing – Student agency, Identity, Learning and Leadership – Student influence. The extent to which students feel that there are opportunities for them to have a voice, choice, propensity to take action to influence and direct their own learning and assessment is an area of growth for Mary MacKillop Memorial School. As we continue to engage in professional learning through the Clarity work by Lyn Sharratt this will provide deeper insights of how teachers are able to bring student agency and influence into their own learning and assessment in an authentic and rigorous manner.

What the parents are saying:

Only six families completed the survey, which is below the average response rate of 30%. Any response collectively above four is deemed a very satisfied response. The results are a reflection that our school climate is above the norm.

Balanced Score Card: Parent & Caregiver Perceptions (LLL Framework)

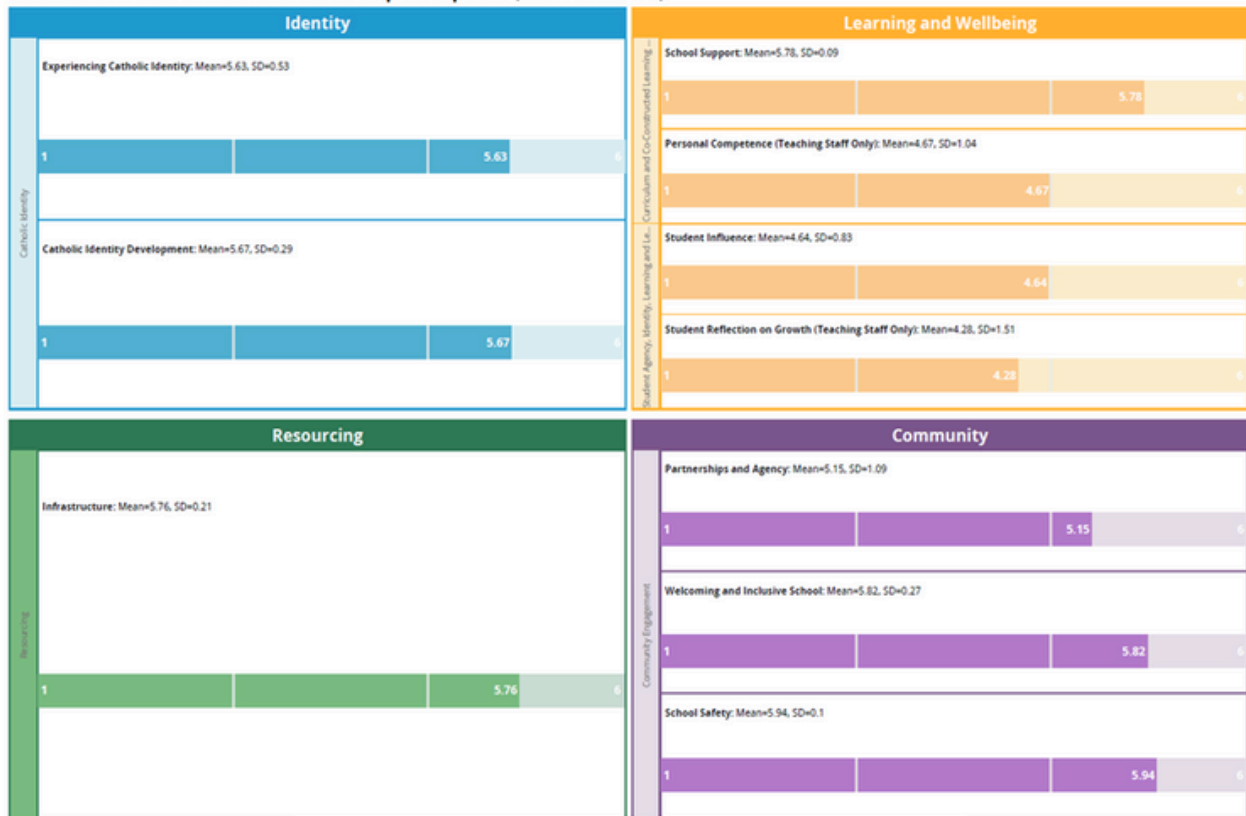


What the staff are saying:

Once again with a very small cohort of staff completing the survey it is not viable to make generalisations. When delving deeper into the data staff see community as a strength for our school and student agency as an area of growth in the future.



Balanced Score Card: Teacher & Leadership Perceptions (LLL Framework)



FINANCE

School Income by funding source
Recurrent Income

Federal Government Grants	
State Government Grants	\$1,213,225.00
School Fees	\$339,694.00
Other Income	\$99,234.60
(includes School Card, resource changes, interest income, donations for recurrent purposes, long service leave, staff allowances and rebates and reimbursements for costs paid by the school)	\$168,655.86
TOTAL	\$1,820,809.46

2024 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

During 2020, the school engaged in a self-assessment process that led to development of a School Strategic Plan 2020 – 2024. The School Improvement Plan for 2024 is based on the domains specified in the Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools and the Living Learning Leading Framework Standards, Balanced Score Card.

Self-assessment Process

Our school uses the Living Learning Leading Standard document provided by Catholic Education South Australia to self-assess and improve its performance. We also use the Continuous Improvement Framework to support our Annual Improvement Planning. These documents are part of a system-wide strategy to promote a culture and practice of continuous improvement in Catholic schools that has the students at its centre.

The Living Learning Leading Standard is organised into four domains which each Catholic school in SA uses to measure ourselves against and aspire to be ‘Excelling’ in each area:

- Catholic Identity
- Curriculum and co-constructed learning and assessment design
- Student agency, identity, learning and leadership
- Community Engagement

Each domain has a number of elements that describe its scope. Each element has a set of indicators of effectiveness. The Framework is organised into nine ‘aspirational’ domains which describe the characteristics of high performing, high quality schools.

These domains include:

- Catholic Identity
- Focussed Vision and Goals
- Strong Leadership
- High Expectations of All
- High Quality Teaching and Learning
- Effective Use of Data
- Orderly and Safe Learning Environments
- Strong Home/School/Community Engagement
- Effective Administration and Resourcing

Each domain has a number of elements that describe its scope. Each element has a set of indicators of effectiveness.

2020 - 2024 School Strategic Plan

- Please see Appendix A

2024 School Improvement Plan

- Please see Appendix B

Progress towards achievement of 2024 goals:

- Our school values are based on the Josephite Values and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and have been identified by staff and students – we love, we are courageous, we serve and we are present. They are able to be named in our words and actions.
- All teachers are consistent with the teaching, lesson structure and assessment strategies across the school in Numeracy.
- Students have high gain in Writing
- Assessment strategies developed
- Rigorous feedback on student's assessment



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Moving into 2024 we faced several challenges surrounding enrolment levels. "Build it and they will come" holds some weight and we, as a whole school community, certainly have worked hard together to build something very special here at MMMS.

From the state of the art learning spaces and classrooms, nature play areas and the grounds in general, MMMS is a leader of educational facilities. To state the obvious, there is more to the school than bricks, mortar and acoustically pleasant walls. Like all good organisations, it is the people that have made MMMS what it is. Where every child is supported in a safe learning space without judgement. A place where quality people come together to help staff the school and deliver a first-class education. Looking at the number of applicants for advertised roles at the school, it is also known as a leading place to teach.

All of this aside, we do need additional assistance with attracting new families. With the support of Catholic Education South Australia, we were able to introduce a new fee structure of \$250 for 2025 enrolments. This allows us to offer a top tier education that is accessible for all.

Further initiatives include additional signage for enrolments, playgroup and bus access. The ultimate in sign placement came when the school secured the 5m space on the highly visible football club booth for two years.

We also had Tenison Woods College support us, in a more public sense, in the importance of MMMS, along with the other regional Catholic Primary schools as being a feeder schools. We strongly believe that this, coupled with the new fee structure, will have more than positive results for our numbers going forwards.

Again, the quiz night was a huge success. It is also good to have the greater school community to the school along with people new to the school. The quiz night has proven itself to be a great night of fun and laughter as well as raising money at the same time. After two solid years I feel it is safe to say it will become a permanent fixture in the MMMS calendar.

Thank you to the School Board for a great year. You each volunteer a lot of time and it is greatly appreciated. Thank you, Nicole, for all your efforts, you consistently go over and above for the betterment of the school and much of its success starts with your passion.

As always, thank you Janice for keeping the administration and financials in check. Your hard work is always greatly appreciated.

Thank you to all the educators and support staff. It is very rare to see unhappy faces walking into and out of the school. Keeping the children happy and delivering a well rounded education that includes not just numeracy and literacy but also respect for oneself and others is no mean feat.

I have come to the conclusion of my time on the school board and can say I have honestly enjoyed every part of it and am exceptionally proud to be associated with MMMS.

Tom Pearce
CHAIRPERSON SCHOOL BOARD

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT – Annual General Meeting

This AGM Principal's Report is a reflection paper on the 2024 school year and is in line with the requirements of the Schools Assistance Act.

I am delighted to present the Principal's Report for the 2024 School Board Annual General Meeting. As the leader of our school community, I am dedicated to its continued success. This report reflects a profound sense of pride and appreciation for all that has been achieved throughout the year.

2024 Commitment:

This year, our school focused on innovation and enhancing our practices in the following key areas:

Catholic Identity – Ensuring our values are clearly defined, communicated, and actively taught.

High Expectations – Striving for more than a year's growth for every student.

Excellence in Achievement

Literacy – Implementation of InitialLit and the development of a Writing Agreement.

Numeracy – Review and update of the Numeracy Agreement.

Curriculum and Assessment Design – Utilizing data walls and case management to support co-constructed learning and assessment.

Student Agency – Empowering students as active participants in their learning through goal setting and co-construction opportunities.

Catholic Identity

The Catholic Identity of our school continues to be fostered by both staff and students in meaningful and diverse ways. In 2024, Sam Baxter took on the role of Religious Education Coordinator, guiding our community in faith-based celebrations throughout the year. These included St Joseph's Feast Day, Lent, Project Compassion, Holy Week, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop Feast Day, Founders Week, and Advent, among others.

Our community also embraced the spirit of giving through various outreach initiatives. Funds were raised for Project Compassion through Shrove Tuesday Pancake Day, while donations of money and essential goods supported the St Vinnies Winter Appeal. Additionally, the generous contributions to our Giving Tree helped provide much-needed assistance to those in our local region.

Through these acts of faith and service, our school continues to uphold its strong Catholic identity, fostering a deep sense of compassion, generosity, and connection within our community.

We embraced the spirit of Catholic Education Week, reflecting on what it means to be part of Catholic Education in South Australia. Throughout the year, students and staff engaged in prayer and scripture study, strengthening their faith and understanding. Classes visited the Mary MacKillop Interpretive Centre and connected with other Catholic schools in the South-East, sharing knowledge and celebrating Australia's first saint.

Our students' faith was further enriched through Class Masses and Liturgies, as well as whole-school Masses for Feast Days and special celebrations. Under the guidance of Fr Olek, Fr Peter, and Sam Baxter, several students were trained as altar servers, deepening their involvement in the Church.

With inspiration from the Josephite Sisters and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, our school values were developed in collaboration with students and staff. Students were encouraged to express what it means to be present for others, to serve, to be courageous, and to love and be loved—values that define life at Mary MacKillop Memorial School.

We developed a concise Crossways Scope and Sequence, linking our values to teaching and learning.

Early Learning

Our school remains a vital part of the community, offering an Early Years program that includes Occasional Care (for children aged 3–5) and Playgroup. In 2024, Occasional Care was facilitated by Leah Kuiper and Ebonie Moulton, experiencing steady growth each term. By Term 4, demand exceeded our seven available places, resulting in a weekly waitlist.

SPiCE (Supported Playgroup in Catholic Education) provided families with opportunities to connect with our school. Held on Friday mornings from 9:30 to 11:00, it welcomed families with children aged 0–5 years. Under the capable leadership of Ebonie Moulton, Playgroup maintained strong and consistent attendance.

In Term 4, we held Joey's Jumpstart, a comprehensive transition program for children starting school in 2025. This extended transition was highly valued by both parents and students, helping new learners feel comfortable in their environment, build relationships with educators, and connect with their peers.

Community

2024 was filled with opportunities for our community to come together. We hosted a successful Gather and Grow Afternoon and Information Sessions, led by each classroom teacher. Highlights of the year included a fantastic Quiz Night, Christmas Carols and BBQ, Mother's Day, Grandparents and Special Friends Afternoons, Father's Day Breakfast, The Arts Festival, Remembrance Day, Anzac Day, the Ag Town of the Year Expo, and catering for the Pilgrim Dinner, among others. Community involvement remains a key focus of our Strategic Planning.

Our senior students had the opportunity to participate in the Grandbuddies Program with Pinchunga residents. This initiative was highly successful, fostering meaningful friendships between students and residents, with both groups eagerly anticipating their time together.

In 2024, the MacKillop Markets were once again part of the Penola Coonawarra Arts Festival, offering students hands-on experience in running a business. This enterprise involved selling surplus produce from our Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden, as well as student-made items. Year 4/5/6 students developed valuable skills in areas such as advertising, pricing, harvesting, displaying, and selling products.

A strong sense of belonging continues to thrive at Mary MacKillop Memorial School, with community collaboration playing a vital role. The Just One Thing initiative remained instrumental in coordinating family involvement across various school activities.

Extra-Curricular Activities and Learning

In 2024, camps were a standout highlight for our students, providing exciting experiences and opportunities for personal growth. The Year 2/3 class enjoyed a fun-filled day trip to Mount Gambier alongside the R/1 class, followed by a memorable school sleepover. The Year 4/5 students embarked on a two-night adventure in Robe, where they took part in activities such as surfing lessons, kite flying, and river exploring, along with a unique visit to a camel farm. Meanwhile, the Year 6 students joined St Anthony's Catholic Primary School in Millicent for an action-packed camp in Adelaide, featuring a mix of educational and recreational activities.

Throughout the year, students also participated in Sporting Schools programs, engaging in activities such as golf, basketball, swimming, and surf lifesaving. Additionally, specialized sporting clinics, including cricket and AFL, were conducted by various agencies, further enhancing students' skills and enthusiasm for sports.

Student Leadership

Student leadership is an integral part of our school culture, promoting service, community engagement, and personal growth. Leadership opportunities empower students to take responsibility, contribute meaningfully to their school environment, and develop essential life skills.

Our student leadership groups play a key role in shaping school initiatives and fostering a positive, inclusive community. These groups include School Captains, House Captains, Choir Leaders, Student Representative Council (SRC) members, and Young Environmental Group leaders. Each role provides students with valuable opportunities to lead, inspire, and make a difference within the school.

The Young Environmental Group actively promotes sustainability, leading initiatives that encourage environmental responsibility and educate others on eco-friendly practices. Meanwhile, the Student Representative Council (SRC) ensures that student voices are heard, helping to implement ideas that enhance school life.

Through these leadership experiences, students develop the values of teamwork, responsibility, and service to others, embodying the spirit of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. By fostering student leadership, we nurture confident, compassionate individuals who are well-prepared to make meaningful contributions to both their school and the wider community.

Inclusivity

Our school is dedicated to fostering genuine inclusivity, ensuring that every student receives the support they need to reach their full potential. In 2024, students with specific learning needs were supported through Personalised Plans for Learning (PPLs) and Individualised Learning Plans (ILPs). These tailored programs, combined with additional school resources and funding through the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD), enabled students to work toward and achieve their goals.

In 2024 our Enrichment Program for students with exceptional and exceeding knowledge and skills was further developed with engagement in group tasks, through Bebras Challenge, Ethics Olympiad and writing and poetry.

Goal setting is a key component of our learning approach. Each semester, students collaborated with their classroom teacher to set personalised learning goals and regularly reviewed their progress. These goals were shared with parents during Learning Conversations in Term One and communicated via Seesaw, ensuring strong engagement between school and home.

By prioritizing individual growth and support, we continue to cultivate a nurturing and inclusive learning environment where every student is valued, encouraged, and empowered to thrive.

Wellbeing

Throughout 2024, wellbeing remained a key focus for our school community. To enhance student support, we employed a School Counsellor for one day a fortnight. Together, Rebecca Baker, Kaitlyn Lusty (Inclusive Education and Wellbeing Coordinator), and I, as Principal, formed the Wellbeing Team, working closely to address the wellbeing needs of all students. Key events such as R U OK? Day, Bullying No Way!, and Harmony Day were prominently featured in our school, with student leaders actively involved in organizing activities to promote these important messages.

We continued to develop and implement wellbeing strategies, incorporating the What-What-How tools from the Life Buoyancy Institute to support students in creating intentional growth action plans. The Kimochis program was further strengthened for our younger students, while our older students engaged in The Resilience Project, focusing on Gratitude, Empathy, and Mindfulness through journaling. Our approach encouraged a deeper understanding of each child's unique needs, fostering positive emotional wellbeing.

To further support student welfare, all staff who had not yet completed Resilient Impact training undertook the program through the Life Buoyancy Institute, while others received additional training in developing growth action plans and building stronger connections with vulnerable students. These strategies and practices were effectively implemented, ensuring all students received the support they needed to flourish emotionally and academically.

Pedagogies and Practices: Professional Learning

Our staff remain dedicated to providing engaging and high-quality learning opportunities for all students, with a strong emphasis on student agency and co-constructed learning. Throughout 2024, all staff participated in professional learning opportunities, continually refining their teaching practices by referencing the AITSL Standards, Living Learning Leading Framework, and the Clarity Learning Suite. A culture of innovation and adaptability was embraced, with staff actively serving as change agents in education.

Our commitment to student agency was reflected in teachers working alongside students to co-construct Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, and Bump It Up Walls, while also utilizing Anchor Charts to support learning. Students were encouraged to strive for excellence by understanding their learning goals and the steps needed to achieve them. Goal setting in Literacy, Numeracy, and personal development was a priority, with all students meeting regularly with their teacher to establish and refine their goals, ensuring they remained focused and motivated.

Seesaw continued to be a valuable platform for student-teacher communication, allowing students to share their learning and receive feedback. In 2024, staff worked to ensure consistency and uniformity in communication with families, strengthening the home-school partnership and keeping parents informed of their child's learning progress in a timely and meaningful way.

Seesaw continued to be a valuable platform for student-teacher communication, allowing students to share their learning and receive feedback. In 2024, staff worked to ensure consistency and uniformity in communication with families, strengthening the home-school partnership and keeping parents informed of their child's learning progress in a timely and meaningful way.

Staffing and School Resources

At the end of 2024, we acknowledged and farewelled Alison Smith, expressing our gratitude for her dedication and commitment to Mary MacKillop Memorial School. We also said goodbye to Sam Baxter, thanking him for his service as Leader of Learning and Religious Education Coordinator. Additionally, we farewelled Amy Boyd and Sasha Reilly, who have taken maternity leave, and we wish them all the best during this special time.

Student numbers remained steady at 74, allowing us to maintain four classes, which provided greater flexibility in catering to students' diverse learning needs. Financially, the school is well positioned for ongoing success. A significant milestone in 2024 was the official opening and blessing of the redeveloped and reimaged 1936 building and the new Woods Learning Centre, both of which were blessed by Archbishop Patrick O'Regan.

We were honored to be selected by Catholic Education South Australia as a candidate for the Enhancing Catholic Schools Project, which provided regular marketing support from the CESA team. Additionally, the Commission for Catholic Schools approved a new fee structure, effective in 2025. This change reflects the vision of Fr Julian Tenison Woods and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, who believed that every child should have access to a Catholic education. Beginning in 2025, school fees will be minimal, ensuring that financial barriers do not prevent families from choosing Mary MacKillop Memorial School for their child's education. Our ongoing partnership with CESA and participation in the Enhancing Catholic Schools Project will continue to strengthen our presence in the community as a school of choice for all.

We remain committed to ensuring our students have access to the best learning resources. A structured cyclic plan for upgrading laptops and iPads has continued, ensuring a 1:1 device ratio for students in Years 2-6.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the dedicated members of the Mary MacKillop Memorial School Board, including Fr Peter, Sr Loreto, and our exceptional staff. Their commitment to the mission, vision, and values of our school has been invaluable. It is a privilege to lead such a vibrant and supportive school community, working alongside staff, families, and students to foster a nurturing and enriching educational environment.

A special thank you to Tom Pearce, our outgoing Chairperson, for his thoughtful leadership, strategic vision, and innovative ideas, which have significantly contributed to the growth of our school. His guidance will be greatly missed. I also extend my appreciation to all School Board members for their ongoing dedication and support in shaping the future of Mary MacKillop Memorial School.

Being part of an inclusive, faith-filled, and caring community that is committed to providing the best opportunities for our children to succeed is an incredibly rewarding aspect of this role. Witnessing the growth of our students and staff throughout the year continues to inspire me to build upon our shared vision and lead a Christ-centred, child-focused Catholic school.

There are many exciting opportunities ahead, and I am grateful for the chance to be part of this journey. Inspired by our founder, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, I look forward to 2025 as a year of continued growth, success, and flourishing for all.
Inspired by Hope.

Nicole Coote

PRINCIPAL

