



St Mary of the Cross Point Cook

2020

Annual Report to the School Community

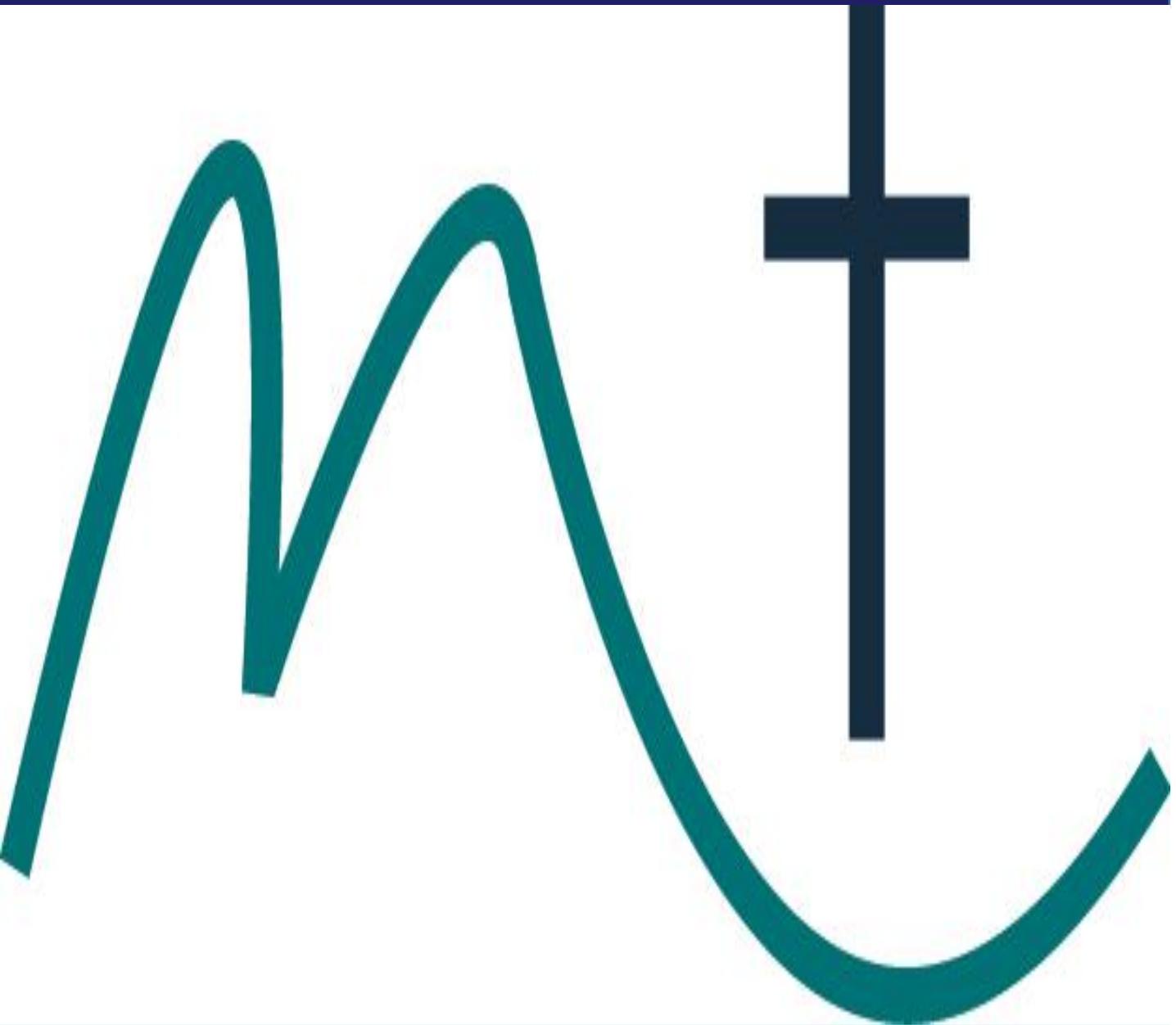


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Contact Details

ADDRESS	70 Carrick Street Point Cook VIC 3030
PRINCIPAL	Leon Colla
PARISH PRIEST	Fr John Healy
SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR	Colleen Palmer
TELEPHONE	03 8376 5400
EMAIL	principal@smocptcook.catholic.edu.au
WEBSITE	www.smocptcook.catholic.edu.au
E NUMBER	E1399

Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Leon Colla, attest that St Mary of the Cross 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 2020 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 School.

28/04/2021

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

Our School Vision

We, at St Mary of the Cross,
are an inclusive and welcoming Catholic Community
of actively engaged learners.

We model Mary MacKillop's servant leadership,
to nurture compassionate and
respectful individuals
who translate their beliefs into action.

School Overview

St Mary of the Cross is the newest of the five schools in the Parish of Laverton. The school is a Catholic primary school located in the Saltwater Coast Estate at the southern end of Point Cook, in Melbourne's outer western suburbs.

The school opened in 2014 in response to the growing demand for places at the Parish's two existing Catholic primary schools in Point Cook. The children in the foundation year commenced their education at either Stella Maris Primary School or Lumen Christi Primary School in 2013. The cohort moved to the new site at the start of 2014. The Foundation Principal was appointed and commenced duties in June 2013.

St Mary of the Cross opened its doors on the current site at Saltwater Coast in January 2014 with an enrolment of 152 students across all year levels and 16 staff members. In 2020, the population grew to 335 students and 32 staff.

Stage two of the building was completed in December 2015 with the middle and senior learning communities taking up residency in preparation for the 2016 school year. The new stage builds on the contemporary design of the building allowing maximum flexibility in the learning spaces. The new stage also added a permanent administration area, teaching kitchen, boardroom, and small group room. The school has a community café, located at the front entrance which is open to all parents and carers to utilize as they wish. This area is also used by the staff as a staff room at break times. The design of the building allows for natural light and ventilation to maximize energy efficiency.

The completion of stage 3 of the building program happened in 2019 with our senior community (year 5 & 6) moving into the new 'MacKillop' community.

The school is a warm and welcoming environment and reflects a contemporary approach to education in the twenty-first century. We acknowledge that our school is in the business of learning, and therefore we provide opportunities for all community members to become successful learners.

Our learning focus at St Mary of the Cross is Needs Based. Targeted teaching to the individual needs of children will ensure the best outcomes for our learners. Our flexible learning spaces maximize the possibilities for targeted needs-based learning to occur. The tracking of each child with supporting data is of paramount importance to ensure that children's needs are addressed

Principal's Report

A Reflection on 2020

Queen Elizabeth II In a speech at Guildhall in November 1992, marking her Ruby Jubilee on the throne, she said: "1992 is not a year on which I shall look back with undiluted pleasure. In the words of one of my more sympathetic correspondents, it has turned out to be an ``annus horribilis".

For all of us at St Mary of the Cross, and indeed across Victoria, 2020 turned out to be our annus horribilis!

Who would have thought that for 20 out of the 42 weeks of the school year we would have fewer than 20 children at school and that nearly all of our children were 'working from home'.

Last year, our teachers really came to the fore, with a quick adaptation to online learning. Most teachers in the State, when faced with lockdowns and the like moved into online or remote learning within the few weeks of the first term school holidays. Did we get it right? Probably not initially, but we worked hard over term two and three to ensure that all of our students got the best learning opportunities available under very trying circumstances.

I want to publicly acknowledge and praise our teachers for the work that they did during 2020 and the remote learning phases. They were amazing! Whilst most students in the state had a reading, writing and maths lesson per day, students at St Mary of the Cross received Reading, Writing, and Maths, but also received Religious Education, Inquiry, Art, Music, Phys Ed, and Japanese. A stunning response by our teachers!

I also want to acknowledge and thank our parents who under great duress and stress carried on the learning program in the home. This was not an easy task considering many of our parents were still trying to work from home in their own jobs. Great work everyone!

I think many parents had a new appreciation for teachers and the work they do, after having 20 weeks of home learning to contend with.

School was not the same in 2020. Having no children in them our buildings maintained a very morbid feel about them throughout the lockdown period, an empty feeling with little or no noise, conversations, questions, or fun. We missed our kids!

There are few highlights to mention from 2020, with most families in lockdown for nearly half the year, and no opportunities for community or social activities. I lament the fact that we could not even have an end-of-year Carols night to celebrate our achievements for the year. I would though like to acknowledge the PFC members who continued to meet during 2020 to at least keep the conversation going, even if they couldn't do the things that they would normally have done over the course of a normal year. A great job to the Chairperson, Micelle Goddard, and her small Committee they should be very proud of their leadership in our community and the work that they have done over the past year.

Congratulations and thank you also to our Board members. The Board met virtually during 2020 and was kept up to date on the new Governance arrangements which came into effect on the 1st

of January 2021. There will be some changes to the Board's role and construct over the course of this year. It is good to know that parents will continue to have a consultative role in the decision-making processes of the school.

In closing, I just want to say that I am looking forward to working with the school community as we set about rebuilding what our COVID year of 2020 has decimated. There is much work to do, and we have to do it in a COVID safe way, a 'new normal, but I think that the SMOC community are up to the challenge and I am looking forward to walking that journey with you.

School Education Board Report

The St Mary of the Cross Board of Management met on four occasions during 2020. All of these but one were Zoom meetings.

Whilst Zoom has become the 'new normal' of meeting protocols it is a difficult way to conduct meetings. Included in the Board of Management's Agenda during 2020 were the following items:

February 19th, 2020

- Finalisation of the St Mary of the Cross Whistleblower Policy
- Finalisation and endorsement of the St Mary of the Cross External Providers Policy

27th May 2020

- COVID - plans for moving forward
- Governance - introduction to the new model of governance
- Reports on the four audits the school undertook in the first term
- School Review - input into the minimum standards required for school registration
- Endorsement of the St Mary of the Cross External Providers Policy

10th June 2020

- The community meeting was cancelled due to COVID restrictions

12th August 2020

- Child Safety Regulations - new Information Sharing Scheme
- Remote Learning - Feedback from parents (improvements that could be made)
- COVID Safe Plan - input into the draft plan
- Governance - discussion on MACS position paper

On behalf of the St Mary of the Cross Community, I would like to thank all of our Board members for their work over 2020. It has been a difficult year for all but it was good to see the work of the Board continue.

Board Members 2020

Leon Colla Principal ex-officio
Rodriguez. Deputy Principal (3-6)

Maria Zarafa Deputy Principal (P-2).

Kat

Colleen Palmer PFC Board Rep.
Goodwin. Parent Rep

Shane Curson Parent Rep

Michelle

Diane Sisak Penjalov. Parent Rep
Dimech Teacher Rep

Nic Coots Teacher Rep

Carmen

Education in Faith

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To continue to develop a welcoming, inclusive and contemporary Catholic community

Intended Outcomes:

That the Catholic Culture Aggregate indices are improved for staff, students and parents.

That student engagement in the Religious Education program is continually enhanced.

That the school moves towards the dialogue school model

Achievements

It is difficult to judge the effectiveness of our approach to Education in Faith during 2020.

Many of the targets set were not met. The supporting data (CEMSIS) was not available because we were unable to complete the survey due to COVID.

In 2020, there were no sacrament programs and very few community or school masses.

VALUE ADDED

The school was able to conduct:

- Beginning of the School Year mass
- Community prayer services (term one and four - restricted)

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To develop actively engaged visible learners

Intended Outcomes:

That student outcomes in Mathematics and English continue to progress.

That the Teaching Climate Aggregate Index continues to improve

Achievements

It is difficult to judge the effectiveness of our approach to Learning and Teaching during 2020.

Many of the targets set were not met. The supporting data (CEMSIS) was not available because we were unable to complete the survey due to COVID.

With a move to remote learning, teachers were required, at very short notice, to provide ongoing curriculum programs via a remote learning platform. The staff chose Google Classroom as the platform to deliver lessons to the children.

At St Mary of the Cross teachers provided children at all grade levels with the following:

- Literacy: Reading, Writing and Speaking and Listening
- Mathematics
- Inquiry
- Education in Faith
- Art
- Physical Education
- Performing Arts - Music
- LOTE - Japanese

All lessons delivered were planned sequentially using the scope and sequence chart for each subject.

Although parents were required to supervise the learning, students were able to access a full program of learning for all the lockdown periods during the year.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students did not complete NAPLAN o in 2020., so there are no results available.

Students completed the PAT R and PAT M tests at the end of the year as well as a number of other performance evaluators.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019	2020	2019 – 2020
	%	%	Changes	%	Changes
			%	*	*
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	94.8	95.5	0.7		
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	97.7	-2.3		
YR 03 Reading	98.3	95.6	-2.7		
YR 03 Spelling	96.6	95.5	-1.1		
YR 03 Writing	100.0	97.7	-2.3		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	92.5	87.5	-5.0		
YR 05 Numeracy	96.3	91.7	-4.6		
YR 05 Reading	92.7	95.8	3.1		
YR 05 Spelling	96.2	95.8	-0.4		
YR 05 Writing	98.1	95.8	-2.3		

* 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.



Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To develop a community awareness and understanding of the interrelated areas of personal wellbeing (physical, social, spiritual, mental and emotional), learning success and personal growth

Intended Outcomes:

That the Student Wellbeing Aggregate Index is improved.

Achievements

During 2020 the school's focus in this area was twofold, the first being on our Values: Respect, Inclusively, Integrity, and Success.

The second part of our work in the Wellbeing space was to focus on embedding the Positive Behaviours for Learning (PB4L) approach across our whole school community. The approach was initiated in 2019 and we used 2020 to ensure that all staff and children were aware of and operating under the PB4L approach. We included a school-wide approach through our assemblies and community meetings and also a Homeroom approach encouraging and monitoring the approach across all Homerooms. Planning for and including PB4L initiatives in our planning sessions was imperative to the success of PB4L across the school. A PB4L committee was established to monitor SWIS data collected on incidents in the school. Lock downs also skewed our data and we look forward to monitoring the data in 2021 to evaluate our success in the PB4L approach.

The embedding of our four values took varied approaches during the year including a focus each week introduced at the weekly assembly as well as tailored lessons delivered by each Homeroom teacher.

VALUE ADDED

Students were introduced to daily routines, with four routines outlined for each day. These included the Entry to school routine - including going to lockers, unpacking bags, putting drink bottles and lunches in appropriate places then proceeding to their table and sitting quietly with a book until the teacher was ready to start the lesson. Other routines included: Moving out to play routine, Lunch break routing and End of school day routine. Teachers were introduced and encouraged to use pre-correctives giving students the instructions and success criteria that they were looking for before the activity was undertaken.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

The Student Leaders have expressed their satisfaction during regular meetings that the temperament of the school is 'lower'. Less violence in the schoolyard and particularly on the

soccer pitch. Students believe that PB4L and our focus on our school values have had a positive impact on the climate of the school.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Non-attendance is monitored through the nForma software application. Nonattendeess are tracked and monitored on a weekly basis by the Intervention Committee. Families are then contacted by the Wellbeing Leader and in some cases, Return to School plans are developed to ensure the student returns to school and has success in their daily learning.

Unexplained absences are dealt with as follows:

At 9:30 am after the attendance roll is marked, the office staff review the children who have not been marked present. They compare this list with the list of students who have explained absences (parents have called the school or registered the child's absence on the school website)

For children who have unexplained absences: The office staff text the parent/s and requests they contact the school to explain the absence. If no response is received by 10:00 am, the office staff will follow up with a phone call. If no response, then the office staff contact other parties listed as emergency contacts. In the event that no contact can be made, the office staff will contact the police and register the absence with them.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y01	92.2%
Y02	93.0%
Y03	93.5%
Y04	94.5%
Y05	93.0%
Y06	94.0%
Overall average attendance	93.4%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

The safety and wellbeing of our students is of primary importance to all adults at St Mary of the Cross. We have integrated our child safety policies into our daily routines and ensured that all children who come to our school are safe from abuse.

Achievements

During 2020, in line with the expected review of our Minimum Standards expected by the VRQA, St Mary of the Cross has reviewed all our child safety practices and policies. We have done this with our staff through our staff meetings (this has become a standing order in our regular agenda), with our parent community through our weekly Newsletter 'Family News', and with our Board Members through regular reviewing of policies at our Board meetings.

Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To build strong organizational health

Intended Outcome:

That the Organisational Climate Aggregate Index is improved

Achievements

In 2020, the School implemented a new format for the weekly newsletter. This format included a range of submissions including all the Leadership roles reporting to the community on what had been happening during the lock down/home-schooling period. The newsletter format was revamped and a new title was introduced. The new publication was called Family News and has been well received.

Weekly meetings of the Admin team and the Senior Leadership Team (including the two Deputy Principals, were scheduled on a weekly basis. Most of these meetings were conducted using Google Classrooms. These were more regular than in the past in order to be able to agilely react to the changing landscape that COVID presented us with.

The development of COVID safe plans and the ongoing monitoring of these took a great deal of time and energy..

The school collective (all five Parish schools) also moved to an automated platform for enrolments of Prep students. These enrolment applications often number greater than 500 and so preparations were made in 2020 to move towards an online portal that handled, sorted, and allocated enrolments to school enrolment zones. Full implementation will be completed in the 2022 enrolment program.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

In 2020 a new position of leadership was introduced after the 2019 review and realigning of the school goals. A growth and development coach was appointed from the staff. This was a POL2 position and this person was responsible for coordinating all professional learning in the school, managing pre-service teacher placements, accreditation, and other network learning activities.

In 2020, the staff undertook a full day Positive Behaviours for Learning professional development day, Individual staff members participated in online courses including, but not limited to:

Design Thinking program (NoTosh organisation)

Accreditation studies (3 teachers)

Literacy Network

STEM Network

Literacy PL - Colourful semantics, phonics,

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	22
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$455

TEACHER SATISFACTION

In 2020 staff worked well together particularly in the lead up to and during the first and second remote learning phases. Teachers were collaborative and diligent in their preparation for work to be posted on to the online platform. Teachers worked incredibly hard to ensure that students' needs were catered for even if they were not in a face-to-face environment.

It is difficult to measure staff satisfaction for their work and with the school with staff spending 20 of the 42 weeks working from home.

Generally staff morale was high.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	84.8%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	82.1%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	16.7%
Graduate	16.7%
Graduate Certificate	4.2%
Bachelor Degree	70.8%
Advanced Diploma	8.3%
No Qualifications Listed	20.8%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	27.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	23.6
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	14.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	9.5
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

School Community

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

To further develop as an inclusive and connected Catholic community

Intended Outcomes:

That the Community Engagement Aggregate Index is improved

Achievements

Last year was a unique and difficult year for community engagement, given that parents were not allowed into the school buildings after the end of term one.

The parents and Friends community continued to meet online for most of 2020 and the Board of Management also met online during this time.

Most of the usual gatherings for parents, Parent Teacher Interviews, Tuckshop, Carols Night, Mothers Day, Fathers Day, Grandparents day and Sacraments etc were all cancelled during the remote learning time.

We did attempt to maintain lines of communication with parents through the Google Classroom platform and through our weekly Family news.

PARENT SATISFACTION

Parents were generally satisfied with the remote learning periods during 2020. The school kept in touch with them and provided daily classes including English and Mathematics, Religious Education, Inquiry, LOTE Japanese, Art, Music, and Physical Education.

Feedback from parents indicates that they were satisfied with the work presented, the rigor of the work, and its availability. Following the first lockdown a survey was conducted with parents (online) and 78 parents of the 248 families responded.

67 parents responded positively to the amount of work presented each day for the children

22 responders indicated that there was too much work for parents to manage at home

11 responders had no positive response

Of the 78 responders, 48 enjoyed the first lockdown experience and 41 preferred that the children were at school.

72 responders were satisfied that the school had responded appropriately to the remote learning phase, and in a timely manner.

Future Directions

The school will undertake a School Improvement Review in 2021. This Review should have taken place in 2020 but was not conducted due to the COVID-19 lockdowns.

A new School Improvement Plan will be generated after the Review has been completed.