

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School Merbein

2021

Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 1277

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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Narelle Gallagher, attest that Our Lady of the Sacred Heart 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.

30/03/2022

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

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

Purpose Statement

We are a Catholic community that is welcoming and inspired by Jesus to influence each individual to reach his or her full potential. In partnership with our parish community, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Primary School will provide a Comprehensive Education by developing in all children the particular qualities which will enable them to contribute to the common good of all society, based on the gospel values of: love, trust, dignity, respect, freedom, forgiveness, self-awareness and self-discipline.

Graduate Statement

We want our students to grow in faith, bring faith to life, develop a love of learning and be positive, resilient contributors to society.

School Overview

Our school is named for Mary, Mother of Jesus, and is the Catholic school of the Merbein parish. Our symbols of the grapes, vines and cross represent the link between our school and the community's dependence on the vines. This is reflected in John's Gospel - "I am the vine; you are the branches." (John 15:5) The motto of our school is "United We Educate." This is the basis of all that we do.

Merbein is a small town situated on the Murray River, 12 kilometres from Mildura. Surrounding the town are closely settled fruit blocks, which rely on irrigation. As well as fresh fruit, Merbein supplies the wine industry and also provides a market for citrus, nuts and other vegetables.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School was built through the determination of a small group of parishioners who saw the need for a Catholic Church and school in Merbein. After consultation with the parish priest in Mildura and the Bishop of Ballarat, parishioners Tom McCarthy and John Power Senior travelled the parish by horse and cart, looking for donations to fund the project. In 1927, a brick building was constructed to serve as both the parish church and the school.

In January 1928, the school opened and was staffed by three Sisters of Mercy, who travelled daily from Mildura to teach and provide educational opportunities to all those in the Merbein Community. "Educate people, and you will provide them with an opportunity for life." (Catherine McAuley - founder of the Sisters of Mercy).

In the beginning the school provided education for 60 students and, over time, the building was added to for the purpose of catering for larger enrolments. Along with a staff of dedicated and committed lay teachers, the Sisters of Mercy continued their service to the school until 1998. The first lay principal was appointed in 1999 and, since then, there have been three more lay principals. In 2017, the current principal, Mrs Narelle Gallagher, was appointed.

Today, our school community is made up of town and rural families from both Victoria and New South Wales. Our parish is currently led by Fr. Matthew Thomas from the Sacred Heart Parish in Mildura. Approximately 34% of the 152 students enrolled at OLSH are Catholic, with the majority of other families not in faith. Despite this, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart is concerned with shaping well-rounded students who have the ability to explore and question the Catholic faith and the spiritual growth of the individual is encouraged and supported through a comprehensive Religious Education program and participation in the life of the church through masses and liturgies.

At OLSH we aim to develop a strong love of learning through an extensive curriculum, based on shared, evidence-based pedagogical practices. We continue to explore how our children learn best by recognizing their individuality and work to give every child an opportunity to shine. Given that we have approximately 27% of students who currently receive support through the NCCD, our Graduate and Purpose Statements are integral to our approach to educating our students.

Sitting alongside all learners are staff who are valued and appreciated, and who are encouraged to develop their teaching practices through a combination of professional learning and timely feedback from peers and instructors from outside our own school setting.

Principal's Report

It is hard to believe that we have almost come to the end of another school year, and what a year it was! After a very challenging time in 2020, we began the year with the hope, and perhaps misguided belief, that we would have a smooth year at OLSH without the trials and tribulations of the lockdowns and remote learning of the previous year. A retreat at the end of January had all staff in a positive frame of mind to face the year and allowed us to share important information about our students and complete team building activities that helped to reconnect us as a group.

Our bubble was burst only three weeks into the year when a short lockdown was announced, luckily only lasting for three days. Unfortunately, this was to be the first of six whole-school or partial-school lockdowns which would see us learning remotely for 10 weeks of the year, give or take a few days. Although these physical absences from school took a toll on students, staff and parents alike, the resilience of our school community shone through again and again. From the dedication of the staff in preparing and delivering a quality online teaching program, the back and forth from school to home, and the stamina displayed by parents and students to keep going, even when throwing in the concept of home-schooling seemed tempting, everyone did an amazing job of keeping each other afloat!

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, there have been many positives this year. We began the year with 137 students and seven classrooms, including 19 new Prep students. With the challenges of the previous year in mind, we made the decision to have a Boost teacher who would work across the school to address any gaps left by remote learning, particularly in the junior years. Our thanks go to Lisa Ryan for her dedication to the groups of children she has supported throughout the year and for the collaborative and flexible way she has worked with all teaching staff to make this endeavour a success. Casey Stoetzer continued to lead the way in the area of Learning Diversity, James Canavan the Religious Education of the school and Adam Lawrence and Rebecca Appledore the Learning and Teaching. All did so extremely well while juggling classrooms and other duties and we thank them for taking on these roles.

An enthusiastic group of parents formed the School Advisory Council this year, with Hannah Mills, Lana Borchard and Amy Cupper joining Gavin, Thel and Grant on the SAC. Plans to unite the school community once more through various events and initiatives such as the Bingo Night and Learning Walks had us motivated and enthusiastic. While some of these events took place, others did not and were postponed several times throughout the year. Our OLSH Community Group had a brief revival and was able to coordinate a successful Pie Drive, as well as a Hot Cross Bun drive at Easter. We are looking forward to this group taking charge of more school events in the future. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the SAC for their dedication to their children and our school in a difficult year and hope that they have not been scared off for 2022! It has been wonderful to have their support as they represented the families of OLSH and for this I am extremely appreciative.

Throughout the year, the spiritual life of our school remained a focus, even though many of our usual celebrations were either cancelled or delayed. We were joined by Father Matthew Thomas and the students continued to learn from the Awakenings program, as staff continued to build their understandings of Catholic Social Justice and how to incorporate other religious world views into our teaching. The junior grades were regular visitors to the Thursday Parish Mass in the first half of the year, which was loved by our older parishioners and served to keep us connected with our wider parish community. We held a very successful Mission focus in early November and are looking forward to celebrating our end-of-year/Grade Six Graduation Mass as a school community in a few weeks.

Throughout the first half of the year, our staff meetings were focused on our continued preparation for our School Review, held every five years for the purpose of reflecting on our last School Improvement Plan and to develop our goals and focus for the next five years. In July, after much collaboration, discussion and work, our report was completed and presented remotely before the review panel. After two days of reflection by staff, parents and students, we were able to celebrate our achievements, completing our School Improvement Plan and arriving at some solid priorities for the coming five years.

Around the school grounds, our project of completing the impressive roof over the basketball court, which had begun late in 2020, was finally achieved. This will be an area that will provide shade and shelter for our students in the both summer and winter months. A storage room for school files and records was also completed, along with some improvements to the front entrance of the school.

With a view to remaining financially responsible into the future, in August we considered our staffing numbers and decided that changes needed to be made, resulting in the loss next year of a valued member of our staff in Mila Giddings. Mila was fortunate to obtain a position at St. Paul's School in Mildura and our loss is most definitely their gain. Since then, as fate would have it, we have lost two more staff members for 2022 in Casey Stoetzer and James Canavan, with Casey seconded to the Catholic Education Office for a year in a Learning and Teaching position and James relocating to teach in South Australia. All three of these staff will be deeply missed by their colleagues and the students and families at OLSH, but we wish them well for the future and know they will be successful in all they undertake.

Wellbeing has become a major focus throughout the pandemic and has never been more important in our schools. While the School Review demonstrated that we are kicking goals in this area, we will continue to put our energy into how we can support our students academically and socially, as well as providing valuable information and support to our families when needed. In 2022, we will be taking on the ReLate Program which will build on our understanding of trauma and its effects on children and how we can create a culture where every child is valued and understood, in turn improving student learning outcomes. Our Wellbeing focused 'Rainbow Day' celebrated the importance of gratitude, resilience, mindfulness and, most importantly, empathy. These are elements of our school that have shone through this year and on which we hope to build on in the future.

Finally, I would like to say a huge thank you to our staff and families, who have managed to face the toughest of years (twice!) with a steadfast resolve that has been tested over and over. Constant changes to rules and restrictions have tested our resilience, but all staff, from the administration, to the teachers and Learning Support Officers (who, by the way, did an amazing job throughout remote learning) have managed to keep smiling and doing what they do best. We are finishing the school year with 144 students, and with 24 Preps beginning their education journey with us in 2022. The hopefully COVID-free future is looking very rosy for OLSH.

Thank you.

School Advisory Council Report

On behalf of the SAC board good evening and welcome:

This year was looking to be very productive for the SAC, with new faces, new ideas and a fresh outlook. As we all know, this year didn't play out as we all hoped, throwing us back into lockdown, back to online learning and keeping us away from what we needed most. So, as a SAC, we only ended up with a few meetings for the year because of this.

Our aim was to welcome back parents, families and the parish to build the school community to show how great this school really is.

This was to be done via:

- in-school hours functions such as the highly successful Mother's Day High tea which saw around 75 mothers, grandmothers and/or guardians attend.
- out-of-school hours functions such as a Bingo Night, Footy Night and Trivia Night, all of which were postponed for the year because of lock-downs and restrictions.
- promotion of the school to the wider community, including the Wentworth area, via flyers, advertisements, school viewings and word of mouth.

A new way to show parents how the school and classes are run was trialled by members of the board in May, called a 'Learning Walk'. This was thought up and led by Tony Dalton to show how to run the Learning Walk for a future program to be implemented and run by OLSH Staff. It is run in small groups for minimal disruption to classes while the participants can view the workings of the school. This was very successful with very positive feedback with all that were involved.

New sport shirts were agreed unanimously upon, as a change was needed due to durability, staining problems and to give a new fresh look. This transition will be completed over a two-year period.

A high priority among the board was to help form a new OLSH Community Group. With flyers and a good word put out, a keen interest was returned and an enthusiastic new group of parents was brought together. In the short time they had together, they were able to help with a very worthwhile pie drive. It will be really exciting to see what could be achieved in a 'normal' year as a group like this is invaluable to the school.

Some exciting projects have been completed this year which have been in the pipelines for a while. The Basketball Court Shelter which was designed by Daniel Manno (Energy Architecture) working alongside the school and the parish came up with this amazing structure. This was then constructed by Dale King and his team at King Construction Group. This has now, with the illuminated sign, brought the school to life with people from the area talking and now noticing the school as never before. A much-needed Archive Storage Room was also constructed (much to Carolyn's pleasure), along with an update and a little safety upgrade to the main front entrance.

Sadly, we have a few departures within our teaching staff this year. To Casey Stoetzer, James Canavan and Mila Giddings: thank you very much for your services and dedication to our school but more so to our children. Your absences are definitely our loss, but I would like to wish you all the best for what the future holds.

Finally, a massive thanks and congratulations to Narelle, the staff at OLSH and parents for going above and beyond this year for our kids. This year has by far taken more of a toll than anyone expected it to. The dedication shown by all was and is simply amazing and what makes this school the community it is.

Thank you and good luck for 2022.

Gavin Gourlay

Chairperson SAC

Catholic School Culture

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Our 2021 Annual Action Plan did not contain any goals specific to Catholic School Culture. We did, however, feel that continued guidance was required with the implementation of the new Awakenings program and our goal was to continue developing our practices in this area by improving our teaching practices and student learning outcomes.

Achievements

We began our year with an outdoor school Mass and were thankful to have parents and the parish community able to attend. This was streamed live on Facebook to allow parents to join in remotely. Throughout the year, despite COVID-19 interruptions and crowd restrictions, we were able to hold several masses and liturgies as a school, including a Year 6 Graduation Mass at the conclusion of the year.

Project Compassion and Mission Week activities were held and money and awareness was raised for Caritas and Catholic Missions. The school celebrated 200 years of Catholic Education with a Mass and several activities (in conjunction with Twilight School) throughout the week to acknowledge this milestone. The junior grades were regular visitors to the Thursday Parish Mass in the first half of the year, which was loved by our older parishioners and served to keep us connected with our wider parish community.

As a staff, we completed work on our Mercy heritage with Sr. Helen Nolan and continued to strengthen our knowledge of the new Awakenings planning format and Shared Christian Praxis through workshops with Kim Hawkes, our CEB Religious Education Leader. A planned PD on Spiritual Formation, with Jim Waight, was cancelled due to COVID-19 lockdowns. We focused on the TAP tool and its use in recording our RE professional development into the future and, as part of our School Review, we revisited our Vision and Mission to ensure its validity for our school.

VALUE ADDED

- Catholic Education Week Mass
- Twilight School activities with 200 years of Catholic Education theme
- Mission Mass/Crazy Sock Day
- Mission Day stalls
- Hot Cross Bun sales for Project Compassion
- Giving Tree for St. Vincent de Paul

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

As a part of our first priority in our Annual Action Plan, we aimed to improve parent engagement in student learning through activities such as classroom STEM days and by using Learning Walks as a tool to show parents the processes involved with running these in the classroom. We managed to complete one successful Learning Walk in Term one, with some very positive feedback from parents, but our plans for a second STEM-based Learning Walk were thwarted due to COVID-19 lockdowns.

Remote Parent/Teacher interviews and Student Support Group meetings conducted by phone or video link, rather than in person, became the norm at OLSH in 2021 and, with this format embraced by parents during early-year lockdowns, we decided to continue to offer this to parents as an alternative way to meet. This provided an almost 100% uptake of parent meetings, which benefited all involved.

The SAC planned several social events, including a Bingo Night for parents and a Footy Night for the whole school community, but both of these were unfortunately cancelled due to COVID-19. The OLSH Community Group was revived and came together to organise a successful Pie Drive for the school and, despite being in lockdown when this took place, it was well-supported by our school community.

Despite the effects of COVID-19 on parent participation and the presence of parents in the school, our Insight Data around parent engagement rose in all areas, including Partnerships, Approachability and Reporting. Throughout any lockdowns, teachers were available to parents through various platforms, including email, telephone and video conference and work was shared through the Seesaw platform by all classrooms.

Achievements

- Learning Walk
- Mother's/Father's Day activities
- Changed format to Parent/Teacher interviews and Student Support Meetings
- End-of-year concert (with parents present for the first time for the year)

PARENT SATISFACTION

Parents have expressed satisfaction with the practices taking place at our school, with the growth in the area of Community Engagement very pleasing (please see table below).

INSIGHT SRC Survey Data Area
INSIGHT SRC - Community Engagement Aggregate
INSIGHT SRC - Staff - Parent Partnerships
INSIGHT SRC - Parents- Partnerships
INSIGHT SRC - Parents- Approachability
INSIGHT SRC - Parents-Parent Input
INSIGHT SRC - Parents-Reporting
INSIGHT SRC - Parents-School Improvement

Leadership & Stewardship

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Our goal in this area focused on our upcoming School Review in the middle of 2021. We set out to do the following:

- Develop a set of norms for completing our review
- Ensure a collective understanding of why we are completing a school review
- Appropriately resource the process (time, staff, leadership)
- Plan and discuss the review process and data sets collaboratively
- Utilise data sets to plan appropriately
- Use the expertise of our Education Consultant
- Follow the suggested timeline for reviewing our practices and completing the required documents

We also continued our Leadership model of a dual Leadership Team/Consultative Committee in 2021, with decisions affecting the staff (such as class sizes) brought before the Consultative Committee, twice per term. Our processes and procedures during COVID-19 were included in these meetings. Leadership continued to monitor staff professional development through Annual Review Meetings and tracked staff morale and mental health through well-being checks.

Towards the end of 2021, staffing numbers were reviewed and decisions made around how to decrease spending in this area while still maintaining quality teaching and learning opportunities for our students.

Achievements

- Meetings with Chris Robarts to prepare for the School Review
- Regular whole-staff meetings to complete each sections of the Review, including establishing working groups
- Completion of the School Review in August 2021
- Updating and check-ins of our Annual Action Plan
- Wellbeing Checks and ARMs

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2021

Professional Development in 2021 was limited due to restrictions on travel and, as a whole staff, we did not participate in many external activities. We did begin the year with a whole staff retreat, which focused on rebuilding our team after long periods of working remotely the previous year.

Professional learning that did occur was related to specific roles within the school, such as Learning Diversity meetings, gatherings of the River Region Learning and Teaching Alliance and limited Northern Zone Principal Gatherings, REL meetings and training in several areas of compliance. One staff member took on the Browne Collective course to develop leadership.

- Ables Curriculum Training
- Browne Collective
- CPR/Asthma/Anaphylaxis update
- Compliance Training (Compliance Officer)
- Auslan Professional Learning

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2021	12
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1437

TEACHER SATISFACTION

Teacher satisfaction at OLSH is generally high, with teachers feeling supported across most areas. Twice yearly wellbeing checks, an open-door policy to leadership, and numerous chances to interact socially all contribute to this.

Staff are encouraged to up-skill themselves with support from their peers, leadership and the expertise of Catholic Education Ballarat representatives. Opportunities for peer observations and feedback have been given in the past and will continue to be a focus of our professional development in 2022.

Staff are given time to collaborate on a weekly basis in units and, over the past two years, a Wellbeing Team has been formed who plan and run small events to keep the morale of staff up and to promote down-time in the busy schedule of the school. This has been vitally important over the last year with the impact of COVID-19 weighing heavily on the physical and mental health of staff.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	92.8%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	92.6%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	0.0%
Graduate	10.0%
Graduate Certificate	30.0%
Bachelor Degree	80.0%
Advanced Diploma	10.0%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	11.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	10.0
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	12.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	7.7
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Our Annual Action Plan included a goal to further explore STEAM to ensure a coverage of the Victorian Curriculum and increase student engagement

Achievements

- Implementing STEM days across the school
- Revisited Writing and our Essential Learnings in this area, as well as assessment practices and moderation processes
- Learning Walk with Tony Dalton
- Revisited our learning goals from the data
- Continuation of Spelling Mastery program
- Targeted Literacy programs

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

A comparison of 2019 and 2021 NAPLAN results shows that there has been an increase in our Reading results from Year 3 to 5, bringing us to above the state average over the past two years. Writing levels have been grown but are at similar levels during both years but which are still above the state average. Spelling remains an area of focus, as the interruptions of COVID-19 have impacted on the consistency of our adopted Spelling Program (Spelling Mastery) and kept our results at a stagnant level. Numeracy across the two years has dropped from above the state average to being on par with the average in 2021, but still shows movement in this area.

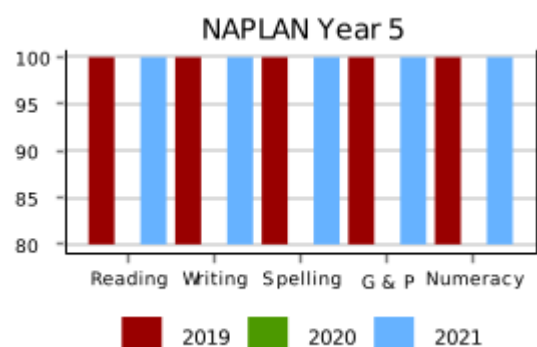
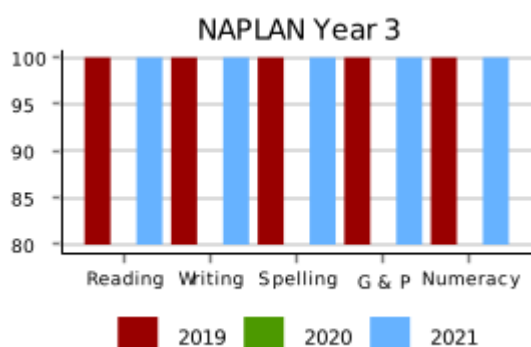
At OLSH, we continued to implement MiniLit and MultiLit programs for students who needed boosting in the area of Literacy and also provided a Boost Teacher to specifically target those cohorts of students who needed extra assistance across both Literacy and Numeracy. This was aimed at our junior and middle years, with data showing the greatest need here. Data is constantly reviewed and moderation takes place in several areas, but particularly in Writing where this is revisited each term.

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	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Reading	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 03 Writing	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Reading	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Spelling	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 05 Writing	100.0	-	-	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 2021 Annual Action Plan did not include specific goals in the area of Wellbeing, but we continuously strive to improve our knowledge of what contributes to healthy minds and bodies of staff and students at OLSH. Our school works hard to provide a welcoming environment for students and families, which creates an overall feeling of positivity and pride in how we conduct ourselves. The physical environment of the school is appealing and engaging for all students and all staff are available to parents via various platforms when needed.

A staff retreat at the beginning of the school year started the year off well for all staff members and was a chance to reconnect after a tumultuous year in 2020. With the effects of COVID-19 and long absences from school having an impact on all students in various different ways, when we finally came back together a whole school wellbeing day was planned, with a focus on Mindfulness, Gratitude, Kindness and Empathy. This was a great way to bring the school community together and to celebrate how special and supportive our school can be for each other.

Achievements

Despite the constant lockdowns in 2021, OLSH managed to nurture our already strong connections to our students and staff by participating in the various events listed below. We also encouraged student voice through our School and Student Leaders via as many school events as possible, such as the GRIP Leadership and PLAY Program, both of which encouraged leadership and organisational skills.

Our ability to stay connected to our families during the lockdowns was reflected in our Insight SRC data, with Approachability increasing from 82 to 88: a very pleasing gain given the challenges of 2020.

VALUE ADDED

- Wellbeing Day/Rainbow Day
- Introduction to ReLate Program
- BeYou modules
- Social Events
- Mother's Day morning tea and activities
- Access to Converge EAP
- GRIP Leadership Day
- PLAY program

STUDENT SATISFACTION

Our Student Wellbeing Aggregate Indicator improved from a score of 76.4 in 2018 to a score of 78.7 in 2020, with students feeling safe in the classroom and school environment (81 in 2018 to 87 in 2020).

In 2021, we know from our School Review that students feel supported at school by their teachers and can recognise where and to whom they can go to access assistance when their wellbeing is challenged. They are happy at school and feel safe in both the classroom and the playground.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Non-attendance procedures remain consistent in the school, with absences monitored through the SIMON system. After the daily roll mark, absences without reason are followed up with an SMS message at 10am each day and a response (or lack of) recorded on SIMON. Absences of three or more days without reason or without contact of any nature by parents, require follow up by the principal with families through a phone call. Lack of action for non-attendance by parents is recorded and, where necessary, external support is engaged to initiate action, such as the Wellbeing team from CEB or services who may be able to provide support to the family depending on circumstances.

With adjustments to the roll marking procedures in 2021, regular check-ins were done with parents and students via phone calls, video conferences and in person to ensure that attendance remained a priority.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y01	92.3%
Y02	91.1%
Y03	92.2%
Y04	91.0%
Y05	90.4%
Y06	85.7%
Overall average attendance	90.5%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

At OLSH we have continued to uphold the Child Safe Standards through policy and procedure reviews and implementation, as well as adopting all the required procedures for a safe school environment during COVID-19. Again in 2021, this took up quite a bit of our time, with constant updates from the CECV and information to parents sent out regularly.

Vaccination was required in 2021 for all education staff and our staff willingly took part in this initiative. By the end of 2021, almost all of our staff had received the mandatory two vaccinations, with intentions for a third in early 2022.

In late 2021, the introduction of the new Child Safe Standards was discussed with a brief overview of what this may mean for schools with the implementation of the new standards by July 2022.

Achievements

- Protocols regarding safe use of technology while remote learning was taking place were reinforced, implemented and monitored
- Risk assessments continued to be completed for all activities involving the school community
- Implementation of the latest 'PROTECT -Identifying and Responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian Schools'
- Updates on Reportable Conduct Scheme shared at staff meetings
- Implementation of all COVID-19 safe protocols, including COVID-safe plans as required
- SRC continued to operate despite lengthy absences from school
- GRIP Leadership encouraged student voice
- Police in Schools Program ran throughout the year with our senior students

Future Directions

After a School Review in 2021, OLSH is looking forward to implementing a new 5-year plan to enhance school improvement.

The following priorities have been identified in our School Improvement Plan:

1. Fostering a culture of continuous improvement through highly effective feedback practices across the school community (students, staff and parents)
2. Developing a contemporary Catholic identity in our diverse community
3. Strengthening collaborative partnerships within the school and wider community through authentic opportunities for improving student outcomes