

ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE SCHOOL
COMMUNITY



ST MONICA'S SCHOOL
FOOTSCRAY

2016

REGISTERED SCHOOL NUMBER: 477



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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Karen Colla, attest that St Monica's School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007 (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 2016 school year under the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth) and the Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)

19 May 2017

Our School Vision

*The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
For He has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,
To proclaim liberty to captives and to set the down trodden free
To proclaim the year of God's favour
Luke 4:18-19*

St Monica's Catholic School is a learning community that exists to make a difference in the lives of our children by:

- Embracing and modelling a Christian Catholic tradition
- Celebrating, respecting and valuing our diversity.
- Valuing and acknowledging our students' development through education
- Promoting life-long learning to allow our students to thrive actively in an ever- changing global community.
- Upholding a strong a view of social justice that builds trusting relationships



School Overview

St Monica's Parish and School have a long history in Footscray, tracing their beginnings to before 1852 when the first land grant was made for the building of a Roman Catholic Church. St Monica's is a small and intimate school with an enrolment of 131 students, organised into six, classes. The curriculum is rich in experiences and challenges, with a wide range of resources, both human and material.

Just over eighty per cent of our children come from language backgrounds other than English and from 20 cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This diversity is source of inspiration and pride to St Monica's. It engenders an environment of welcome, acceptance and cooperation. The parents, students, clergy and staff respect each other and the important role each has in educating our children and developing our community. From the first Irish settlers through to the present community, with its wide spectrum of nationalities and cultures, we are drawn together by our faith and desire to make a difference for our families, community and country.

The school benefits from its hardworking, supportive and engaged parent body. Parents work closely with teachers in the development of their children. Building and maintaining positive relationships between all community members has a high priority at St Monica's.

St Monica's students are engaged learners. From Prep to Year Six our students make the most of every learning opportunity. As a group they are supportive of each other. The senior students display excellent leadership behaviours. We are incredibly proud of them.

The school has 19 staff members: 18 teachers and two administration / ancillary staff. They are actively supported in their roles by the Parish Priest and School Manager, Fr Philip Le.

The school sits on a hill overlooking the Maribyrnong River. Its three buildings span over 100 years of education in Footscray. The 1908 (North Building), 1937 (South Building) and 1996 (Administration and Hall) were totally renovated in 2011 and now compliment the contemporary learning practices in the school.

In 2016 the school entered Year Two as part of the regular, four year, School Improvement Cycle. The major development and improvement foci in 2016 were Student Engagement in Writing and Reading, Performing Arts and Community Engagement in Learning.

Principal's Report

2016 was an exceedingly productive and enjoyable year for St Monica's School Community. The key highlights of the year include:

'Blink of Time' Performing Arts Celebration

A Creative Arts grant from the Victorian Government enabled the school to work with The Women's Circus to develop an integrated unit of work around the concept of 'change.' This unit included all our students and families and culminated in a celebration of learning and outdoor performance.

Community Conversations

Over the year the school community, students, parents and school staff had four 'extra' opportunities to come together to chat about our dreams and hopes for our school and its members. This year the conversations provided opportunities for community members to build relationships as well as a shared understanding of the role and direction of the school. Conversation topics included Languages Other than English and Transition.

Literary Evening

The partnerships in the teaching of writing with 100 Story Building and expert mentoring through the Melbourne Writers' Festival were showcased at the Literary Evening in August. Each child presented a piece of writing to an audience of parents, community members and peers.

Family Partnership Cluster

The school membership of the Inner West Family Partnership Cluster gathered momentum this year with shared activities including a series of Parent Education sessions on Transition into Secondary School.

Open Day

Our Open Day was an opportunity to welcome the wider community into the school. We had a host of parents and students running activities for our visitors. Over 200 attended the event.

National History Challenge

Once again our Year Six students entered the National History Challenge. This competition is held Australia wide from Years Five to Twelve. Nine students received State Awards for their entries. We were also extremely proud that in addition to these achievements, one of our Year Six students received a National Award for his work on Sir Robert Menzies.

Education in Faith

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To develop a greater understanding of 'Catholic Identity' and what it looks like in St Monica's community

- That the school community's understanding and appreciation of Catholic faith-based values will be deepened to make connections with real life.

Achievements

- Over the course of the year St Monica's has worked to make visible Catholic Faith based values through Social Justice Action, Professional Learning and Liturgical engagement across the community.
- Our Middle School came together to share in the Sacrament journey for the Year Three Children. This was a time of learning and community building.

VALUE ADDED

- *Activity that supported achievement of our goals in this sphere include:*
- *Opening and Graduation Masses*
- *Family Sacramental Program*
- *Shared art afternoons around faith based themes*
- *Social Justice Action – Refugee Support, Asylum Seeker Centre collection drive*
- *Class Masses*



Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To continue to enhance the learning environment that challenges and supports all learners and caters for individual needs.

- Develop a rich and rigorous curriculum based on contemporary learning to address individual needs and guide purposeful teaching.
- Improve student literacy outcomes through increased teacher knowledge and skills in EAL methodology.
- Improve student outcomes in mathematics by Increasing teacher knowledge and skills in numeracy, in particular the effective pre and post assessment language demands of Mathematics, the development of Maths concepts and working mathematically.
- Expand the students' understanding of how the world works by providing contemporary learning opportunities that are relevant, rigorous and engaging.
- Further develop teachers' understanding and use of data to inform planning and curriculum design

Achievements

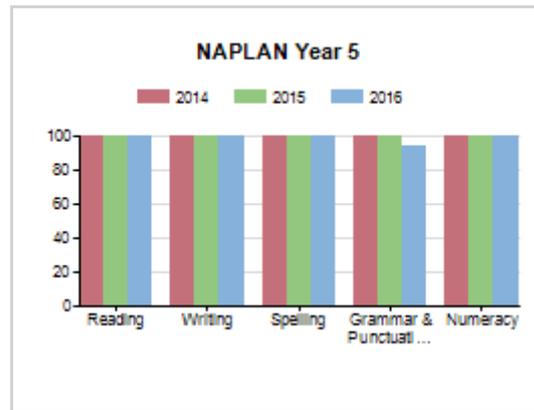
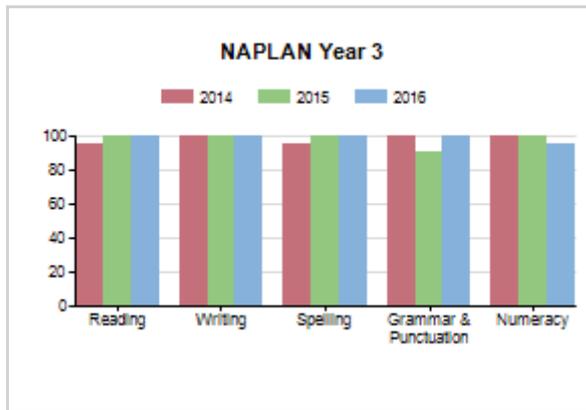
- Consolidation of 'Leveled Literacy' as the preferred Guided Reading resource across the middle and senior departments has provided structured, sequential support for students as they move from decoding to interrogation of texts.
- Beginning participation in the three year 'Visible Learning' Project. Through this project staff is seeking to ensure learning / instruction is supported via clear success criteria and targeted feedback at both student and staff level.
- Collaborative planning continues to support the planning and implementation of effective learning activities across levels. The focus on assessment based planning ensures that classroom activity matches the needs and strengths of our students. Peer coaching has also been a support to teachers seeking to improve and refine their practice.
- Curriculum Leaders engaged in the Learning and Teaching Network Professional Learning Program. The focus was developing a deeper understanding of the new Victorian curriculum which will apply in 2017.



- Significant development of creative movement, music and performance skills and understandings were visible during the unit 'Metamorphosis.' This unit was a collaboration of school, Women's Circus and community groups culminating in a vibrant, student led, whole-school performance.
- History continued to enthuse and excite the senior students. All Year Six students entered The National History Challenge. This was an excellent opportunity to test research skills and dip into varied fragments of Australian history around the theme, 'Triumph or Tragedy?'
- Working with the 100 Story Building provided stimulus to students and professional learning opportunities for teachers to improve their understanding and skill in the teaching of narrative texts.



PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2014 %	2015 %	2014-2015 Changes %	2016 %	2015-2016 Changes %
YR 03 Reading	95.5	100.0	4.5	100.0	0.0
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
YR 03 Spelling	95.5	100.0	4.5	100.0	0.0
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	90.9	-9.1	100.0	9.1
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0	95.8	-4.2
YR 05 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	100.0	0.0	94.7	-5.3
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0



Student achievement continues to grow across all levels of the school. Focus is on ensuring all students make at least two years' worth of growth in each two year period.

St Monica's continues to support all students in achieving their best through responsive teaching foci based on student needs.

VALUE ADDED

100 Story Building

The Middle School worked with 100 Story Building, developing skill in writing narrative texts. Together the professionals from 100 Story Building, teachers and students worked on developing their scene in 'The Blink of Time.'



Art Centre

St Monica's received support from the First Call Fund and was able to view a number of live performances at the Art Centre.

Camp Program

Students from Years Six, Five and Four travelled to Sovereign Hill and furthered their studies on Australia's social, economic and political history. Year Two and Three Students spent a day exploring the Mornington Peninsula. The Juniors spent their camp day exploring 'The Venny' playground in Kensington.



Australian Ballet Workshops

All classes participated in workshops run by the Australian Ballet Education arm. These sessions on body awareness and movement education were a huge success.

Early Harvest Magazine

Four senior students were successful in their nominations to be on the editorial panel for 100 Story Building's 'Early Harvest Magazine.' In addition two students from the school were successful in having their short stories included in the 2016 edition.



National History Challenge

Four entries submitted by seven Year Six students won State Awards in the National History Challenge.

Oz Opera

The students were enthralled and delighted in the performance of 'El Kid,' a version of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff,' using the music of Bizet's 'Carmen.'



Major Games

Students took part in a variety of clinics run by the SEDA group and representatives from sporting organisations including basketball, netball, hockey, badminton and cricket as part of the Physical Education curriculum.

Melbourne Writers' Festival

The Middle and Senior Departments attended the Melbourne Writer's Festival and received advice and inspiration from a variety of published authors.



Sporting Schools - gymnastics

Through the Federally funded 'Sporting Schools' program all students were able to engage in six specialist gymnastics sessions

Science Partnerships

Years Two and Three worked with pre service teachers from Victoria University over a six week period to explore a number of key science concepts.



St Monica's Writers Festival

Inspired and informed by collaborations with 100 Story Building, Marc McBride illustrator of the 'Deltora Quest' series and the speakers at the Melbourne Writers' Festival, all students shared their writing at our fourth St Monica's Writers' Festival. The event was attended by students, their families, staff and members of the wider community.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To develop socially skilled and empathic learners who display responsibility and resilience and maintain positive relationships others.

- That all students feel valued and confident in their day-to-day interactions with peers, staff and the community at large.
 - Develop socially skilled and empathic learners who display responsibility and resilience and maintain positive relationships
 - Build a skill set of social and emotional behaviours that allows students to work effectively with others.
 - Continue to move the students from compliance to empowerment through engagement in real life problems within the school and the wider community.

Achievements

Leadership

Senior students attended Impact Leadership Conference as a starting point for developing their code of conduct. Senior students also run the weekly assemblies. Year Five and Six students met with the principal for three forums / focus group sessions across the year to discuss issues relating to their wellbeing and learning

SRC

Students from all classes and levels met as the Student Representative Council to act on issues affecting student life. Actions for this year included the purchase of 25 Chromebooks, three fundraising activities and two shared activity afternoons.

Social Skills

Staff used the SEL Competencies Scope and Sequence to plan SEL focuses over the course of the year. Families were encouraged to take part in whole school activities

Transition Programs

Both Pre-school to Prep and Year Six to Year Seven transition programs were run across the year. Prospective Preps were invited to drop in for one, two or up to eight sessions across the last term to help familiarise them with their new school. The senior students had the opportunity to meet with other Year Six students and hear speakers from a number of the local secondary colleges.

Senior Student Conversations

All Senior Students met with the principal in 4 forums in last term to discuss the feedback from the School Improvement Surveys. These key issues arising from these conversations informed the focus of Student Wellbeing and Student Engagement for 2017.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	%
Y01	92.87
Y02	92.35
Y03	95.28
Y04	92.33
Y05	95.11
Y06	95.49
Overall average attendance	93.91

Student attendance is monitored daily. Students who are absent without reason are contacted by school staff. All children are expected to be present for their learning sessions daily.

VALUE ADDED

Assemblies

Student run assemblies give an authentic vehicle for leadership development and an opportunity for classes to showcase their learning.

SRC

The Student Representative Council organized a survey to determine what issues were most prevalent for the student body from Foundation to Year Six. A number of fundraising events were held to support Caritas, Joseph's Corner and the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.

The Blink of Time Performance

This performance contributed to and performed in by all students, was the culmination of two terms worth of learning and collaboration with The Women's Circus, 100 Story Building and Footscray Community Art Centre.

Family Homework

Family Tasks were organized around co-operative skills and talents. The 'Family Flag' activity had 100% participation from families. The display formed a vibrant display in the entryway where it was a conversation piece for families and visitors alike.



Shared Afternoons

These afternoons, organized by the SRC, were valuable opportunities to build relationships across the school for all students, staff and parents.



STUDENT SATISFACTION

- Students continue to see their teachers as being engaged in and supportive of themselves personally as well as supportive in their learning.
- Students continue to be well connected to the school.

Child Safe Standards

Goals and Intended Outcomes

St Monica's Vision outlines the desire for our children to thrive in a community of trusting relationships. The newly legislated Child Safe expectations reflected our goals in

- Making the safety of all children an explicit feature of our school
- Making explicit the expectation that each person who joins or works with our school community will do so in a way that ensures the safety of our children is maintained.

Achievements

The development of policies and commitments

- All required Child Safe policies and procedures were completed before the August deadline.

Training and awareness raising strategies

- All contractors and school visitors sign the school Code of Conduct as a mandated pre-entry condition

Consultation with the community

- Regular communications with our community occurs through conversations, email publications and school newsletters.

New Human Resources practices

- New staff were employed using the process with Child Safe additions developed by CEM

Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Build a sustainable culture of shared ownership across the school community
- Facilitate shared understandings through the implementation of key communication methods
- Build the capacity of the School Leadership team to realise the goals set out in the School Improvement Plan and the Annual Action Plan.

Achievements

Online communications continue to be utilised to support the sharing communication and sharing of information across all staff.

Collaborative planning in teams is in place to support teachers in achieving maximum outcomes for their students.

Professional Learning Conversations that focus on developing good practice – all administrative matters dealt with via online and whiteboard notices.

Leadership team engaged in Professional Learning focused on curriculum development and the new Victoria Curriculum Foundation – 10.

Leadership team engaged in Professional Learning focused on new project direction – Visible Learning.

Whole of Staff engaged in the initial day of Visible Learning engagement.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

DESCRIPTION OF PL UNDERTAKEN IN 2016

- Collaborative Impact Program - Visible Learning Project – Foundation Day
- Collaborative Impact Program - Visible Learning Project – Coaches Training
- Collaborative Impact Program - Visible Learning Project – Leadership Days
- Numeracy Leader Clusters
- Reading Recovery
- Teaching Children with Anxiety
- George Otero – Leading Family / School partnerships
- Learning & Teaching Network
- Sue Larkey – Teaching Children with Autism
- GAFE Training
- Google Apps for School Training
- STEM – ScienceWorks training for Catholic teachers

- Reading Recovery Training
- Teaching Children with Varied Learning Needs
- Workplace Safety Training
- Finance Cluster
- Credentialed / sponsored study - TESOL

NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN PL	13
AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER TEACHER FOR PL	\$ 5349

TEACHER SATISFACTION

St Monica's Staff continue to work together to make a difference in the lives of our students.

Staff Satisfaction Surveys indicate teachers have a high connectedness to the school. Student Behaviour, Teamwork and Work Demands all returned positive responses in the top 25% of all Australian Primary Schools. Parent Participation and Ownership all recorded improved results from previous years.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	88.04%
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STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	87.50%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.00%
Masters	23.00%
Graduate	50.00%
Certificate Graduate	0.00%
Degree Bachelor	50.00%

Diploma Advanced	80.00%
No Qualifications Listed	0.00%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class	1
Teaching Staff (Head Count)	12
FTE Teaching Staff	7.900
Non-Teaching Staff (Head Count)	4
FTE Non-Teaching Staff	1.640
Indigenous Teaching Staff	0

School Community

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To improve parent connectedness to their child's learning through promoting a common purpose and shared understandings.

- That there is a stronger sense of partnership between parents and teachers in the education of their child/children.

Achievements

One of the greatest assets St Monica's has is its supportive and engaged parent community. Much of the success of the school can be attributed to the positive and proactive manner the parent body displays.

Community Conversations

Parents continue to join teachers and students to speak about the school and look for ways to celebrate the excellent work done and set the direction for future growth.

Playgroup

The playgroup continues to support and educate parents and is a valuable opportunity for parents to meet, share knowledge and learn from each other. The group meets each week and is open to any school or local family. In 2013 the group received a grant to engage the 'Sing and Growth' foundation for 10 weeks in Term 2. This facilitated the services of a trained music therapist to work with mothers, fathers, grandparents and preschool children.

Archbishop's Pastoral Visit

Archbishop Hart made a pastoral visit to the Parish and School. Our parents and family members initiated a 'Multicultural Lunch' to help celebrate the occasion.

Transition Forum

Along with parents from our FEL Cluster Schools, families shared in the Transition evening organized by the cluster. This was an opportunity to learn about the local Secondary Schools and share

Twilight Sports

To begin the year families gathered to watch and participate in our third Twilight Sports a short, sharp team sports event. This was an excellent 'get to know you' opportunity. Over 95% of families were able to come for the event.

St Monica's Writer's Festival



St Monica's students continue to amaze with the quality of their writing and their willingness to share it with the wider community. This is becoming community strength.

National History Challenge

Almost all our Year Six families participated in the preparation for the National History Challenge. Families attended interviews in two rounds and then celebrated with us at Award Ceremonies both in Melbourne and Canberra.



Events

Shared Afternoons, Curriculum Nights, Mother's Day Breakfast, Father's Day Breakfast, Literacy and Parent Nights, Class Excursions and school assemblies all provide opportunities for members of the wider school community to connect. This year students have worked with '100 Story Building,' Footscray Historical Society, The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre and member schools of the Footscray Cluster.



PARENT SATISFACTION

Parent Satisfaction continues to place St Monica's in the top 25% of schools in Australia. Of particular interest were;

- Parents believe that opportunities for *Parent Input* have increased.
- Parents continue to find the reporting process supportive. This includes the formal and mandated reports and the informal learning conversations and communications teachers have with parents.
- Parents find the range of learning activities engaging and appropriate.
- Teachers continue to be seen as providing a relevant and stimulating learning environment and maintaining high morale.
- School staff members are seen as approachable. There is a strong sense of partnership between teachers and families. The afternoon practice of dismissing children from the school hall is an excellent way for parents and staff to meet regularly and share information and achievements.
- Parents believe that the behaviour and motivation of the students is good and getting better. Classroom Behaviour, which is generally seen as good increased in 2016.

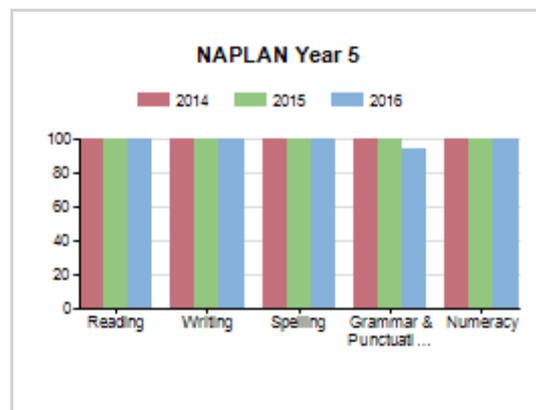
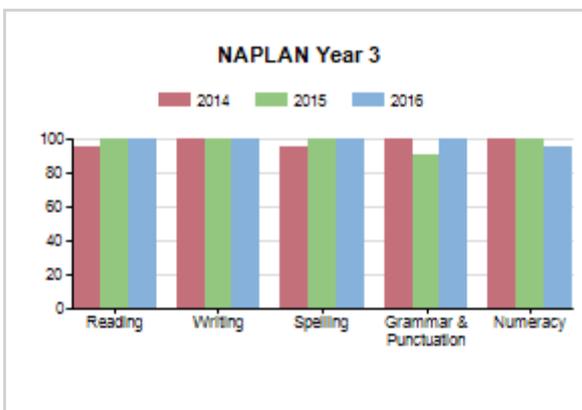
VRQA Compliance Data

NOTE:

The School's financial performance information has been provided to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority and will be available for the community to access from their website from October 2017.

[Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority](#)

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