



St Vincent de Paul's School Strathmore

2020 Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 1422

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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Shane Byrne, attest that St Vincent de Paul's School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in *the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 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.

Shane Byrne

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

Our School Vision

St. Vincent de Paul Primary School empowers students to become lifelong learners facing life with faith, hope humility and resilience.

School Overview

Strathmore is located in the North-Western suburbs about 12 km from central Melbourne. It is an area well served by public transport and is adjacent to the Tullamarine Freeway. It is primarily a residential zone with little or no secondary industry.

The majority of families attending the school are employed in clerical, sales and service workers, professionals and associate professionals with an associated high level of socio-economic status, the current SES for our school is 110. This is reflected in the high collection rate of school fees and the low number of families receiving CSEF. Catholic families make up the overwhelming majority of the school population with the average percentage of Prep students over the past 5 years being 93%. The families are very involved in activities within the school and new parents often comment on how social the school environment is with well-organised activities. Consequently, many of the fund raising activities organized by the Parent Association are well supported. The money raised by the Parents Association, together with school levies, make up the bulk of the private income per student figure for the school.

Over recent years Strathmore has continued to see a number of young families move into the area and as a result many are seeking a Catholic Education. The school has been involved in a number of building programs which have provided modern learning facilities which better reflect the school's approach to Learning and Teaching.

St. Vincent de Paul School, like all schools, was impacted by COVID in 2020. Despite the challenges this presented the school continued its commitment to Visible Learning which is based on the work of John Hattie. His work is based on research with a database of 350 million students. He has identified what has the biggest impact on student learning. As a result our school has focused on the approaches and strategies which have the higher effect size. The school and the community regularly review approaches to learning and teaching to ensure the most effective strategies are used in supporting the children in their learning.

Principal's Report

The year 2020 was full of learning but not necessarily the learning the school had planned and prepared for. The theme which the school focused on during the year was 'Walking in Others Shoes'. This was in response to the devastating fires Australia experienced over the summer and to encourage the development of empathy in the community for others who were less fortunate or who had experienced hardship. In support of this theme the school was to raise funds for the Mallacoota P-12 school, a town which experienced first hand the ferocious force of nature. Unfortunately, the plans to support the school in the way we wanted to could not be implemented because of the onset of COVID-19.

However, there were a number of events that did take place before COVID-19 took hold.

Our welcome BBQ for Prep families was well attended by both Prep families and their Year 6 buddy's families. Expertly planned and organised by the Parents Association and the Year 1 parents, a number of the new families commented what an enjoyable event it was. Our Prep children, together with the school community, also celebrated the beginning of the school year mass. This event was filled with traditions and rituals formed over many years and was an opportunity to identify the aspirations of the students, staff and parents for the school year.

The Year 6 children were fortunate to be able to attend camp at Campaspe Downs near Kyneton. The activities and experiences they were involved in were very challenging at times and took the children out of their comfort zone. It helped them realise what they could achieve as an individual and what could be achieved as part of a team. It also provided the opportunity for the children to support each other and bond as a year level. This, in fact, was the last activity outside of school before the COVID restrictions were enacted. As the staff said on their return they had only been away for 4 days, but it felt like the world had changed in that time.

The children in Year 3 were to celebrate their Reconciliation in March having prepared for the sacrament throughout 2019 and the first term of 2020. Unfortunately due to the restrictions coming into place the week after camp, the children have not yet celebrated this important step in their faith journey. However, they have continued to come to a better understanding of the steps involved in reconciliation and how it can be expressed in the way they live their life.

As the first term of the school was coming to an end, schools across the country were told to prepare for remote learning. This was a time that no-one had experienced before so there weren't any guidelines to refer to as such. Not only were schools to 'close' but businesses were shut down and where possible, people were encouraged to work from home.

Our school was positioned well to respond to this change because of decisions made by the school in conjunction with the Parish Education Board back in 2017. It was then that it was decided to implement a sustainable process whereby students in Year 4 would lease a Chromebook for the remaining 3 years of their schooling. Implemented in 2018 this meant that in 2020 all Year 4,5 & 6 students had their individual Chromebooks to work with. This was very important in allowing students to access the learning using these devices. It also meant that

families with children in the Junior year levels could use the technology available at home rather than having to share it with older siblings.

Our staff had to adapt to this new way of engaging children in their learning as well as understand how to best use different technology to support the children. It is during times of challenge that you really get an understanding of how people cope under such challenges. Our staff worked tirelessly to problem-solve all the challenges which were presented. Video conferencing was a tool which staff had limited experience with but quickly mastered and used effectively to communicate with students and families on a daily basis. Applications such as See-Saw, Hapara and Google Classrooms were also used as communication tools by staff, students and parents to identify learning tasks as well as provide feedback on completed work. Additional Google Meets were also added throughout the day for teachers to meet with groups of students to clarify tasks and to provide additional instruction. Learning Support Officers also worked with children with additional needs to ensure their needs were also being met. The feedback we received, through a survey sent out to each family reinforced that, despite the challenges that Home Learning presented, the children felt supported by the practices in place and the way staff were working to support the children. The information and data gathered by staff during Home Learning was also important in preparing for the return to onsite learning for the children in Term 4.

During Home Learning children of essential workers and, later permitted workers, still attended school and were supported by staff in their learning. The school established systems around booking in these children to ensure we had recommended ratios according to guidelines. Specialist teachers were regularly supporting and supervising the children who attended onsite in conjunction with other staff. Through both periods of Home Learning staff did whatever was required of them to ensure the best possible outcome was achieved under, at times, very stressful circumstances.

When we first meet families enrolling children into the school we always talk about partnership with parents in supporting the children's learning. This was critically important during Home Learning. It was very much a partnership with parents in working with their children to help understand the curriculum and complete tasks to reinforce this understanding. Parents overall did a terrific job of supporting their children in their learning and the outcomes were reflective of this commitment by parents. Many families were balancing their own work requirements whilst at the same time being available for their children. This was difficult and placed pressure on families in our community. The school thanked families for their commitment in working hand-in-hand with staff to achieve outstanding results.

We do not know what 2021 holds in store for us and we hope and pray it is continued improvement in the local and the global situation in relation to COVID-19. We naturally do not want to experience what we have experienced this year as a result of COVID. However should we be faced with similar challenges the experiences which we have had in 2020 give us confidence in knowing that we are adaptable and responsive to anything which may prevail. We take this confidence with us as we prepare for 2021 and have a positive mindset of what can be achieved.

Education in Faith

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To continue to strengthen the Catholic culture at St Vincent de Paul.
- That greater value on the school's Catholic identity is evident across all staff, parents and students
- To continue to promote best teaching and learning practices in Religious Education, through the Renewed RE Curriculum.
- To encourage students to live out the Gospel messages, by using Jesus as a model.

Achievements

Our school continues to focus on exploring the importance of the Gospel values, to guide and inform the decisions that we make as members of the Catholic faith. We have continued to focus on ways to use the Inquiry model to explore the concepts and learning, through the Renewed RE Curriculum. Our Catholic faith permeates all that we say and do. We strive to live out the Gospel messages in our day-to-day lives, especially being kind to our neighbour and giving of ourselves to support others in need. One example of this was gathering the voices of the SRC (Student Representative Council) to create a video message of hope during the Home Learning period, which enabled students to connect with one another, although they were physically apart.

VALUE ADDED

- Whole School Masses including Commissioning Mass for Opening of the School year and Ash Wednesday Mass.
- Reconciliation Sacramental Information Evening for parents.
- The celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Continuation of the Religious Education collective with schools in the Northern Region to work together to build capacity and confidence of teachers who teach Religious Education.
- Online RE planning sessions with staff using the Renewed RE Curriculum as a base and building upon this with resources suited to the Home Learning environment.
- Remote learning sequences created, including activities that suited the Home Learning environment, for example reading and responding to gospel stories and family prayers.

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- All staff will have a clear understanding of the expectations of Integrated Inquiry from Prep to Year 6.
- Teachers and leaders will conduct an audit of current practise to identify best practices in Reading and Mathematics.
- Teachers will use data to differentiate the learning for students in Reading and Mathematics.
- Teachers will embed the use of learning dispositions in everyday practice.

Achievements

Our Strategic Goal as outlined in our 2020 Annual Action Plan was that 'Teachers will embed the use of learning dispositions in everyday practice.' To enure this happened staff worked collaboratively to develop a consistent approach to home learning. The quality of the teaching and learning program was paramount during this challenging time.

As a result of the Reading Audit (to identify best practices in Reading) the focus was primarily on conferencing students in relation to individual reading goals and curriculum learning. Due to Home Learning, this focus continued with teachers meeting regularly with small groups of students via Google Meet.

The Smart Spelling approach was implemented at the beginning of the 2020 school year, with a school closure day dedicated to teacher professional development. This was conducted via Home Learning modules in year level teams. As a result of Home Learning, this program was made available to teachers and students so that continuous learning of spelling could take place.

The school continued to focus on facilitating effective teaching of mathematical discourse among students, to build a shared understanding of mathematical ideas. Mathematical discourse would continue to be a focus in 2021 due to Home Learning.

School leaders, teachers, and LSO's worked collectively to plan learning for students via the platform of Home Learning (Google Meet). Teams were able to view and discuss each other's curriculum content and the ways in which they were able to best present it in an engaging manner.

Staff continued to implement a whole school approach to Inquiry Learning through collaboration with educational consultant Kath Murdoch. Throughout Home Learning and on site the school continued to focus on personalised learning through the use of student voice to guide learning and teaching. Students had the opportunity to participate in iTime and Passion Project tasks which made connections with their personal interests.

In order to enhance student learning the school was in a fortunate position to lease a set of iPads for the Grade Prep's and purchase STEM robotics such as, Lego WeDO, Lego EV3 and Cubetto's to integrate into multiple curriculum areas. During Home Learning Google Education licences for staff and students were purchased to enable teachers to use the online video conferencing tool (Google Meet) and allow students and teachers to work collaboratively.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the beginning of 2020 student assessment data was analysed and used to differentiate learning for students in Literacy and Mathematics. During Home Learning, students continued to receive intervention support. Learning Support Officers and teachers were working with the students to support individual learning needs. Classroom teachers worked closely with Learning Support Officers and communicated with parents regularly to support their child's learning via Seesaw and email.

Our Assessment Schedule was adapted in light of home learning. Teachers engaged in strategies needed to ensure the implementation of literacy testing online. A flexible approach to the Assessment Schedule was necessary due the circumstances of Home Learning during this time. It was difficult to implement formal assessment strategies that were indicative of students' current performance. Upon returning to school in term two and term four, some standardised assessments were conducted to measure student growth and to plan for learning and teaching. Student School Reports were adapted to reflect student achievement during Home Learning.

NAPLAN TESTS	2018 %	2019 %	2018 – 2019 Changes %	2020 % *	2019 – 2020 Changes %
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	98.0	-2.0		
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	98.0	-2.0		
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	98.6	-1.4		
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Reading	98.5	97.2	-1.3		
YR 05 Spelling	98.5	98.6	0.1		
YR 05 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0		

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS

* 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

- That student engagement generates a sense of wellbeing and connectedness to the school community.
- That students become independent, resilient members of the school community.
- A shared and agreed upon understanding of supporting student behaviour is developed by staff.

Achievements

Across 2020 staff continued to use the language associated with Social Emotional Learning. Staff continued to use the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships program which aims to assist students managing their emotions and behaviours and build their understanding of emotional literacy.

Across Terms 2 and 3, the students were learning from home during the global pandemic. Teachers used daily Google Meet sessions with their students to enable wellbeing check ins as well as using this time for direct instruction. Additional sessions were offered to students who benefited from the regular connections with peers and staff, through online lunchtime games and opportunities to interact.

During the pandemic, children of essential workers, permitted workers and students with additional needs were offered onsite learning, supervised by teachers and LSO's on a rostered timetable.

Each day, teachers met with small groups to provide direct feedback in relation to learning tasks. This was an opportunity for the students and teachers to discuss areas of success and challenge as well as a chance to touch base and stay connected.

The school learning dispositions continued to be a focus. These dispositions affect how students approach learning and provide them skills to use on a daily basis. The students recognise and use the language of resilience, communication, risk taking, self-discipline, problem solving and respect through all aspects of the curriculum.

Staff continued the use of learning intentions and success criteria both onsite and during home learning. This provided students with clarity around daily learning tasks which in turn had a positive impact on their wellbeing as they understood what was expected of them each day.

Upon the return to onsite learning, staff continued to use a Circle Time framework to address areas of Wellbeing and ensure explicit teaching of Social and Emotional Learning skills and Learning Dispositions. Each class ensured multiple weekly wellbeing sessions were embedded into the weekly timetable to allow students to reconnect. It was important that this support was a part of the day to day for all of the students, many of whom found the lack of connection a challenge during the pandemic. Evidence of this is identified in the weekly planner across all levels, through student learning, classroom displays and staff PLT meetings.

Two students from each class were nominated for the Student Representative Council (SRC). These students were involved in meetings where they had an opportunity to voice new ideas, suggestions and concerns and therefore be involved in the decision making process at a class/whole school level. Opportunities for the Student Representative Council to continue to explore Child Safety was also provided.

Students worked with their buddies across different year levels, particularly the Prep and Year Six buddies to help with transition for Prep students which allowed them to become more comfortable in their new environment. During the transition to home learning, regular opportunities were provided for online connection.

Staff continued to benefit from Professional Development, catering for students with special needs. This included the Disability Standards for Education e-Learning modules.

The continued use of the Passive Play areas in both the senior and junior yards was utilised to support students outside during recess and lunch. These spaces aim to provide students with a place which is both safe and quiet during recess and lunch breaks. Resources such as board games, cards, bean bags and picture story books were provided in these areas for students to access as a means of playing in a calm way.

The Learning Support Officers (LSO'S) were timetabled on to both recess and lunch breaks on a rotation to support students in the Passive Play spaces. Students benefited from having a familiar adult in these areas to encourage them with social and emotional skills.

VALUE ADDED

- Continuing to use Circle Time and wellbeing sessions in the weekly planners across all levels;
- Daily Google Meet check ins with students during home learning
- Additional wellbeing sessions offered during home learning
- Opportunities provided to share resources and activities;
- Continued focus placed on Learning Dispositions throughout the whole school;
- Student Buddy program;
- Staff training and development to help cater for students with special needs;
- Student Counsellor available one day a week
- Continued use of the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships program
- Continued use of the Passive Play area in the senior and junior yards
- · Learning Support Officers support students when on yard duty

STUDENT SATISFACTION

During home learning and when students returned to school, feedback was sought from children regarding their challenges in their learning and their wellbeing. This feedback was used as a basis for making changes to practices in place. E.g. daily check ins, opportunities for social connection and incorporating more instructional videos for learning teaks. Additional check in times were included for the second phase of home learning following this feedback.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The school has a strong attendance record with very few issues in this area, particularly during home learning where daily attendance was incredibly high. When onsite parents are contacted initially by SMS if there is any unexplained absences. If parents do not respond to the SMS then the parent is contacted by phone. During home learning, any student absences were followed up by the classroom teacher via email. Any non-attendance problems are managed by the class teacher in consultation with a member of the leadership team who will work directly with the family of the student to assist in any way that may be required. A proactive approach is used with all staff instructed to contact families when any regular or extended nonattendance is identified. Parents of children away for extended periods of time (more than 10 consecutive school days) for holidays outside of normal school holidays are required to fill a form explaining the reasons for this.

Y01	96.7%
Y02	96.3%
Y03	96.6%
Y04	95.9%
Y05	95.6%
Y06	96.1%
Overall average attendance	96.2%

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

St. Vincent de Paul Primary School continues to hold the care, safety and wellbeing of students as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is drawn from an inherent belief in the teaching and the mission of the Gospel. St. Vincent de Paul Primary School acknowledges that creating a child-safe environment is a dynamic process that involves active participation and a shared responsibility from all within the school community.

Throughout 2020, our school has sought to further embed its child safety strategies through the ongoing review and implementation of policies and practices. Professional boundaries have been reinforced with all staff members and volunteers, as has obligations regarding the protection and reporting of allegations or disclosures of abuse.

Achievements

The embedding of policies and commitments into everyday practice

- Child Safety Standards remains a regular agenda item at School Board meetings where the school's child safety strategy, risk management processes and their effectiveness are reviewed.
- Staff participate in regular briefings and presentations on the school's Child Safety Strategy with a focus on classroom and students management, duty of care, and reporting requirements.

Training of teachers, non-teaching staff and volunteers

- All teaching & non-teaching staff members participate in annual Child Safety Standards 'refresher training' and are required to read and acknowledge the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct annually.
- Volunteers are provided with briefings on acceptable behaviours and are required to read and acknowledge the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct every time they enter the school site.
- Staff members have completed the Victorian Department of Education and Training on-line Mandatory Reporting module.

The participation & empowerment of students

 The school's Child Safety Action Plan focused primarily on the promotion and participation of student empowerment. Providing students with a voice is critical in ensuring their well-being and safety. Education about healthy and respectful relationships and the development of resilience through participation in Respectful Relationships Program played a fundamental role in achieving this outcome. This culminated in the development of a 'Child Friendly Code of Conduct' developed and review by the Student Representative Council (SRC) and communicated to students via relevant learning opportunities and made available to the broader school community via the school website. Consultation with the community

- St. Vincent de Paul Primary School continues to actively engage the school community in all aspects of Child Safety. Briefing sessions have been held with members of the school community to further disseminate requirements of Child Safety Standards, the school's Code of Conduct and its expectations of those who intend to participate in 'Child Connected Work'.
- The school's Child Safety Strategy is communicated to new members of the school community at enrolment, with ongoing briefings facilitated via parent information nights, the school newsletter and website.

Human Resource Practices

- St. Vincent de Paul Primary School continues to implement robust Human Resource practices ensuring the suitability of any staff member or volunteer permitted to participate in 'Child Connected Works'.
- To achieve this the school implements rigorous screening processes which have a child safety focus and include:
- Position advertisements
- Position descriptions
- o Referee Checks
- Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration (VIT)
- Working With Children Checks & National Criminal Record Checks
- Screening of Casual Relief Teachers, Contractors and Volunteers.

St. Vincent de Paul Primary School remains committed to ensuring the well-being and safety of all students under its care by actively implementing, reviewing and improving it child safety strategy.

Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal: The school improvement agenda has been effective in focussing the whole school's attention on core learning priorities

Intended Outcome: There is a clear vision within the Leadership Team.

Achievements

Following on from work that the School Improvement Team (SIT) were involved in during 2019 in creating a Charter, the following graphic was created which depicts the role of the SIT and how that sits with the school's core values and 'Norms'. This was communicated with staff as was the purpose of the SIT which was to build capacity and empower others to flourish.



During 2020 the School Improvement Team were instrumental in achieving their purpose. Being creative and creating guidance for staff on how to switch to Home Learning was critical in managing a challenging situation and turning into a very successful result. Staff were involved in the problem-solving and decision making which took place. Staff's ideas and suggestions helped put in place some great practices for both Home Learning and onsite learning. As our goal identified, the school was focused on key learning priorities which was delivering learning using tools and approaches which weren't common practices prior to the pandemic taking hold.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

Student and Staff Wellbeing working with Educational Consultant Chris Egan

Google Hangout/Meet -Video Conferencing

Mandatory Reporting E-Modules

SMART Spelling Professional Learning

Kath Murdoch Professional Learning- Inquiry Pedagogy

SAFE Smart online learning

First Aid

Corwin Visible Learning- 2 day Introduction

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	28
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$410

TEACHER SATISFACTION

Feedback was sort and provided by staff in relation to Home Learning during its implementation and post its implementation. The feedback received from staff together with feedback from parents and students helped guide adjustments made to the school practices and approaches to the learning and teaching. Staff were very committed to ensuring the most effective support was provided both at home and when returning to onsite learning. Staff identified different technology applications which were effective in supporting the children's learning together with the need for a focus on wellbeing for both students and staff. With the regular feedback, practices were adapted which were sustainable and which provided opportunities for parents to be more involved in their children's learning. Professional Learning meetings continued to take place and staff were supported by curriculum leaders.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE	
Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	70.1%
ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE	
Staff Retention Rate	82.2%

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	4.5%
Graduate	27.3%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	63.6%
Advanced Diploma	22.7%
No Qualifications Listed	4.5%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	42.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	32.0
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	14.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	8.0
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

School Community

Goals & Intended Outcomes

A shared and agreed upon understanding of supporting student behaviour

Achievements

The school continued to review its Student Behaviour Policy and the practices which supported its implementation. A team of staff members was established with the intention of working with students and parents to consult in the review of the policy. Due to the COVID pandemic the ability to consult with all stakeholders was very limited and the review of this policy is set to continue in 2021. Staff did manage to audit the current policy against the Catholic Education of Victoria Positive Behaviour Guidelines through a number of Professional Learning meetings.

This included refining school expectations, expected and unexpected behaviours and the different levels (tiers) within behaviour. These tiers indicate a hierarchy of steps taken to support students. This also allows for a consistent approach across the school. The staff also investigated consequences for student misbehaviour in relation to our school expectations.

PARENT SATISFACTION

In 2020 the school surveyed parents to gain an understanding of their thoughts on how well children were being supported during Home Learning. This survey was completed by 135 families out of the 264 families in the school which, in terms of survey response rates, was a very high return. The overwhelming responses from parents were that the communication provided by the staff using the variety of online tools was very supportive of their child. Parents mentioned the morning Google online meetings were very important in setting up the day's learning and tasks and allowing the children to remain connected with their peers. The tasks being communicated the night before was also appreciated by parents because it gave them the opportunity to plan their day and the children were able to seek clarification at their morning Google meeting. Based on parent feedback additional Google meetings were introduced throughout the day to provide more opportunities for children to meet with their teachers. Parents commented on the fact that work was reviewed regularly and feedback was provided to their children. Parents also commented on how more involved they were in their children's learning as a result of the situation and the way teachers were communicating.