

**ST. MONICA'S
SCHOOL**



FOOTSCRAY

St Monica's Primary School, Footscray



2014 ANNUAL REPORT to the School Community

REGISTERED SCHOOL NUMBER: 477

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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Karen Colla, attest that St Monica's Primary School, Footscray 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 2014 school year under the Schools Assistance Act 2008 (Cth) and the Schools Assistance Regulations 2009 (Cth)

22 May 2015

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 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 ninety-eight per cent of our children come from language backgrounds other than English and from 19 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 21 staff members: 18 teachers and three 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 2014 the school undertook its major, four year review as part of the School Improvement Cycle. The Review showed the school community to be proactive and innovative in identifying areas for growth and gaining improvements across all these areas.

Principal's Report

2014 was an exceedingly busy and fruitful year for St Monica's School Community. The key highlights of the year include:

School Improvement Cycle Review

This year is the fourth in our Review cycle. This gave the school community the opportunity to reflect on current goals and plan for future growth based on the data generated through assessments, surveys and conversations. Aply assisted by our reviewer the school community developed the following goals to guide our direction in the next Improvement Cycle;

- To be a Catholic school that lives and enacts a life of faith based on contemporary understandings: expressed through our Catholic identity that calls us to witness, serve and celebrate.
- To provide a personalised and collaborative learning community that is rigorous, challenging and engages all.
- For our students to develop greater self-esteem so that they can be compassionate, respectful and assertive in their relationships.
- To partner with families, Parish and the global community in promoting student wellbeing and learning.
- To work strategically to improve student outcomes through collaboration with all key stakeholders.

Community Conversations

Over the year the school community, students, parents and school staff had four 'extra' opportunities to come together to chat about our children and our hopes for them. These conversations will become part of our regular practice in future years.

Inaugural Sports Night

The year began with a 'bang!' at our Twilight Sports Night. This was a wonderful way of getting everyone to mix and get to know each other under the guise of a Sports Event. The general feel was that this should be an annual event.

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. School Improvement Survey responses from Students, Parents and Staff indicated a higher Catholic Culture Aggregate Indicator level at the end of this four year Improvement Cycle.

Our new parish priest, Fr Philip Le, worked in support of our goals and intended outcomes.

VALUE ADDED

Activity that supported achievement of our goals in this sphere include:

- Opening and Graduation Masses
- Family Sacramental Program
- Social Justice Action – Refugee Support, Asylum Seeker Centre collection drive
- Class Masses
- Staff Professional Learning events led by Legal professionals, Caritas, Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Catholic Aboriginal Ministry.



Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

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

- To continue to enhance the learning environment to 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 teaching

Achievements

Oral Language continues to be a focus across all levels with specific emphasis on Oral Reflection and Thinking Routines across all levels and Language Experience in the Prep and Year One classes. End of year literacy data shows continued growth in the Record of Oral Language (ROL) scores of the Year One students as well as appropriate gains in Reading skills. All year levels indicated an improvement in student's ability to respond to questions using complex sentences.



Our writing focus has provided excellent support for creativity and author craft. This allows teachers to personalise the learning in this area and accommodate greater student voice. Staff continue to develop skills in this area, using Professional Learning opportunities provided by Deb Sukarna.

Collaborative Planning in level teams occurs each week and Professional Learning Team Meetings (PLTs) are run twice weekly. During Planning sessions teachers use student data to inform future activity and focus. PLTs continue to focus on best practice in general teaching methodologies.



Curriculum Leaders engaged in the Learning and Teaching Network Professional Learning Program. The focus was developing a deep understanding of National Curriculum and AusVELS.

The final musical performance was the culmination of a term's work by students, teachers, community members and artists.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES IN NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS						
NAPLAN TESTS	2012 %	2013 %	2012–2013 Changes %	2014 %	2013–2014 Changes %	
YR 03 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0	95.5	-4.5	
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0	95.5	-4.5	
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	
Year 5						
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	100.0	0.0	
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	



Student achievement continues to grow across all levels of the school. Particular growth in Mathematics has been evident in NAPLAN results at all levels.

St Monica's continues to support all students in achieving and surpassing state and national benchmarks through responsive teaching foci based on student needs.

VALUE ADDED

School Garden

The school garden continues to be a catalyst for learning with crops planted, chickens producing eggs and the harvest used for cooking or sold to raise money for social justice projects.

National History Challenge

Three entries in the National History Challenge won State Awards in their year levels. One entry took out the State Award for Cultural Exhibit.

Cultural Diversity Art Competition

A senior St Monica's student won the major Primary Aged category of the Cultural Diversity Week Art Competition.

Maths Suitcases

Maths Suitcases go home to each Year Prep family. They hold a range of 'at home' fun maths activities that families can play together. Cameras are included with each case so that families can share their experience with the wider community.

Camp Program

Students from all levels across the school took part in camps; single day, overnight, on-site and off-site. Our seniors spent time in Ballarat exploring Sovereign Hill as part of their History, geography and Civics and Citizenship studies. Our Year Three and Four students travelled to DOXA in central Victoria.

Literary Evening

The Literary evening was held in Term Three. Each child took the 'writer's chair' to share their prose with families and community members. This event is becoming a key showcase for

quality writing for our students.

Science Fair

Senior students held a 'Science Fair' to share their learning with their parents and the wider school community.

Science Partnerships

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

Major Games

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



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.



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.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	%
Year 1	90.56
Year 2	95.36
Year 3	93.11
Year 4	94.95
Year 5	94.92
Year 6	95.49
Overall average attendance	94.07

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

Vision

Each class developed their own version of the St Monica's Vision and used this to inform the development of class learning goals and behaviour expectations.

Assemblies

Student run assemblies give an authentic vehicle for leadership development.

SRC

The Student Representative Council organized a survey to determine what issues were most prevalent for the student body from Foundation to Year Six. Action resulting from their findings included new playground structures, increased attention to certain areas of the playground and planned capital works to refurbish the student toilets in the next school year.

Buddies

Middle School and Junior buddies work together to build strong social and peer support networks across the school

Family Homework

Family Tasks were organized around co-operative skills and talents. The 'Family Crest' 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.

School Counsellor

St Monica's employs a trained school counsellor for two days a week. The counsellor supports teachers with strategies and resources as well as taking individual and small group sessions.

Impact Leadership Conference

Senior Students took part in the Impact Leadership Conference at the Melbourne Convention Center in March along with over a thousand other senior primary students from across Melbourne.

Community Conversations

Community Conversations were held each term. Some conversations were level specific and others more general. The mix of students, parents and staff provided opportunities to build relationships and strengthen links across the community.

Art Program

Oz Opera was one of the companies that performed for the students and the school community this year. Rossini's 'La Cenerentola' (Cinderella) was a wonderful way to expose our community to varied musical genres.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

- School Improvement Survey data shows via the Student Wellbeing Aggregate Indicator a 6 point increase in positive growth over the four year School Improvement Cycle.
- Student Morale and Connectedness to School rose in the year from 2013 – 2014.
- Student Motivation increased markedly in the 2013-2014 period, a reflection of the work done with personalised learning.



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

Standardised communication methods via the school desktop to facilitate information sharing among staff.

Google.docs are utilised to support communication across all staff and to facilitate information sharing about students.

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

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

Leadership team engaged in Professional Learning, attending EduTech 2014 and also the Performance and Development Culture Professional Learning via the Catholic education Office.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

DESCRIPTION OF PL UNDERTAKEN IN 2013

- Performance and Development Culture
- Partnerships for Learning - Parents as Partners
- Learning & Teaching Network
- Religious Education Leadership Learning
- Administration Conference
- AusVELS in Catholic Primary Schools
- Reading Recovery Training

- OH & S Training
- Social Justice in Action
- Principal Professional Learning Program
- Writing – Deb Sukarna

NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN PL	18
AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER TEACHER FOR PL	\$ 2747
AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER 9.8 FTE	\$5045

TEACHER SATISFACTION

Staff Satisfaction Surveys indicate teachers have a high connectedness to the school. Student Behaviour, Team Practices, Feedback and Appraisal and Learning and Teaching continue to have high responses with increased satisfaction in 2014.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	93.47%
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STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	94.12%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.00%
Masters	11.11%
Graduate	66.67%
Certificate Graduate	0.00%
Degree Bachelor	33.33%
Diploma Advanced	88.89%
No Qualifications Listed	0.00%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class	1
Teaching Staff (Head Count)	18
FTE Teaching Staff	9.800
Non-Teaching Staff (Head Count)	5
FTE Non-Teaching Staff	1.964
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

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.

Inaugural Twilight Sports

To begin the year families gathered to watch and participate in team sports in a short, sharp intense Twilight Sports event. This was an excellent ice breaker and 'get to know you' opportunity. Over 90% of families were represented.

Events

Shared Afternoons, Curriculum Nights, Mother's Day Afternoon Tea, 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 'The Big Fish,' Footscray Historical Society, Jesuit Social Services and The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.



PARENT SATISFACTION

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

- 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 the parent body. The afternoon practice of dismissing children from the school hall is an excellent opportunity 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.



Financial Performance

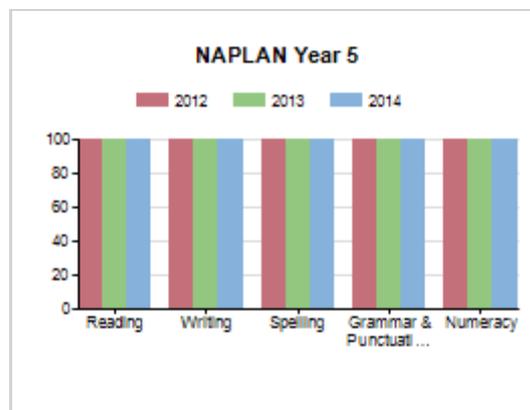
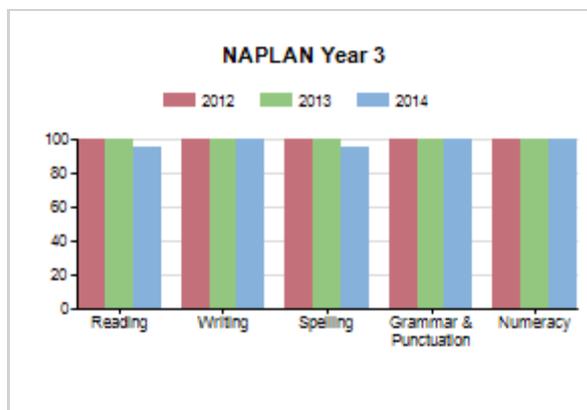
REPORTING FRAMEWORK	MODIFIED CASH \$
Recurrent income	Tuition
School fees	13,115
Other fee income	52,504
Private income	14,656
State government recurrent grants	352,632
Australian government recurrent grants	1,055,170
Total recurrent income	1,488,077
Recurrent Expenditure	Tuition
Salaries; allowances and related expenses	1,225,373
Non salary expenses	273,661
Total recurrent expenditure	1,499,034
Capital income and expenditure	Tuition
Government capital grants	-
Capital fees and levies	74,470
Other capital income	26,000
Total capital income	100,470
Total capital expenditure	62,912
Loans (includes refundable enrolment deposits and recurrent, capital and bridging loans)	
Total opening balance	74,737
Total closing balance	48,059

Note that the information provided above does not include the following items:

System levies charged to individual schools, intra-systemic transfers and diocesan supplementary capital fund (SCF) supported borrowings for primary schools. The information provided is not comparable with other educational sectors. This VRQA template is not comparable to the ACARA school-level income reporting requirements which are to be reported on the MySchool website. ACARA school level reporting requirements will require system level income from Government grants and some private income to be allocated by school. This will be a small adjustment in relation to the total level of school resources. At this stage, recurrent income from Government sources, school generated income and capital expenditure are to be reported by schools. Additionally when assessing the private income of the school include both recurrent and capital school fees.

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