



Melbourne Archdiocese  
Catholic Schools

# 2023

## Annual Report to the School Community



### St Bede's School

2 Marwal Avenue, BALWYN NORTH 3104

Principal: Brian Grace

Web: [www.sbedesbn.catholic.edu.au](http://www.sbedesbn.catholic.edu.au)

Registration: 1482, E Number: E1161

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## Principal's Attestation

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I, Brian Grace, attest that St Bede's School is compliant with:

- The minimum standards and other requirements for school registration and school boarding premises (if applicable) as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic).
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2023 school year under the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth) and the Australian Education Regulations 2023 (Cth).
- The Child Safe Standards as prescribed in Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises.

Attested on 09 May 2024

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## About this report

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St Bede's School is registered by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). The Annual Report to the School Community (ARSC), provides parents and the wider community with information about the school's activities and achievements throughout the year including information about various aspects of school performance. The Report is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the school community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students. Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can also be obtained from the [My School website](#).

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## Governing Authority Report

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When Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) launched our inaugural strategic plan MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World just over a year ago, I spoke about the need for our whole organisation to reflect on the biggest challenges that confront us, and to work at speed to find practical, ambitious, student-centred solutions.

As a relatively new governing authority, 2023 set us on the path to achieving our first goals, as we focussed our efforts on building strong foundations for success. The four pillars of MACS2030 – Inspired by Faith; Flourishing Learners; Enabled Leaders; and Enriched Communities - serve to guide our work on how we achieve our strategic intent.

When we surveyed our teachers in late 2022, over 80 per cent told us that they want access to quality teaching and assessment resources. So in January 2023, we secured a system-wide licence for MACS primary and secondary schools to access the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) assessment suite. The inclusion of the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Survey allows schools to monitor the wellbeing of their students and target resourcing to specific areas of need. Together, these tools provide a coherent and systematic approach to student assessment.

In partnership with Ochre Education, we began work on F-6 Mathematics curriculum resources, being developed in a phased approach over three years, and delivered the first tranche for F-2. A key consideration in developing the materials is ensuring teachers retain autonomy to tailor curriculum implementation to meet the individual and local needs of students.

This is an exciting development for our MACS community, clearly demonstrating the commitment we all share to delivering the best possible education opportunities for our 120,000 students and supporting our 10,000 classroom teachers to be the very best that they can be.

Archbishop Peter commissioned a comprehensive review of Religious Education curriculum, the first in over a decade. It offers us some challenges, but fundamentally is a hope-filled report that invites a path of ongoing work to develop a new RE curriculum for all Catholic schools. We continued Working Together in Mission with Parish Priests throughout the Archdiocese, including through regular roundtable discussions.

Across greater Melbourne, one in five students attend a Catholic school and 2023 saw steady growth in enrolments across our system, demonstrating the value families place on a Catholic education and the high quality, holistic education MACS schools provide.

As a system of schools, we can be better together, reducing the administrative load on our schools and freeing our teachers and principals to focus on what they do best.

I would like to pay tribute to our MACS school and office colleagues who have worked so hard to achieve our goals. We look forward to further strengthening those partnerships as we work together to deliver an education that inspires young people to enrich the world.

Yours sincerely

Dr Edward Simons

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

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## Vision and Mission

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Bede was a committed scholar and educator in the service of God.

With Bede as our model and Christ as our everlasting light, we strive to build a Catholic school community where each is given time and support to learn to know, to do, to live together and to be.

Christus Dies Aeterna Nostra

Christ our ever lasting light. Christ our ever lasting day.

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## School Overview

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St Bede's School strives to create an educational experience for all students that is strongly grounded in our Parish community. The education of our students, staff and parents begins with an invitation to explore and grow in understanding of our faith and how we can live it out within school and the wider community. The pastoral care of all students is an important focus and we place significant emphasis on Student Wellbeing so that we may offer an education that is holistic.

We give time to meeting and working with parents in order to build relationships that strengthen and enrich the way we work. We are keen to build a school culture where staff value working together. We encourage all staff, inclusive of our leadership team, to be responsive in the way they work and to be open and reflective when reviewing their own performance and needs.

There is a very genuine commitment to working with individuals so that staff will be skilled to improve student outcomes. We unreservedly create a school culture where expectations, structures and processes are focused on our endeavour to meet the needs of students. We encourage strong commitment to excellence in teaching and learning.

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## Principal's Report

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My name is Brian Grace and I thank you for taking the time to read this report. 2023 was my 4th year as principal of St Bede's and I am continually impressed by and proud to be a member of the St Bede's school community. We work together to ensure all students under our care thrive in our learning environment.

There were many highlights throughout the year. For each student these will be different. Some highlights of 2023 were:

5/6 Camp to Canberra, Whole school Art show

Yr 2 sleep over, 3/4 camp, Year level excursions

Carols evening, St Bede's Feast Day

During 2023 St Bede's had an unexpected influx of students into the junior years. These students and parents were welcomed and transitioned seamlessly to our St Bede's community. With the substantial increase in student numbers, the school needed to create another class for Yr. 1 students. This influx also saw our enrolment increase from 225 to 254.

Our Parents and extended community continue to enrich our school and we appreciate the work, friendship and support that they provide in so many ways. The Parent Association provides many ways for our community to come together. These opportunities include events such as Mother's Day dinner, Father's Day Breakfast, trivia evenings and class dinners.

St. Bede's school is so much richer because of the wonderful connection and relationship we have with our Parish and I thank Fr John for his guidance and generosity in working with us to ensure that our whole community can grow in living and understanding our faith.

I trust you will enjoy reading the rest of this report and thank our wider community for the positive manner in which they support our school.



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## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

To increase the consistency of practice across the school in the teaching of Religious Education.

#### Intended Outcomes

A consistent approach to the learning and teaching practices of religious Education across the school

Students are able to reflect on their learning and their faith

Students have the opportunity to record their responses

#### Achievements

Throughout 2023 St Bede's celebrated many achievements in the area of Catholic Identity and Mission.

Our Students were prepared for and received the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. As part of this preparation, families participated in a faith formation evening facilitated by our Religious Education Leader and our Parish Priest.

St Bede's celebrates all the major feast days. The school celebrated Ash Wednesday, the Feast of St Bede, Holy Week, The Feast of the Sacred Heart, The Feast of Mary MacKillop and Advent with Masses and Liturgies. Prayer is deemed an essential aspect of our daily life which is why we begin each day with prayer.

St Bede's cultivates an understanding of social justice among its students and actively encourages them to engage in efforts to affect change. In 2023, our students demonstrated their commitment to this cause by raising funds for Caritas, The Open Doors Foundation and the St Vincent de Paul Society.

The staff were involved in further professional learning around the topic of catholic identity. Fr Brendan Reed led the sessions and included all three schools in our parish in the experience.

## Value Added

Whole school/Parish Professional learning with Fr Brendan Reed

Celebration of Sacraments

Yr 3 Reconciliation

Yr 4 Eucharist

Yr 6 Confirmation

Class Masses

Staff Faith Formation Day

Staff participation in Professional Development

Sacramental Reflection Day

Daily Prayer in classrooms,

Social Justice Initiatives

St Bede's Feast Day

Whole school celebration, activities and liturgy

Mini Vinnies

Year 6 Graduation Mass

Facilitated level planning which provided scope for the further embedding of Religious Education across other subject areas.

Dedicated prayer spaces in all classrooms

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## Learning and Teaching

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

To develop a school wide professional learning community.  
To effectively use data to clarify procedures for ongoing data analysis and discussion to track the growth of all students

#### Intended outcomes

A whole school shared understanding of Inquiry and student voice (ongoing)  
Consistent pedagogical practice across the school  
An increase in teachers' ability to analyse and discuss data to set individual targets and inform teaching.

### Achievements

Our Leadership team was again a part of the School Improvement Learning Collaborative with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), which included ongoing professional learning with Dr. Simon Breakspear throughout 2023. The professional learning with Simon Breakspear supported the Leadership Team in analysing the Annual Action Plan and planning for working with staff to meet the School Improvement Plan goals and outcomes.

The continued use of data walls and formative and summative assessments enabled teachers to 'put faces on data', tracking student growth in PAT R and Fountas and Pinnel B.A.S. reading levels. B.A.S. provided a consistent whole-school approach to assessment in Reading and consequently enabled differentiation in instruction. The data was used at PLTs to track student growth and to identify students in need of intervention or as a student of wonder in Case Management meetings. This was a continuation of the work from participation in the Learning Collaborative.

In Mathematics our school was part of the MACS Grants for Mathematics initiative. We worked closely with MACS to continue the previous year's work around mathematics to help to continue the improvement the school has made in the area of mathematics.

Throughout 2023, the Year 1 and 2 teachers and the Numeracy Leader participated in a Professional Development program designed to inform the teaching of Early Numeracy.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

St Bede's Naplan data from 2023 indicated that our Yr 5 students performed above both State and National averages. This is very pleasing and an area we will continue to work at to ensure our standards remain at these levels. These Naplan results are also reflected in our own formal school based assessments which takes place throughout the year.

What is also very pleasing is that the 5 year trend continues to show an increase in raw scores.

Our Yr 3 Data indicated our students were above national level, but only at, or slightly below state averages across all testing areas. This is disappointing and an area we will need to analyse to ensure we address the issues which may emerge and raise the standards of our year 3 cohorts.

The school has enrolled in MACS led professional learning projects in both mathematics (TIMS) and literacy (The Science of Reading) to help address this concern.

<b>NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards</b>			
<b>Domain</b>	<b>Year level</b>	<b>Mean Scale score</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	433	60%
	Year 5	515	73%
Numeracy	Year 3	418	80%
	Year 5	513	83%
Reading	Year 3	428	72%
	Year 5	522	90%
Spelling	Year 3	413	64%
	Year 5	507	90%
Writing	Year 3	409	76%
	Year 5	516	93%

\*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2023 due to participation not meeting these criteria or no students were assessed. Participants include students who were assessed, including non-attempt, or those exempted from the test.

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## Student Wellbeing

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

To develop a consistent approach to the planning and implementation of teaching Wellbeing.

#### Intended Outcomes

Facilitated planning with Wellbeing Leader to be regular and meaningful

use of pre-assessment and post-assessment data to increase effectiveness of teaching wellbeing.

Continue to develop our PBL team and framework with support from MACS.

### Achievements

During 2023 the leadership team and middle management worked closely with support from MACS Learning Consultant Wellbeing, Roland Wans, to introduce our Positive Behaviours for Learning program. There were regular PBL meetings at which staff participated in professional learning, which led to the creation of its own set of values. These sets of values are displayed around the school so that our whole school community is aware of them.

The timetabling of consistent and regular SRC meetings provided a forum for student voice across the whole school. The students had a voice in the creation of our new playground.

The continuation of our whole school buddies program where explicit teaching of values takes place is an area of the curriculum that at St Bedes, we believe we do very well.

Our buddies program is another highlight. This takes place on a Friday every fortnight.

### Value Added

Below is a list of the value added happenings that took place at St Bedes in 2023

All staff completed Mandatory Reporting Modules

Families were referred to support programs and networks as needed

Harmony Day celebration and activities in Term 1

A curriculum focusing on diversity and Inclusion

Student Behaviour Tracking records

Student Leadership

Social and Emotional classroom lessons

School Counsellor

Whole school Buddy Program

Transition programs from Grade 6 to Year 7

Transition programs from Kinder to Prep

Fostered an open relationship between school and home through regular communication such as Parent Information sessions and Parent/ Teacher interviews.

### **Student Satisfaction**

The MACSSIS data clearly shows that there is greater satisfaction amongst the girls at St Bede's than there is amongst the boys. The satisfaction is also higher in Yrs 4 and 5 students than it is in Yr 6 students.

Determining the reasons for this and devising solutions will form part of our 2024 Annual Action plan.

The Yr. 6 students rated "Child Safety" 13 points higher than the MACS average.

While "Enabling Safety" was rated 15 percent lower than "Child Safety" by our Yr. 6 students, it still remained above the MACS average.

In General, the Student Survey results indicated that the students of St Bede's had overwhelmingly positive feelings about their schooling.

## Student Attendance

### Attendance Monitoring at St Bede's

1. Student daily attendance is recorded using the NForma software program
2. Staff are required to record attendance twice daily
3. Parents are informed regularly via the school newsletter to inform the school in a timely manner about student absences
4. Working with NForma the school has an automated parent notification process for students who are absent without the school being notified. This is overseen by personnel in the school office
5. Twice yearly reports contain records of student attendance
6. If a child is a "Non Attendance" the school will make contact with the family and the appropriate authorities. These authorities include child first, DHHS and Catholic Education. The school will work closely with the family to ensure the child returns to school.

<b>Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level</b>	
Y01	94.5%
Y02	94.9%
Y03	97.0%
Y04	95.5%
Y05	92.3%
Y06	94.7%
Overall average attendance	94.8%



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## Leadership

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

To develop a school wide professional learning community.

#### Intended outcome

Provide regular, scheduled targeted feedback to teachers through peer observations, coaching, mentoring, modelling

#### Achievements

The leadership team meets regularly to address the school's Annual Action Plan (AAP) as well as any operational issues that may periodically arise. At these meetings we focus on specific goals and map and assess our progress towards our stated targets.

In 2023 the wellbeing focus was on introducing our Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) program. As part of this process, we developed a clear direction and a set of shared expectations across the whole school (See below)

At St Bedes we grow by

Being Safe

Being Respectful

Being Resilient

These values and expectations are on display throughout the school. They are also shared with families via newsletters.

The leadership team was also part of the Eastern Region School Improvement learning Community (SILC) which was facilitated by Dr. Simon Breakspear. With the assistance of Breakspear's tools, we implemented the following goal in Mathematics.

#### Mathematics Goal

The goal for 2023 was Assessment and student engagement. To improve student learning outcomes by using a consistent pre-assessment structure(template) as well as technology.

<b>Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning</b>	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<p>The staff were involved in the following Professional Learning opportunities throughout 2023</p> <p>First Aid</p> <p>Mathematics -Ross Kirwan</p> <p>Literacy - PLT meetings High Impacting Teaching Strategies</p> <p>Use of Elastik ( data program) Matt Dixon</p> <p>Positive Behaviours for Learning</p> <p>SILC - Simon Breakspear</p> <p>Religious Education Herminetical approach to teaching</p> <p>Religious Education Dialogue schools (Catholic Identity) - Fr Brendan Reed</p> <p>Inquiry Approach - personalised Shaz Bailey</p> <p>Faciliated Planning - Shaz Bailey</p> <p>Teachers as co learners ( Language Program)</p> <p>NCCD data collection - Odette Budge</p>	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	21
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1800.00

## Teacher Satisfaction

The feedback received from the MACSSIS data was very favourable. The staff believe there is a good relationship between staff members and leadership.

Below are some of the results from the surveys (*the percentage numbers represent "favourable"*):

Collective efficacy 86% ( working collectively)

Support for teams 84% ( support from leadership for teams)

Psychological safety 78% ( safety of staff to try new things)

Across all sections surveyed, the staff were 77% positive about what is happening at St Bede's. This is 10% higher than the average across MACS schools. All areas surveyed were above the average of Catholic schools across the Melbourne Archdiocese.

However, the staff also indicated that "Feedback" was still an area in need of improvement.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	15.6%
Graduate	18.8%
Graduate Certificate	3.1%
Bachelor Degree	46.9%
Advanced Diploma	9.4%
No Qualifications Listed	6.3%

<b>Staff Composition</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	28
Teaching Staff (FTE)	21.9
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	23
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	14.1
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

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## Community Engagement

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goal

To build a culture that includes collaborative (community planning) that enriches the experiences of everyone involved.

#### Intended outcome

For the community to have a sense of belonging to the school

#### Achievements

Some of the achievements and community events that took place throughout the year include

- Mother's and Father's Day celebrations
- Trivia Evening
- St Vincent De Paul winter and summer appeals (Mini Vinnies)
- Communication of the Improvement Agenda with the community through the newsletter
- Mothers' and Fathers' Day stall
- Mothers' Day Dinner
- Fathers' Day Breakfast
- Father Child Camp
- Christmas Market
- Carols evening
- Parent Helpers in the classroom
- Fun tuckshop days e.g Harmony Day
- St Bede's Feast Day - Parents invited
- Parents attendance at athletics and cross country events.
- Colour Fun Run

What is most pleasing is the verbal feedback the leadership team receives regarding the 'community feel' of St Bede's and the sense of belonging.

Prospective parents of the school when asked, 'What do you know about our school?' respond with, 'We know it's a community.'

## Parent Satisfaction

Below you will find some of the parent feedback data we received from the MACSIS surveys

The areas that the parents thought the school was performing well in were:

Families' perceptions of the social and learning climate of the school. 88%

School Fit 78%

Student safety 77%

It is wonderful that the parents view our community as a positive place for learning. Learning is why students attend school and this data also matches the students thoughts about learning.

The parents indicated that their own schedules was a reason preventing them from being more involved in the community. We now need to explore ways of including these parents. This will form part of our 2024 Annual Action Plan.

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## Financial Performance

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The school's financial performance information and a report of the financial activities of the school's boarding premises (if applicable) have 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](http://www.acnc.gov.au).

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at [www.sbedesbn.catholic.edu.au](http://www.sbedesbn.catholic.edu.au)