



St Paul's Catholic School

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

SCHOOL PROFILE AND HISTORY

St Paul's Catholic School is located approximately 20km north of Hobart in the outer suburbs, and was first opened in 1984. The school's original founding orders are the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers. The school caters for students from Kindergarten to Grade 6 and has a current student enrolment of 197, including Kindergarten. The core values and mission of the school include a strong emphasis on promoting the value of each child in the school as well as a very recognisable culture of caring and supporting all students and families. The school aims to provide an educational foundation for each individual to reach his or her full development as a person, intellectually, spiritually, physically, morally and emotionally. The school also provides an excellent extra-curricular program which for 2019 included Sport, Physical Education, Digital Technology, Art and Drama.

St Paul's Catholic School has a relatively short history being built in 1983 for the start of the 1984 school year. We continually celebrate the two founding orders (Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers) who took on the caretaker role of the school. The traditional culture, set by the religious order principals in the early years, have been continued by the first lay Principal, appointed in 2002 and subsequent principals.

VISION and MISSION STATEMENTS

Vision

St Paul's Catholic Primary School continually strives to fulfil the Gospel ideals and values based on the belief, 'We are God's work of Art' (Ephesians 2:10)

Mission

We aim to develop and nurture all of our school community to reach their full potential by:

- invoking the charism of the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers to encourage faith and a spiritual journey with Christ.

- providing rich learning experiences that develop the whole child, that are valued and promoted within all aspects of school life.
- developing a welcoming school community built on relationships based on mutual respect.

GOVERNANCE

Catholic Education

The Archbishop of Hobart has ultimate responsibility for Catholic Education in Tasmania. The Archbishop receives policy advice from the Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission (TCEC). Policies, approved by the Archbishop, are enacted by the Director of Catholic Education. At the local level, the Principal is responsible for the leadership and management of the school, in accordance with overall Archdiocesan policy objectives and the advice of the Board.

Systemic Catholic Schools Governing Council

The SCSGC governs the System of Catholic Schools in collegial partnership with the Director of Catholic Education, Principals and Boards. The Council assumes final responsibility for all decisions and actions of members of the System of Catholic Schools acting on its behalf.

The Council's role is primarily one of overseeing, supporting and monitoring the operation of the System of Schools.

Tasmanian Catholic Education Office (TCEO)

The Tasmanian Catholic Education Office, under the guidance of the Director, implements the policies developed by the Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission and the Share-funded Catholic Schools Governing Council. The Office also provides a wide range of professional and management services to all Catholic schools, including Archdiocesan and Congregation Colleges. These services are provided generally using Commonwealth recurrent and targeted funds, or through levies contributed by all Catholic schools. They cover a range of areas including Catholic Culture and Ethos, Learning and Achievement, Curriculum and Pedagogy, Learning Environment and Leadership. The

Tasmanian Catholic Education Office is the contact point for a range of Tasmanian and Australian Government and education agencies.

School Leaders

The Archbishop of Hobart appoints the Principals of Share-funded Schools on recommendation of the Director in collaboration with the recommendation of an Appointment Panel.

Leadership within the school:

School Principal

The overall leadership and management of St Paul's Catholic School for 2019 was entrusted to the school Principal, Mrs Jo-Anne Clark.

School Leadership Team

Membership of the 2019 School Leadership Team was Mrs Jo-Anne Clark as Principal, Mr Ben Morgan as Deputy Principal, Mrs Sarah Longey as Religious Education Co-ordinator, Ms Claire Whitehead as Student Support Co-Ordinator and Sr Carmel Hinkley, Pastoral Care and School Chaplain.

School Board

St Paul's Catholic School Board remained inactive in 2019 following its disbandment in 2018 and complicated by a new Principal in 2019. Under guidance from Tom Dorey (Executive Director – Directorate) and Director/s South, Denise Long (terms 1 & 2) and Cameron Brown (terms 3 & 4), it was decided to continue with the Finance committee and not force school board membership. The Financial Committee continued to meet throughout the school year to oversee the financial management of the school. This group consisted of Jo Clark (Principal), Deb Ackerly (Business Manager), Neil Reardon (TCEO Finance Officer) & Narelle Green (Business Manager – St Virgil's College).

CATHOLIC CULTURE AND ETHOS/RELIGIOUS LIFE

The focus in the area of Religious Education continued to centre on the Archdiocese Religious Education Curriculum "Good News for Living". Religious Education at St Paul's aims to provide substantial learning experiences for the students in programs for the Liturgical Calendar of the Church, incorporating Lent, Easter, Advent and Christmas. Our mission at St Paul's Catholic School is to follow Jesus, our teacher, by providing a welcoming and supportive environment where we strive to live the Gospel values of love, forgiveness, justice, compassion and peace. The promotion of these Gospel values is evident in our modelling to our students, by word and example, to become fulfilled and responsible members of society. The partnership between parents and staff working together is an essential part of the development of relationships within our school community. We strive to develop within our community an attitude of respect and acceptance where all members are valued. As an educational community, we aim to challenge students to express their opinions and communicate effectively and creatively, so that they may become resourceful and effective problem-solvers with a commitment to life-long learning.

At St Paul's we are committed to providing opportunities for students, staff and the community to develop their spirituality and outreach. We aim to maintain the charism and spirituality of our two Founding Orders – the Mercy Sisters and the Christian Brothers. We continued a major focus on developing a greater understanding of the work of Catherine McAuley and Edmund Rice. During the year, we supported outreach programs such as CARITAS, and the Archbishop's Samaritan Project, the Mercy Sister's Tank-a lot and other 'causes' for which the school has an affinity. As a Catholic school, it is important for us to celebrate as a Christ-centred community. We gathered throughout the year to celebrate prayer in class groups and as a whole school. Classes attended the Parish Mass on Thursdays to be 'one with the Parish'. We support the Parish Sacramental programs of Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation, which are significant celebrations in the Parish/School year. Parents are vital participants in the

programs, and we encourage them to support their children through preparation and celebration of the Sacraments.

As an important part of the Bridgewater/Brighton Parish, we strive to foster co-operation, support and communication. We encourage students and their families to attend Parish Masses, Holy Days and significant Feast Days. Special liturgies are held to celebrate important events such as Holy Week, The Assumption, ANZAC Day, Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, Remembrance Day, Advent, the Commissioning Mass at the beginning of the year and the Graduation / Thanksgiving Masses at the end of the year. We, also, participate in Catholic Education Week Mass with everyone in Catholic Education Tasmania.

STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

Student background

School ICSEA value: 920

Distribution of Students

Bottom Quarter	Middle Quarter		Top Quarter
57%	30%	9%	3%

NAPLAN Results for 2019

Comparatives for like and all schools -

	READING	WRITING	SPELLING	GRAMMAR and PUNCTUATION	NUMERACY
GRADE 3 ST PAUL'S	419	398	383	400	377
GRADE 3 LIKE SCHOOLS	390	395	371	390	374
GRADE 5 ST PAUL'S	479	443	490	460	436
GRADE 5 LIKE SCHOOLS	478	444	466	459	461
GRADE 5 ALL SCHOOLS	506	473	501	499	494

Relative Gain Yr 3 – 5

	Medium gain	High gain	Total Med-high gain	Similar school Med-high gain
Reading	50%	15%	65%	75%
Writing	45%	40%	85%	75%
Spelling	30%	40%	70%	75%
Grammar	35%	25%	60%	75%
Numeracy	50%	15%	65%	75%

During 2019, we focused on a number of strategic and operational goals to enhance student learning by engaging in improvement strategies that drew from the critical reflection of our school community, as it responds to various questions and issues about student learning. This ensures that knowledge remains current and that we cater for the various educational needs, learning styles and challenges presented at St Paul's Catholic School.

Students with additional needs, talents and gifts are given appropriate opportunities, challenges and experiences to develop their potential and meet their learning needs with various activities throughout the year. Individual education programs are provided for students who are assisted in our educational support programs. Targeted intervention, extension and enrichment formed the basis for catering for the diverse learning needs of students. Multlit (Making Up Lost Time in Literacy) the intervention reading program designed for students who are experiencing some difficulties in the acquisition of appropriate reading skills continued as a major focus. Pre-Lit and Mini-Lit were also fully implemented in the Early Years. EASAL programs offered enrichment experiences for our talented students. Letters and Sounds and Daily 5 programs continued an integral part of our Literacy Block in 2019. All staff attended Professional Learning on SMART spelling at the beginning of the year and this program was implemented across all classes Prep – Year 6. As a whole school initiative, we worked closely with Rosalie Martin (Speech

Pathologist) to assess all children's phonemic awareness using PASP (phonological awareness skills program) and to work with individuals, small groups and whole class on their particular skill level.

Grade Six students continue to be involved in leadership programs, which develop their skills and experience in assisting and supporting younger students. These programs include the 'Making Jesus Real' program, which provide opportunities for Grade 6 students to participate in leadership activities which promote values, character building and Christian living. The program enables students to explore co-operative group sharing activities and encourages them to show initiative in decision-making and problem solving tasks. It encourages affirmation of others and develops leadership potential through understanding the responsibilities of being effective leaders. The organisational and team skills of student leaders were promoted and practised by their involvement in the very successful Red Day fundraising, training for sports events and commitment to house events and peer support. We also introduced MJR in our classes from Year 3 – 6 to support their leadership. We hope to introduce more leadership opportunities for the students in year 3 – 6 through Student Representative Council in 2020.

CURRICULUM AND PEDAGOGY

The students of St Paul's Catholic School receive a Catholic education which encompasses the following learning areas from the Australian Curriculum and Good News for Living framework: Religious Education; English; Mathematics; Science; Humanities and Social Sciences; the Arts, which includes Music, Dance and Drama; Health and Physical Education, and Languages. Technologies was introduced in 2019 but not reported on.

We aim to:

- Guide students in their discovery of a Christian way of living as a member of the family of God within our Catholic tradition.
- Assist students to develop and grow academically to the best of their abilities and capabilities.

- Encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Provide equity and opportunity for all students.
- Provide a well-balanced curriculum, which acknowledges and addresses the needs of students in a climate of social, cultural and technological change.
- Assist students to develop self-confidence, self-esteem, and respect for others.
- Encourage students to learn co-operatively and collaboratively and to maintain a positive attitude to learning.

To provide and maintain a positive environment, we aim to:

- Become witnesses of the Gospel values of truth, justice, freedom, love and service.
- Create a friendly, safe and supportive school community where everyone is treated with dignity.
- Provide balanced and broad Catholic educational experiences which stimulates learning, encourage excellence and respects individual differences.
- Support staff through structures that allow for personal and professional growth.
- Give every opportunity for parents to enter into an educational partnership with staff and to share in their children's spiritual, emotional and intellectual development.
- Support staff, parents and students in times of grief, illness and stress.

During 2019, St Paul's Catholic School ensured every child accessed the Australian Curriculum and moved towards google drive sharing of all our planning. We ensured that all classes had dedicated literacy and numeracy blocks and year levels worked with their other stage year levels to ensure there were enough targeted groups and teaching to accommodate individual needs.

Access to digital technologies continued to support student learning in 2019. Our goal and focus was to implement lessons and planning which facilitated the integration of digital technologies across all curriculum areas. All children have access to technology to support their learning. In 2019 St Paul's

introduced a one-to-one ipad program with all students in Grades 3 to 6. These devices were funded by the school and loaned to the students for the school year. Lego Robotics was also continued in the Upper Primary classes.

St Paul's Catholic School received accreditation to run the Catholic Education initiative, *Set Up for Success*, for our birth to 5 years old children and their families in our school community. The program runs every Friday morning. Our qualified *Setup for Success* coordinators develop tailored programs to meet the needs of children and families within the local community inspired by Christian values. Parents attend *Setup for Success* alongside their children in a welcoming and inspiring environment designed to promote development across all learning areas.

Each week the *Setup for Success* program coordinators will work with families to:

- support parental understanding of child development,
- respond to learners' interests, strengths and needs,
- communicate the learning that is on offer, and why this learning is important to their child, and
- provide resources to assist families to continue to support their children's learning in their home settings.

Our caring and supportive environments promote optimal early childhood development that greatly increases children's chances of a successful transition to school. This, in turn, promotes children's chances of achieving better learning outcomes while at school, and better education, employment and health after they have finished school.

Engaging parents with the learning community enables greater communication between school and home, between the child and their family and support learning.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

The school has an attendance policy, which aims to maximise student learning opportunities and performance by ensuring that children required to attend school do so regularly, and without unnecessary or frivolous absences. In 2019 St Paul's, along with most CET schools, adopted the Compass online

portal which allows parents to indicate absences for students without the office staff or teacher having to input the information. All student attendances are recorded in the morning by the teacher and aggregated on our database and communicated to agencies as required. Office staff initially follow up daily absences. The Principal will contact parents of students with high levels of unexplained or unapproved absences, with the view to developing and implementing strategies to minimise absences. Should absences continue at an unacceptable rate, we engage the services of the Registrar of Education via our Executive Director which may result in Compulsory Conciliation.

CAPITAL WORKS

In 2019, plans were drawn up for our new nature playground in Kindergarten. This was put on hold until the drafting of a new space in the vicinity of our Kindergarten room to accommodate 3 year olds in 2021. This has been a changing and evolving project facilitated by Catholic Education Tasmania in conjunction with Catholic Care. We are looking forward to this development hopefully in the near future.

SCHOOL INITIATIVES

SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM

School chaplain and pastoral care worker continued to be an incredible resource to staff, students and families. The chaplaincy program gives Sr Carmel the most valuable of resources – time. As a trusted listener and supporter she, among a diverse range of practices, walks and talks with students and families, conducts programs to support children through grief, trouble shoots in times of crisis and initiates 'hobby' projects which bring children together to learn and socialise positively.

Futures

2019 saw the continuation of our school based Futures Program. The

program was designed, planned and full implemented by St Paul's staff. This program gave all students an opportunity to choose a small group activity each Thursday afternoon. Groups included – gardening club, bike club, boot camps, choirs, guitar groups, mechanics, sewing, glee club, art club, etc..

The Futures initiative was well supported by students from Guilford Young College and St Virgil's College. This program also gave the parents an opportunity to participate in the activities and even lead some them. At the end of each term each group showcased their new skills and talents to the wider school community.

Mercy Action Program (MAP)

An exciting initiative that saw the Sisters of Mercy take an active role in our community supporting our most marginalized and vulnerable students. The school staff, led by Sr Carmel, participated in a day out for our most vulnerable families. This was planned for January 2019 but due to the bushfires, it was postponed until later in the year. Instead of heading to the Tahune Airwalk that was destroyed by fire, the group went to Port Arthur and ended the day with dinner at Dodges Ferry.

MAP also sponsored an artist in residence program during term three. Sr Margaret spent a week in our community engaging with the children and families and during this time designed artwork that is now pride of place in our school.

At the end of year 6, MAP supports a child with a scholarship to a catholic high school of their choice.

Phonological awareness

Mrs Rosalie Martin is the 2017 Tasmanian/Australian of the Year finalist and owner of Speech Pathology Tasmania. Rosalie has generously given her time and expertise to our school over a number of year and this year we focused on phonological awareness across the entire school. We tested all students from K-6 using the Phonological Awareness Skills Program (PASP) to assess all students and get a starting point for our program. The review highlighted

that we were making little progress with some of our most vulnerable students. Rosalie worked with the whole staff, individual students and teachers in a coaching model to encourage daily practice in this area. We were quite ambitious and decided not to retest at the end of the year but leave it until 2020 as “it takes a village to raise a child” and every staff member was an active participant.

Families and Schools Together – FAST

In 2019 the school was once again fortunate enough to be involved in the Families and Schools Together Program (FAST). A voluntary program that targets the whole family. The FAST Program consisted of eight-weekly whole family meetings with structured activities to build social connections and reduce social isolation. The approach is designed to enhance the child’s functioning in school, in the community, and at home. The FAST Program believe that “a high level of involvement is a critical protective factor that increases the likelihood of children succeeding in life and in school”.

We had many positive outcomes from participating in the FAST Program. The results indicated that on completion of the program, the school had a high number of statistically significant results. We had 13 families participate and we had 3 leaders run the group from our parent community as well as 2 from our school personnel. The FAST Program is an example of how community partnerships can work together to support students, schools and families.

Kindergarten Playground

In 2019 we enlisted the support of a playground/landscape architect to design an inviting, user-friendly and aesthetically pleasing nature playground in our kindergarten space. The plans were developed and approved and discussion about funding the project was being investigated until the discussion increased in the three year old space and the need for us to ensure that we could accommodate our vulnerable (or maybe universal) 3 year old within or as an extension of our Kindergarten space. Therefore our

Kindergarten playground design became part of the bigger Early Years building development. This plan for the building included other architects and discussion and plan were drawn up but once again halted by the need to future proof our designs to house many more 3 year olds if needed. The planning will now continue into 2020.

St Paul's Soccer Club

Our Soccer Club continued to be a positive way for the parents to be involved in the school. We had over 60 students participating in our soccer program and competing in the Northern Suburbs Junior Soccer Association. We have parents and family members who coach the teams and a parent/staff member who oversees the weekly opening of our home grounds at Wylie Park, Bridgewater.

Mentoring Programs

St Paul's continued to develop relationships with St Virgil's College, St Patrick's College (Launceston) and Guilford Young College. All three Colleges facilitate a range of programs at St Paul's, which promote higher education and provide our school with a range of positive role models. GYC students participated in our FUTURES Program every Thursday afternoon and the St Patrick's students worked throughout the year with our Grade 6 leaders, including a joint camping experience and visits to each other's schools. SVC students are regular visitors to the school and worked across all grade areas.

TRANSITION TO GRADE 7

2019 saw a major focus on transitioning our Grade 6 school leaders to their schools/colleges for Grade 7 2020. We had a high percentage of students enrolled in Catholic Secondary Colleges. Our Student Support Co-Ordinator and year 6 teacher worked with all colleges to ensure our students had a smooth transition. Many meetings were held and the year 6 teacher took some students in small groups to their perspective schools. We also took a small group of students to St Virgil's every Thursday afternoon during Terms

2 and 3.

PITSTOP

PITSTOP continued to work well as a safe place students can spend their playtimes if they are struggling in the playground. In 2019 a teacher from the leadership team was rostered on to help with students when they reentered the playground giving them guidance and support. PITSTOP data continues to show significant improvements in the behavior and attitude of our students during playtimes.

Jo Clark

Principal