



# **St Paul's Catholic School**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2021**

## **ANNUAL SCHOOL COMMUNITY REPORT**

Year: 2021  
School Name: St Paul's Catholic School  
Suburb/Town: Bridgewater  
Address: Paice Street, Bridgewater, 7030  
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Principal: Mrs Jo-Anne Clark

### **School Facts:**

School Sector: Non-Government  
School: Primary  
Year Range: Kindergarten - Grade 6.  
School ICSEA value: 912  
DMI: 85  
Total Enrolments: 172 (Prep - Grade 6) 30 (Kindergarten)  
Girls: 74 16  
Boys: 98 14  
Full time equivalent Enrolments: 191  
Indigenous Students: 24%  
Language other than English  
Students 1%  
Student Attendance Rate: 89%  
Teaching Staff: 15  
Full time equivalent Teaching Staff: 13.1  
Non-Teaching Staff: 18  
Full Time equivalent Non-Teaching Staff: 9.6

## **GLOBAL PANDEMIC Continues...**

Although 2020 was challenging with enforced learning at home, 2021 was more unsettled as while parts of Australia had enforced learning at home, Tasmania did not and really had continued and ongoing interruptions to learning. We did have a short three day lock down at St Paul's Bridgewater after a member of the public was positive in our community. While we had no long lock down period, like our Victorian counterparts, we had to ensure that we were prepared for this to happen at a moment's notice and that the school could still be staffed for any of our disadvantaged families or families of frontline workers. For the entire year our school was open for students with no staff working from home. We followed directives from Catholic Education Tasmania informed by Public Health Tasmania. During 2021 we kept accurate records of COVID-19 positive cases in our school. We found that the number of positive cases came in waves and we had individual classes having as many as three quarters of their class away. We had several individual class outbreaks, where the entire class had to do a rapid antigen test on days 0, 2 & 5 and we had two school outbreaks with the entire school having to test on days 0, 2 & 5 before returning to school. During these school outbreaks, leadership team members would meet the students at the drop off zone and check they had tested.

Cleaning was increased, sanitation stations set up at school entry points and unwell children encourage to stay home or were sent home.

Teaching and Learning was interrupted as on any one day you may have a few, several or many students away so teachers found it challenging to ensure that every child in their class was exposed to the entire curriculum at their year level. Some parents with students at home because they were COVID positive or were close contacts wanted work sent home or access links online while others did not. As a school we decided that we needed to put some interventions in place to ensure the level of learning was targeted to individual students especially in literacy, speech, phonological and phonemic awareness.

## **SCHOOL PROFILE AND HISTORY**

St Paul's Catholic School is located approximately 20km north of Hobart in the outer suburb of Bridgewater, 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 203,

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 2021 included Sport, Physical Education, Digital Technology, Music, Art, Drama and Social Skills.

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 Tasmania

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.

#### Systemic Catholic Schools Governing Council (SCSGC)

The SCSGC governs the System of Catholic Schools in collegial partnership with the Director of Catholic Education, CET Directors, Standing Committees and Principals. 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.

#### Catholic Education Tasmania (CET)

Catholic Education Tasmania, 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.

#### School Principal

The overall leadership and management of St Paul's Catholic School for 2021 was entrusted to the school Principal, Mrs Jo-Anne Clark.

#### School Leadership Team

Membership of the 2021 School Leadership Team was Mrs Jo-Anne Clark as Principal, Mrs Annie Baker as Deputy Principal, Mr Casey Moore as Religious Education Co-

ordinator, Mrs Anne Duigan 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 2021 following its disbandment in 2018. Under guidance from Tom Dorey (Executive Director – Directorate) and Cameron Brown (Director South), 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 (Finance Officer)- replaced by Jess Webb (Term 4), Neil Reardon (TCEO Finance Officer) & Narelle Green, Business Manager – St Virgil's College (replaced by Michael Harvey in term 4).

### **Strategic Plan (see appendix 1)**

2022 would see the end to our current strategic plan which is due to end in 2021. To ensure the next three years would be planned to reflect the needs of the whole community and aligned with the Archbishop's Charter and the Catholic Education Tasmania strategic plan, we employed the services of a company called 2PM services. We worked with Linda and Steph from 2PM to survey all our key stakeholders including parents, teachers, students, community and parish members and CET representatives. We had a select group from the community mainly teachers and teacher assistants meet to determine and analyse the data from the surveys to land on our "plan on a page". This consisted of five change project/initiatives and five business as usual directives. While the outcome was to come up with an easy to access document that all parties could support and develop throughout 2022. The process was rigorous and detailed and we look forward to continuing to develop these projects and work with the whole school community to adopt the changes.

### **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 Fridays to be 'one with the Parish'. Fr Leo the Parish Priest is invited to attend all events in the school and often visits classes with the active members of the Legion of Mary. They visit and work with different classes to pray and answer many of the students' questions. We support the Parish Sacramental programs 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, St Paul's Feast day, 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.

## Staff professional learning

We began 2021 with an off-site spirituality day focusing on our continued work on Laudato Si, attended by all staff. All staff were given a copy of the "Laudato Si" book for them to continue to reference and reflect. Our care of our common home has continued to be part of our narrative as we continue to instill these values in our students also. We have an extensive recycling bin system to ensure that as a school we try to reduce to amount of landfill. We encourage students to take responsibility for emptying and caring for their environment.

Many staff members were trained during 2021 in the Orton Gillingham multi-sensory approach to teaching reading. All staff received professional learning in phonological and phonemic awareness. Every day in every class, students receive drills in deletions and substitutions to support this awareness needed to learn to read and to become fluent at reading. Rosie Martin continued to be the support professional and worked alongside teachers to implement this practice. We also trained a paraprofessional to administer continued small doses of speech therapy every day to students in need. She sits in the corridor close enough to the Prep/Year 1 classroom to work with as many students as possible.

## STUDENT LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT

Student background. **School DMI:** 85

### Distribution of Socio-Educational Advantage

Bottom Quarter	Middle Quarter		Top Quarter
61%	28%	10%	1%

### NAPLAN Results for 2021

Naplan was administered entirely online in 2021 (except Year 3 writing) after Naplan was not administered during 2020 because of the pandemic.

Year 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	G & P	Numeracy
Exempt	18.75% (3)	20% (3)	20% (3)	20% (3)	23.08%
Below NMS	6.25%	20%	26.67%	33.33%	-
At NMS	37.5%	-	13.33%	13.33%	15.38%
Middle	12.5%	40%	20%	13.33%	53.85%

Above NMS	25%	20%	20%	20%	7.69%
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<b>Year5</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>G &amp; P</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
Exempt	9.52 (2)	10% (2)	10% (2)	10% (2)	11.11% (2)
Below NMS	14.29%	20%	35%	20%	11.11%
At NMS	19.05%	30%	15%	25%	33.33%
Middle	47.62%	30%	35%	40%	55.56%
Above NMS	9.52%	10%	15%	5%	-

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 a number of fundraising events, training for sports events and commitment to house events and peer support. We also introduced MJR in our classes from Prep – 6 to support their leadership. We have also introduced more leadership opportunities for the students in year 3 – 6 through Student Representative Council who meet regularly with our Religious Education Co-ordinator, Mr Casey Moore.

## **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. Digital Technologies was introduced and 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 2021, 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 2021. 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. Our one-to-one ipad program continues to ensure all students across the school have access to technology to support their learning. These devices were funded by the school and loaned to the students for the school year.

Set Up for Success, for our birth to 5 years old children and their families in our school community has operated during 2021 and parents and families engage in the activities 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. Although our Early Learning Centre was being renovated for most of 2021, we were still able to run *Setup for Success* in our temporary classroom and in our outdoor learning space which the participants loved.

## **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. St Paul's continued to use the Compass online portal to allow 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**

For most of 2021 our new Early Learning Centre including our new nature playground as an extension to our current Kindergarten was a construction site of which CDC Builders had carriage. We also underwent an extension of our carpark as part of the works. Our Kindergarten teacher and Educational leader, Karla Annear, and myself, as Principal were engaged in fortnightly meetings with the builder, architects and CET facilities representative, Kim Barker. While the works were not completed by the end of 2021 as first anticipated the progress was consistent and the students loved seeing progress of the work especially the craning of the tree into the space and the digger hard at work in the carpark and playground. A time capsule was stored in the ceiling cavity for future extraction. The builders and architects also engaged with older students about the process of development from design to build.

## **SCHOOL INITIATIVES**

### **Responding to need...**

We had analysed our data from previous years and with the support of Rosie Martin, Speech Pathology Tas., we became very aware that a number of our students, especially our most disadvantaged, were well behind in their language development and continued to stay that way even with intervention. We realized that we needed to target our intervention and ensure that all students (K-6) received daily doses of support. We employed a Literacy Intervention Coach (Rena Millikan) who knew the students well and could support the teachers and students. She took carriage of this initiative and worked with our Student Support Co-Ordinator, Anne Duigan, or Expert Language consultant, Rosie Martin. We trained all our teachers, especially our Early years teachers in the fundamentals of phonological and phonemic awareness and implemented daily doses on drills and intervention to support individual students' learning. Every day in every class, students receive drills in deletions and substitutions to support this

awareness needed to learn to read and to become fluent at reading. Rosie Martin continued to be the support professional and worked alongside teachers to implement this practice. We also trained a paraprofessional to administer continued small doses of speech therapy every day to students in need. She sits in the corridor close enough to the Prep/Year 1 classroom to work with as many students as possible. By the end of term three, every Prep student, but one, was able to recognise and name the initial sound and name of all 26 alphabet letters.

#### Play before eating at Recess and Lunchtime

As part of our response to our "laudato si" spirituality at the beginning of the year and to help support students who were struggling in the playground we changed our Recess and Lunchtime structure so students went out to play before coming back inside to eat. This had two major advantages – the first was that no child took any rubbish into the playground and therefore our rubbish in the playground that could get blown into drain etc. was reduced ten-fold and the second was that the classroom teacher had time after play time to discuss and sort any minor issues that may have occurred in to the playground.

#### 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.

#### 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 took place in January 2021 with a group of students and staff. They all had a fantastic day and continued to build on their relationships. MAP also supported a leadership day to Bruny Island for the Year 6 students. They engaged in team building exercises and leadership activities as they prepared for their upcoming

leadership roles.

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

#### School Counselling with CatholicCare

St Paul's has a school counsellor, Claire Johnstone, at our school three days a week. These enables students to build relationships with her and to have someone to go to if they are dysregulated or anxious. While Claire is not directly employed by the school, we have regular well-being meetings to discuss students and support each other in our roles.

#### St Paul's Soccer Club

It was great to have our St Paul's Striker's Soccer Club up and running again this year. We were able to have a team in most divisions and Mrs Terri continued to support families and coaches to get the teams on the field each week. Mrs Terri is looking to take a back seat as her children have grown up and we are encouraging a few parents to step up as delegate.

#### Mentoring Programs

St Paul's continued to develop relationships with St Virgil's College, St Patrick's College (Launceston), MacKillop College and Guilford Young College. The 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. 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

2021 saw a major focus on transitioning our Grade 6 school leavers to their schools/colleges for Grade 7 2022. 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.

### Chill Out

Chill Out continued to work well as a safe place students can spend their playtimes if they are struggling in the playground. In 2021 a teacher from the leadership team was rostered on to help with students when they reentered the playground giving them guidance and support. Data continues to show significant improvements in the behavior and attitude of our students during playtimes. We revisited the reason for a space for children to come and decided to open it up as a safe inside play space for any child who wanted to come inside and play.



Jo Clark

**Principal**

# Appendix 1



**WE ARE A SUCCESSFUL VIBRANT LEARNING COMMUNITY**

**St Pauls School  
2022 - 2023 GOAL**

