

2022 Annual Report to the Community

Vision and Mission

St Mel's strives to:

Build a community illuminated by our Catholic Tradition and grounded in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Nurture the spirit, mind, and body of each learner.

Create learning environments that invite learners to inquire, explore and discover.

Embrace all families working in partnership with parish and community to engage in lifelong learning.

Rejoice in the diversity of our community and celebrate its uniqueness.

School Overview

At St Mel's we acknowledge that the child is a capable person, who from birth can readily manage multiple relationships, both Divine and human, that is willing to make meaning of the world about them.

In collaboration with the child, parent, teacher and community, St Mel's works to create engaging learning experiences that are founded on the theories of past and current researchers such as Piaget, Vygotsky, Cavaletti, Robinson, and Malaguzzi.

Learning at St Mel's is organic and fluid, creating opportunities for the child to experience success in learning via play, the arts, literature, numeracy, physical activity, sciences - learning is multi-disciplinary and is accessed in an environment that is welcoming, homely, challenging and encouraging.

As a learning community, St Mel's takes co-responsibility for all it's citizens, citizens of the world, allowing each member to live life in the abundance of God's love, in union with young and old, with the expectation that all can LEARN.

We not only welcome all those who chose St Mel's as a place of learning, a place where relationships are formed and built upon, but more so we hope to create a community where ALL belong.

Principal Report

Dear Parents and Friends

I would like to take this opportunity to thank St Mel's community for your continued support over the past 12 months. It has been a privilege to lead St Mel's with much being achieved and much more on the horizon yet to do. Leadership isn't an easy gig, and you don't always get it right, but the rewards of seeing the kids grow; learn and flourish is what makes being a principal an exceptional honour. The support from our school board, parents and friends, school staff, and students is greatly appreciated.

I would like to express my thanks and gratitude to all in our community for the response to the demands that the past 12 months have put on families, especially those juggling work commitments, or facing financial hardship. Our call to well-being has been outstanding. Whilst there have been many negatives there have been many positives which we, as a school, will learn from and adapt to suit our needs.

What a year it has been. Thankfully we have managed to get through the year with few interruptions albeit a natural disaster in term 4 prevented us to be onsite. Despite this, we have achieved great things and have learned an incredible amount. Like all learning, we strive to be the best we can be, and we strive to make our school the best place for our students. Sometimes we make mistakes, and

sometimes we think 'I wish we had done this a lot better, but that's learning and that's what we try to teach our students. If you don't get it right, keep working hard and when you succeed celebrate your success.

As I have mentioned many times before, I am grateful for the hospitality and kindness bestowed from all levels across our community, and in reflection of the year we have had, there has been much to celebrate and plenty to look forward to in 2023.

We are grateful for the many acts of kindness especially the generosity shown during the floods. Countless meals, phone calls and 'check-ins' ensured all in our community were being cared for. This is what makes St Mel's such an amazing place to be. To all in our well-being and leadership teams, office staff, and generalist teaching staff; thank you. Your care and support have been appreciated by all.

St Mel's is a community that is committed to its Catholic Traditions, always striving to create learning experiences that meet the needs of the child and allow each student the ability to succeed and grow as an individual. We continue to rely on the support of our parents, adults, and friends to build the community that we have. As an Education Community, we are dependent on the support of the parent to ensure we are not working in isolation, but rather in unison. As a community, we have worked hard to foster positive and trusting relationships and continue to share ideas, visions, and conversations that will further enhance best practices and learning opportunities.

In the next 12 months, we will embark on a journey of discovery. Our vision, mission, pedagogy, and strategic directions will be examined and eventually redone to ensure we evolve as a community of learners. New strategic plans will be created that will enrapture past, present, and future educational thinking and creativity. It's exciting times, and we call on all in our community to embrace the challenge.

Thank you, especially to St Mel's School Education Council. We have an incredible team of members who work diligently in governance and leading strategically in the direction of our school. Melissa Hamilton continues in her role as school council chair and we thank Melissa for her wisdom, generosity, and commitment to our school. You have been an integral part of our journey, and we look forward to your involvement next year. Thank you also to our current council members for your valuable input and contributions throughout the year. You have all contributed tremendously, and your commitment is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to our teaching staff who selflessly give much of themselves when providing engaging learning experiences for all students in their care. We are very lucky to have such a hard-working and diverse staff. I am forever grateful and proud of their commitment and their gift of generosity. We have many exciting programs in place and opportunities to look forward to.

To quote Pope Francis: "The future is, most of all, in the hands of those people who recognize the other as a 'you' and themselves as part of an 'us.' We all need each other."

May we respond to the Pope Francis' call for solidarity by being aware of the blessings in our lives and seek to share those blessings with our community—especially the least among us and those who most need our support and care.

This is what St Mel's is renowned for and is what we will continue to do.

God Bless.

Chris Summers

Principal

Catholic Identity and Mission

Focus 3: Catholic Identity and teacher accreditation

To reconnect as a Faith community and deepen our Catholic traditions, identity and teachings. To provide appropriate staff PD aligned to accreditation priorities.

Actions:

- Focus on accreditation and recording this on TAP (3-5hrs per term)
- Work closely with CES staff (Kevin Lawlor/Kylie Smith)
- Incorporate Aboriginal perspectives more deeply in our daily school life and teaching and learning experiences
- Engage with CES Indigenous Perspectives team ~Michael Chisholm, Troy Firebrace and Louise Levy to provide culturally rich experiences for staff and students (staff retreat to Lake Mokoan Term 3)
- Professional development for educators, focusing on catholic traditions and teachings such as scripture.
- Spirituality experiences for the whole education community.

Review of 2022

On Friday 4th Feb we had a wonderful day celebrating our Feast Day. Danae Napier, our Catholic Identity Leader, led us beautifully in the morning with an online liturgy focusing on the importance of Building Community. Fr Peter joined us which is always nice and we are grateful to have Fr Peter join us whenever he can. Whilst we couldn't enjoy the talents of Andrew Chinn (yet again), our feast day celebrations were still a huge success and were a great reminder of the reasons why St Mel's is such a wonderful place to work. Thank you, Danae, for your hard work organising everything and adapting to the last-minute changes ensuring we all had a fun celebration.

Catholic Education Office Sandhurst ~ Theme 2022 "Tell the Good News"

The Catholic Education Sandhurst diocesan theme for 2022 is 'Tell the Good News'. The following is from Sr Geraldine Larkins:

If we think "but what can one person do?" we can look to St Paul who brought the good news of Jesus Christ and a vision for bringing God's kingdom on earth. Without the benefit of modern communications or transport Paul brought the good news to the gentiles and then supported the communities he had visited. What is the Good News? God is love. This knowledge of the good news impacts all our relationships and the way we live and communicate with each other. It challenges religious education teachers to engage in dialogue and lead Christian conversations but as St Francis of Assisi said "Preach the Gospel at all times and if necessary use words". This emphasizes the importance of teachers as "witnesses, specialists and moderators" (Didier Pollefeyt). The good news is for all creation. The importance of caring for creation is not new but is often forgotten. Our care for creation comes from respect for the creator not just a selfish response to need. "Suddenly we realize,

of course, that God is not “out there,” but God is in all, through all, and with all” (Richard Rohr). Don't be shy. If you have experienced Jesus Christ in your life share that relationship with your community.

We will focus on telling the Good News in our actions throughout 2023, living our motto of Christ our Light will help us demonstrate the ways in which we will express this Good News – that God is our light, our truth, and the way.

National Apology Day Breakfast ~ Feb 13th. We had a good contingent of students representing St Mel's at the Apology Day breakfast held online in the school library. This significant event seems to be getting bigger and bigger in Shepparton. Our students were amazing ambassadors for their school and for some, their culture. Well done to all those involved.

We had 75% of the parent community and almost 100% of grade 5/6 students and teaching staff completed the ECSI survey. It's anticipated that with such a diverse cross-section of community members completing the survey, we should ascertain where we are as a catholic school and how people in our community view St Mel's as a catholic school. This information will help drive strategic planning for the future.

As a faith community, we keep the people of Ukraine in our prayers. In conversations, I have had with members of our community it became apparent that for several families the experience of a war-torn country and the urgency to flee to a safer place is well known. Seeking refuge is also a real experience many in our parish community understand well. We can appreciate that this brings with it a great sense of compassion for the people of Ukraine and a vivid reminder of their own experiences. It's important to think of our community members currently and pray with Pope Francis during this turbulent time.

Our children who are growing into an increased pressure-filled world need to be self-reliant, questioning, and reflective. We have found this to be ever-present when teaching students about the Gospel stories of Jesus.

We look forward to building our faith community in 2023.

Value added activities

- ~ Building community through our feast day and liturgy.
- ~ Unpacking ECSI survey results with David Walker.
- ~ Commissioning of student FIRE carriers with Michael Chisholm.
- ~ PD provided by Kevin Lawlor to help fulfil staff accreditation hours.
- ~ Imbedding new source of life units.
- ~ Indigenous perspectives review to ensure these become an integral part of planning and documentation.
- ~ Over \$900 raised for Caritas and project compassion during Lent.
- ~ Countless meals and support for flood victims with our community.

Focus 2: Learning and Teaching

To use evidence based assessments to inform and effectively plan fluid teaching and learning experiences that reflect the pedagogical practices of our school philosophy

in order for all children to experience success.

Actions:

- Respond to data trends in Reading Comprehension
- Respond to data trends in Spelling ~ explore CoSTEY spelling
- Embed Lisa Burman's approaches to writing across the school
- Review the implementation of assessment schedules developed 2022
- Ensure staff are using required / recognised and approved documentation & resources for planning and assessment
- Continue to unpack and review our learning philosophy
- Implement Peer to Peer support and observations
- Professional development on inquiry learning for educators
- Continue to Analyze and Critique children's data

Further develop our Response to Intervention (RTI) programs

Achievements 2022

As principal, I am extremely proud and delighted to see how focused our students had been attending to their work and class expectations throughout 2022. Our senior students (3-6) model positive behaviour and attitudes, which have had a significant flow-on effect across the school. Our 'preppies' have taken to school like ducks to water and our one / two's are enjoying being together in their new class spaces.

We began the year with a successful staff planning day on February 28th. Staff participated in personal goal setting to outline hopes and dreams for the year ahead. Our hopes and dreams were aligned with current strategic directions and philosophical statements.

The feedback from staff & parents for Maths Assessment Interviews being held over two closure days in March was overwhelmingly positive. MAI is an evidenced-based summative assessment strategy used by schools to gain a comprehensive overview of student competencies in mathematics. It gives teachers precise data on where student knowledge is at and where to go regarding future learning. Each interview takes approximately 20-30mins and by holding these over two days allows the time teachers need to complete each interview without cutting into class time.

Research has been telling us for a while now that successful and happy students at school are successful and happy because of positive working relationships between staff, students and families being formed. This is something we will continue to build on and encourage all families to be part of.

Camps and excursions were the main focus for student achievement in 2022. Our year 3/4s attend an outdoor adventure camp at Camp Currumbene Corop and our 5/6s enjoyed a 2-night camp at Angahook in Aireys Inlet. These camps provided great learning experiences and were a welcome relief to the ban on camps over the past 3 years.

Whilst there have been negatives this year there have been many positives which we, as a school, have learned from and adapted to suit our needs. The past 12 months at St Mel's has seen much more than just surviving COVID and floods. Our children have been given many opportunities to explore the world about them. The teaching staff has worked hard to improve practices, adapting to changes to give our children the best strategies to learn and apply their thinking.

School Philosophy ~ Who we are and what we do at St Mel's.

At St Mel's we acknowledge that the child is a capable person and is able to make meaning of the world around them. A Community of Inquiry is one that is committed to engaging in all learning opportunities through an inquiry approach. The language and phases of inquiry associated with this approach are paramount to its success. Learners are immersed in and experience the process of Tuning In, Finding Out, Sorting Out, and Taking action. As part of this process, learners are required to engage with each other as researchers, thinkers, collaborators, communicators, and self-managers. These are referred to as learning assets. Further to these assets we wish to nurture certain dispositions such as being curious, courageous, open-minded, flexible, persistent, resilient, responsible, reflective, empathetic, compassionate, reliable, confident, responsive, respectful, and resourceful. These assets and dispositions are not learned overnight, but they are nurtured through the learning opportunities that are masterfully facilitated by expert educators who listen attentively to student's voice, in other words, your son or daughters' teachers.

As Kath Murdoch, a leading educational consultant of whom we base much of our learning and teaching says, 'Teachers who use inquiry-based methodologies have a firm belief in the transformative power of ownership. When students feel they are the ones 'doing the learning rather than the teacher 'doing the learning to them' they are undoubtedly more engaged, and with engagement comes increased potential for learning' (Murdoch, 2015).

This approach is far from an afternoon of integrated learning. A community of Inquiry is totally committed to engaging in an inquiry approach in all learning. Such an approach captures much of the educational literature that promotes lifelong learning and what are called 21st-century competencies such as being adaptable and flexible to new information, being creative, and being able to solve and consider real-world problems. Through these competencies, we hope all students graduating from St Mel's are equipped with the skills, attitudes, and social attributes necessary to have a successful and rewarding life.

Last year we transitioned to Naplan online with the majority of year 3 and year 5 students completing the national assessment.

The International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) independent skills-based assessments with a competition element were offered to students that wish to complete these. The assessments comprise Digital Technologies, English, Maths, Science, Spelling tests and Writing, commencing at Year Two. We had a number of students who competed in the ICAS competitions and saw great results.

Wellbeing

Focus 1: Mental Health & Pastoral wellbeing

Empower families, educators and children to engage in positive practices that foster the social and emotional wellbeing of our education community.

Actions:

- Embedding PBIS & BST practices and structures using a whole school approach
- Professional development of PBIS theory and practices for staff

- Rebuild connection with families through SiMON, PAM, school newsletter, expo days, social events.
- Continue to promote and embed Child Safe Practices
- Engage the support and services of CES Ltd wellbeing consultant Steve Hicks
- Engage in the MHIPS project

Achievements 2022

Pastoral Wellbeing is a very complex and difficult job, demanding much time and school resources. It is though one of the most important areas of school life to get right. The complexities some families face day to day compound the need to ensure all children are kept safe, loved and supported at school. Thankfully we have a very dedicated and experienced team of teachers who lead this important area at school.

Mr Chris Quinn continued in his role as Senior Leader: Pastoral Well-being / Special Needs. Chris leads our pastoral well-being team, which comprises Mrs Elisabeth Rodriguez who continues in the role of Pastoral Well-being and school chaplain.

Mrs Cherie Malanati continued as our Learning Diversity coordinator and curriculum support person. Cherie has a background as a speech pathologist and has worked extensively with children with high needs and traumatic backgrounds.

St Mel's follows a School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) Framework which provides a broad range of systemic and individual strategies for achieving social and learning outcomes whilst addressing behaviours of concern.

Our Behaviour Support Team (BST) continued to follow the work we completed with Dan Petro. Throughout 2022 we strategically worked with Steve Hicks to ensure our systems, structures and strategies that support the implementation of our three school expectations: Respect everyone and everything; Be your best and Help others succeed. The importance of the framework was highlighted for the team as we recognised the variance in perspective that each individual can bring to a situation. Implementing such a framework builds opportunities for consistency and clarity for students and teachers when addressing behaviours of concern.

A tragic downside to the pandemic and floods has been the economic disaster, especially for those who have lost their jobs or belongings. Our thoughts and prayers were with all in our community who were doing it tough financially throughout the year. I'd like to thank our school Well-being Team; Lis Rodrigues and Chris Quinn for the incredible work they do to ensure our families continue to be supported. We continue to monitor and support many families in our community.

Wellbeing and Engagement 2022

- ~ Implementation of our PBIS / BST team to ensure our supports and systems are in place
- ~ Continue to liaise and work with Steve Hicks & BST team
- ~ Student Leadership Teams
- ~ School Camps Excursions to Angahook, Werribee Zoo, Discovery Centre Bendigo and Corop.

Student Satisfaction

In 2022 St Mel's participated in formal and some informal feedback from students. This included an internal survey midway through the year to ascertain student satisfaction, and how we could as a school, better improve engagement, student well-being, and learning opportunities.

The information gained was invaluable in terms of how we could improve learning for our students and what learning approaches are most effective. Parent feedback was also essential to determine which families need extra support; emotionally, academically and, at times, financially. Like many schools, St Mel's is still recovering from the pandemic, which still causes stress and anxiety for some in our community.

Examples of student survey questions and responses are below:

1. What do you enjoy most from your learning at school?

"I like learning different things at school, especially maths and science".

2. What would help you more with your learning?

"Spending more time with my friends when working on problems".

Our teachers worked tirelessly to ensure all students have many engaging opportunities to continue to learn and thrive at St Mel's.

During periods of remote learning, student attendance was recorded through the learning platform Google Classroom and daily phone calls or video conferencing ensured students were best engaged in their learning.

On-site learning was provided for essential workers and students deemed most vulnerable. Parents used Google forms to sign up.

On average, we provided on-site learning for approximately 20-30 students across the school.

Whilst on-site our usual practice of recording student attendance remained the same and is explained below.

Student attendance rate	Percent ¹
All students	87%
Indigenous students	-
Non-Indigenous students	-

Student attendance level (proportion of students attending 90% or more of the time) ²	Percent ¹
All students	45%
Indigenous students	-
Non-Indigenous students	-

- Please note that unexplained attendances are followed up by a telephone call to parents to seek why the absences are occurring and how we can support the family in ensuring a quick return to school.
- Student Absences are recorded on semester reports.
- Extended unexplained absences have been reported to DHS, following the 'every day counts' policy, with letters being sent home to parents.

Child Safety Standards

St Mel's School promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all students.

All students enrolled at St Mel's, and any child visiting, have a right to feel safe and be safe.

The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse.

We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety.

Achievements

The new Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order 1359 begin on 1 July 2022. In preparing to meet the new standards, we had a focus on our existing child safety strategies, policies and practices to help strengthen their culture of child safety and protect children from abuse. We have many good processes in place but like all institutions, we must always stay vigilant.

Commitment to staff training to minimize risk and recognition of child abuse is held once a term at the first full staff PLC. All staff annually complete online Mandatory reporting modules and forward completion certificates to the school principal. At the staff and School Council level, we worked through a series of briefings from CES and shared a presentation to our school council in August.

All staff have read and signed the Code of Conduct as a part of our ongoing updates, along with policy familiarisation and the completion of e-modules for mandatory reporting, disability discrimination, anaphylaxis, and asthma.

All volunteers complete volunteer agreement forms and a volunteers register is maintained along with working with children's check (WWCC). Volunteers are inducted and sign and sight Childsafe policies and code of conduct.

Students regularly participate in lessons to empower and respond to any issues concerning their safety and well-being. This directly links to Standard 7 Empowering Students.

A dedicated Child Safe team has been formed with regular meetings being held to discuss and / or address Child safe practices. Chris Summers, Chris Quinn, Cherie Malnati, and Liz Rodriguez are part of this team.

Staff formally participate in PD run by CES Ltd, Steve Hicks and Francis Brown.

Our school website and weekly newsletters outline our commitment to Child Safety.

The annual school calendar and information booklet include St Mel's commitment to Child Safe practices.

Leadership

To ensure that we maintain our current practice and philosophy when developing and planning future teaching and learning programs, in light of a change of leadership.

To be inspirational leaders who develop genuine relationships across the community and provide authentic leadership opportunities in order for all to reach their full potential.

Achievements

Mrs Danae Napier continued in her role as Catholic Identity Leader. Danae has a wealth of knowledge regarding Catholic Identity and implementing sound teaching and learning strategies.

Mr Chris Quinn continued in his role as Senior Leader: Pastoral Well-being / Special Needs. Chris leads our pastoral well-being team, which comprises of Mrs Elisabeth Rodriguez who continues in the role of Pastoral Well-being and school chaplain.

Mrs Cherie Malanati continued in her role as Learning Diversity coordinator and curriculum support person. Cherie has a background as a speech pathologist and has worked extensively with children with high needs and traumatic backgrounds.

Mrs Laura Emmanuelli continued in her role as Curriculum Leader and 1/2 classroom teacher. Laura continues to strive for best practices and learning improvement.

In 2022 our leadership team committed to regular meeting schedules to ensure all areas of school life were being attended to and all members were on the same page. These meetings were an essential component to our promise of delivering supportive management and leadership across the school. Good things were achieved, and good foundations were laid to help guide our future directions.

All year six students are given opportunities to build upon their own leadership capabilities with students being rostered on for canteen duty, leading school tours and helping in the kindergarten to name a few.

The school environment, both classrooms, and playground reflects the school leadership's care for and commitment to providing an engaging and attractive place for students. Our philosophy of learning has influenced both the utilisation of the current learning spaces and the design of the new learning spaces. Financial resources have been used purposefully to enhance the school's learning, physical activity, social cohesiveness and spirituality.

The needs and care of students and their families are paramount within the school community, evidenced by the many programs, structures, and processes to support the more vulnerable including students with additional needs. St Mel's has established strong relationships with allied and medical health specialists to support relevant students.

All staff had their goal-setting meeting with the principal at the beginning of the year and Annual Review Meeting (ARM) in terms three and four to finalise staff intentions or class placements for 2023. The ARM is an opportunity to reflect on work practices and set goals for ongoing professional learning and growth.

Staff Professional Learning 2022

~ Lisa Burman PD Writing (online PD provided for staff)

- ~ BST & PBIS PD and support from Steve Hicks CES Ltd.
- ~ Child Safety ~ Implementing the 11 standards.
- ~ Right and Respectful Relationships PD
- ~ Individual Learning Plans (ILP's)
- ~ NCCD training
- ~ Students with Disabilities PD
- ~ First Aid Training

Teacher professional learning

Staff Professional Learning 2022

- ~ Lisa Burman PD Writing (online PD provided for staff)
- ~ BST & PBIS PD and support from Steve Hicks CES Ltd.
- ~ New Child Safety Standards
- ~ Right and Respectful Relationships PD
- ~ Individual Learning Plans (ILP's)
- ~ NCCD training
- ~ Students with Disabilities PD
- ~ First Aid Training
- ~ ABLES training
- ~ Mandatory reporting
- ~ Critical incidents training for leadership members
- ~ SOLAR and Science of learning training for area leaders.

Teacher Satisfaction

In 2022 St Mel's participated in formal and informal feedback for staff. These included internal surveys to ascertain staff satisfaction, especially in terms of remote learning, staff workloads, and how we can as a school, better improve student engagement. The information gained was invaluable in terms of how we could improve online learning for students and what online learning platforms were being most effective. We were also able to put our finger on the pulse of how staff were feeling throughout periods of online learning and to see what we needed to do as a staff to improve staff well-being and morale. Like many schools, St Mel's was hit hard by the pandemic, and flood events and we experienced times of difficulty, causing stress and anxiety for staff.

Examples of survey questions and responses are below:

1. Can you please describe ways you have felt supported throughout the year.

"In general terms communication has been very good, I have felt supported by members of leadership and work colleagues".

Many formal structures exist, such as Annual Review Meetings (ARMs) which aim to support teacher's personal and professional growth. At St Mel's, the staff strongly believes that their professional growth is both encouraged and promoted. As we plan for future development we need to be aware of staff workloads and the importance of communication and role clarity.

Community Engagement

To embrace and rejoice with families in partnerships with the parish and community to engage in lifelong learning

To create and nurture within each person a deep respect and appreciation of all the resources made available to us by God our creator - now and for future generations.

Achievements 2022

I'd like to take the opportunity, to express my thanks and gratitude to all in our community on the response to the demands 2022 put on families, especially those juggling work commitments or facing financial hardship. Your ability to adapt and take on the challenge of remote learning was simply amazing, and you all survived! And have, I believe, gained a new appreciation of what teachers do!

During the past 12 months, our children have been given many opportunities to explore the world around them. The teaching staff has worked hard to improve practices, adapting to changes to give our children the best strategies to learn and apply their thinking, and as parents you should be very proud of your children's efforts. We certainly are.

Thank you to our school advisory council. We have an incredible team of members who work diligently in governance and leading strategically in the direction of our school. Thank you, especially to Melissa Hamilton for being our school council chair and for being a great support.

Thank you to our staff who give selflessly of their time and always go above and beyond. We are very lucky to have such a hard-working staff, and I am forever grateful for their commitment and generosity.

Thank you especially to our executive leadership team: Jane, Quinny, Danae and Cherie. You have given much of yourselves, taken on the pandemic and have come out the other side still smiling and working hard to help make St Mel's the best school it can be. You're a wonderful team to work with, and I look forward to next year with enthusiasm for what we can do and achieve.

Parent Satisfaction

In 2022 St Mel's participated in some formal and informal feedback from parents. This included an internal survey midway through the year to ascertain parent satisfaction, and how we could as a school, better improve student engagement, student well-being, and learning opportunities. Parents were concerned for their children's learning and needed opportunities to express their concerns and share with staff what was working or not working for them regarding their learning.

The information gained was invaluable in terms of how we could improve learning for students and what learning approaches were most effective. Parent feedback was essential to determine which families needed support; emotionally, academically and at times, financially. Like many schools, St Mel's was hit hard by the pandemic, and floods, causing stress and anxiety for our parent community.

Examples of survey questions and responses are below:

1. Can you please describe ways you have felt supported through times of school closures (pandemic and floods)?

"The school has been very helpful and supportive, and we thank the staff for the constant updates and phone calls".

"The well-being team at St Mel's has been amazing. Lis and Mel have helped our family throughout our greatest time of need".

As a school, we were very satisfied with our efforts in supporting many families during the pandemic and floods. Our well-being team worked tirelessly to ensure all families had the support they needed and went above and beyond their usual duty of care. Generally speaking, feedback from our school council and parent community was overwhelmingly positive, and whenever a concern was raised, processes were put into place to mitigate further hardship or anxieties parents and families had. I was very proud of the way our staff team handled the extra demands put upon them.

Future Directions

St Mel's 2023 Annual Action Plan

St Mel's is a proud Catholic Education Community striving, learning and achieving together, through Christ, our light.

** Priorities: Establish new Strategic Directions and Master plan commencing 2024

** 4 areas of focus 2023: Mental Health & Pastoral Wellbeing, Teaching and Learning ~ writing, Catholic Identity ~ TAP and EAL & CALD Education

Focus 1: Mental Health & Pastoral wellbeing

Empower families, educators and children to engage in positive practices that foster the social and emotional wellbeing of our education community.

Actions:

- Embedding PBIS & BST practices and structures using a whole school approach
- Professional development of PBIS theory and practices for staff
- Rebuild connections with families through SiMON, PAM, school newsletter, expo days, social events.
- Continue to promote and embed Child Safe Practices
- Engage the support and services of CES Ltd well-being consultant Steve Hicks
- Engage in the MHiPS project

Focus 2: Learning and Teaching

To use evidence based assessments to inform and effectively plan fluid teaching and learning experiences that reflect the pedagogical practices of our school philosophy

in order for all children to experience success.

Actions:

- Respond to data trends in Reading Comprehension
- Respond to data trends in Spelling ~ explore CoSTEY spelling
- Embed Lisa Burman's approaches to writing across the school
- Review the implementation of assessment schedules developed 2022
- Ensure staff are using required / recognised and approved documentation & resources for planning and assessment
- Continue to unpack and review our learning philosophy
- Implement Peer to Peer support and observations
- Professional development on inquiry learning for educators
- Continue to Analyze and Critique children's data

Further develop our Response to Intervention (RTI) programs

Focus 3: Catholic Identity and teacher accreditation

To reconnect as a Faith community and deepen our Catholic traditions, identity and teachings. To provide appropriate staff PD aligned to accreditation priorities.

Actions:

- Focus on accreditation and recording this on TAP (3-5hrs per term)
- Work closely with CES staff (Kevin Lawlor/Kylie Smith)
- Incorporate Aboriginal perspectives more deeply in our daily school life and teaching and learning experiences
- Engage with CES Indigenous Perspectives team ~Michael Chisholm, Troy Firebrace and Louise Levy to provide culturally rich experiences for staff and students (staff retreat to Lake Mokoan Term 3)
- Professional development for educators, focusing on catholic traditions and teachings such as scripture.
- Spirituality experiences for the whole education community