



Catholic  
Education  
Sandhurst Ltd

# 2023

## Annual Report to the School Community



### Our Lady's School

White Street, WANGARATTA 3677

Principal: Cassie Lynch

Web: [www3.olwangaratta.catholic.edu.au](http://www3.olwangaratta.catholic.edu.au)

Registration: 1591, E Number: E3040

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## Principal's Attestation

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I, Cassie Lynch, attest that Our Lady'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 13 Mar 2024

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## About this report

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Our Lady'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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The 2023 Catholic Education Week theme “Let the Words You Speak Always Be Full of Grace” reminds us of Pope Francis’s call to be a synodal Church in which our understanding of others and respect for diversity is shaped by respectful dialogue borne from deep listening.

Catholic Education Sandhurst continues to be committed to providing contemporary and innovative learning environments that value diversity and promote care, respect and co-operation. In 2023 we launched the CES Ltd Strategic Plan 2023-2027 which sets out directions and priorities that will guide the way in which our Catholic schools pursue excellence in fostering the development of each person in all the dimensions of human existence: intellectual, spiritual, emotional, bodily, relational, environmental and cultural.

Schools have begun the process of developing School Improvement Plans aligning their local strategic planning to the CES Strategic Plan, under the direction of Principal Consultants and in response to schoolbased review findings.

Our governance structure continues to mature, with both CES Ltd and SCECEC Ltd committed to ensuring the highest quality student outcomes in a safe and nurturing environment.

Our learning data has identified pockets of excellence in school communities across the diocese but also highlighted greater scope for improvement in the future. The development of the CES Ltd Catholic Learning and Teaching Framework will promote greater collaboration and focus on student learning growth.

The nation-wide shortage of teachers continues to impact all schools demanding new and innovative ways to attract and retain high quality and committed Catholic educators. Strategic initiatives will prioritize workforce placements that are sustainable and ongoing with particular attention given to our remote and smaller communities.

CES Ltd has a small number of schools with low enrolments and personnel and the Catholic Education Office works closely with leadership in these schools to ensure continued viability. An incentive scheme to attract and retain educators has been initiated and the CES Ltd Board has taken a robust interest in the way small schools are promoted through the CES Ltd Marketing Strategy.

I am extremely grateful for the commitment and professionalism that is clearly identified by the efforts throughout 2023 of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd - our schools and personnel in the Catholic Education Office. They continue to work tirelessly for the students and families in our schools, true bearers of the Mission to which they have been called.

PAUL DESMOND

Executive Director, Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited

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## Vision and Mission

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### **Identity Statement**

'Embracing a compassionate and dynamic community, through strong gospel values, quality education and promoting respect for all.'

'Our Lady's is a faith community built on the Brigidine traditions to provide quality education and respect for all.'

### **Vision Statement**

We firmly believe that Our Lady's is a school in which:

The values of Jesus Christ touch the personal life of the child, where he/she is able to experience people who manifest qualities of love, forgiveness, patience, compassion, tolerance and justice.

A strong foundation of faith is honoured; reflecting the teachings of the Gospels and the Brigidine charism.

A strong Catholic community is fostered where respect for ourselves, others, environment, heritage and Church is created and nurtured.

Each individual is given the opportunity to develop to their full potential through quality teaching and learning experiences with consideration of differences between individual needs and aspirations.

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## School Overview

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Our Lady's Primary School was established in 1958 to serve the families of the newly formed Parish Of our Lady Mother of God in Wangaratta South. The formative years of the school were successfully guided by the caring hand of the Brigidine Sisters. It was a time of great growth in this part of Wangaratta and the enrolments at the school grew to well over 200 students. In the 1980's the numbers slowly declined and at one point in the mid 1990s enrolments fell into the 60's. In recent years enrolments have grown to and maintained around 100 students.

The area around Our Lady's has been identified as a low socio-economic area and many of the children present with challenges in some areas of wellbeing and learning. At Our Lady's, we use trauma informed practice to support our students. Trauma informed practice supports all students with self regulation strategies. Support programs are in place to deal with developing oral language, social skills, addressing positive behaviours, speech therapy, occupational therapy, development in reading and gathering supportive information about the growth in student learning.

In 2015 a major refurbishing of the school was undertaken with all learning areas being redeveloped. In 2021, a refurbishment completed the upgrade to the school office area and school entrance. Our Lady's is a beautiful school where children feel proud and embrace individuality.

Our Lady's currently operates out of six learning areas; Foundation, two Grade 1/2 classes, one Grade 3/4 and one Grade 5/6. We are mindful of our learning areas and work hard to provide an environment where children thrive, meeting their individual goals & outcomes.

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## Principal's Report

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The school year in 2022 was a year full of change, exploration and learning for the community of Our Lady's Primary School. This was the first year where COVID-19's impact on our world lessened and allowed us to return to some sense of normal in our school days. This meant the return of many celebrations as a community.

At Our Lady's this year, our aim was to realign ourselves with learning priorities, giving our students the best possible outcomes for success and learning growth. In the area of learning and teaching, this meant a change in practice. For our junior school, we commenced training in Sounds Write, a systematic phonics program aimed to ensure students achieve. Throughout the year we were able to train all our junior school teachers in this area so we were delivering high quality teaching to our students. We also invested significant time in researching and trialling new techniques to assess students, tracking data in various ways. With the support of Catholic Education Sandhurst, staff also embarked on a learning journey in the area of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria. This helped develop staff confidence in the area of learning and teaching throughout the school.

In 2022 we saw Brigid Malcolm step into the role of Catholic Identity Leader and also welcomed Monsignor Chris to the Wangaratta Parish, breathing new life into this important element of our school. We were able to commence celebrating Mass with our Parishioners on a regular basis again. Together as a Parish and School, we came together to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady's on a weekend, having a number of students attend to form a choir. We also had students completing art work to decorate the Church with for this important occasion. We were fortunate enough to be supported beautifully by our Parish in order to prepare students for Sacramental events. This involved Christine McMahon working with the school to prepare students and families for this event, alongside Brigid Malcolm. Parents also joined in on the spiritual journey for their children.

Learner Diversity is an area of our school that continues to grow not only in number but strength. We have a community of diverse learners who are able to advocate for their own needs and the needs of others in our community. In 2022, we embarked on a mission to be as inclusive as possible, commencing a change in languages taught from Italian to Auslan. We did this to ensure inclusion in our community to support a new enrolment in our school. Learning Auslan gave everyone a different perspective of the deaf community and allowed us to learn together. This required a change in practice in all elements of school life, from staff meetings to assembly. Children have embraced this change whole heartedly.

We have had a wonderful year of challenge and growth at Our Lady's and look to the future with enthusiasm and energy.



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## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

In 2023, Our Lady's set the following goal in the area of Catholic Identity & Mission;

Support our new Catholic Identity Leader to feel comfortable and confident with this new role in our school.

Our Lady's will do this through;

- Seeking authentic feedback from staff about current processes.
- Seeking assistance and guidance from Catholic Education Sandhurst.
- Development of a role description for this position.
- Exploring current practices and establishing new relationships with the school & parish.

### Achievements

In 2023, we were able to;

- Establish a working relationship between our Catholic Identity Leader and new Parish Priest
- Connect and support the Parish with initiatives such as Our Lady's Feast Day & Sacramental Masses
- Re-establish regular attendance of classes to Parish Masses during the week.
- Continue to guide professional learning and accreditation requirements for the whole school, scaffolding this with support from the RE team at CES Ltd.

### Value Added

In 2023, we were able to continue to;

- Support various Social Justice causes, using our Grade 6 leadership group to help facilitate fundraising events such as Project Compassion.

- Celebrate whole school masses such as the Beginning of the Year, Graduation and other significant events in the Church calendar.

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## Learning and Teaching

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

In 2023, Our Lady's set the following goal in the area of Learning & Teaching;

To develop strong assessment, planning and teaching practices across the school.

Our Lady's will do this through;

- Reviewing the current approaches to assessment and the links this has to planning for learning.
- Reflecting on the current selection, sharing and bench marking of assessment data.
- Exploring practices that will enhance current use of assessment data including the establishment of data teams.
- Continuing to work with CES Limited staff to explore learning intentions, success criteria and unpack curriculum in the area of reading. To train our junior school in SoundsWrite following exploration of data in the junior school.

### Achievements

In 2023, we were able to;

- Train our junior school members in SoundsWrite, running the program from Foundation - Grade 2.
- Begin to review our assessment schedule and explore various alternatives to assessment that enhanced data collection with a focus on the F-2 area.
- Explore systems to support us in the use of collating and collecting data.
- Review how data is used to support our Individual Learning Plans.
- Engage the services of Andrea O'Connor (CES Leader of Pedagogy) to lead us through multiple teacher sprints with a focus on improving teacher efficacy.

### Student Learning Outcomes

According to our NAPLAN data, reading was the strongest scoring area for our school with above 60% of our students in both Grade 3 & Grade 5 meeting the proficient standards.

In the area of Writing, 50% of students in both Grade 3 & Grade 5 are meeting the proficient standards.

Our Lady's is responding to this data by exploring teaching practice across the whole school and exploring evidence based teaching and learning practices.

<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	325	46%
	Year 5	434	47%
Numeracy	Year 3	388	54%
	Year 5	437	40%
Reading	Year 3	376	62%
	Year 5	474	73%
Spelling	Year 3	350	31%
	Year 5	436	47%
Writing	Year 3	374	55%
	Year 5	436	53%

\*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

In 2023, Our Lady's set the following goal in the area of Student Wellbeing;

- To enhance the school positive behaviour culture to support student wellbeing.

Our Lady's planned to do this through;

- Establishing structure within the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework to ensure all staff are consistent with reward and consequence.
- Establishing and explicitly teach the concept of Major, Minor offences and establishing Classroom/Yard Behaviour Matrix.
- Establishing the teaching of the Rights, Resilience & Respectful Relationship program F-2 partnered with explicit teaching of Child Safe practices.

### Achievements

In 2023, we were able to;

- Commence discussions around the efficacy of the SWPBS framework
- Begin to establish a base for consistency with staff around behaviour and expectations
- Establish classroom and yard behaviour matrix' with the assistance of our student voice
- Implement from F-6 the teaching of Rights, Resilience & Respectful Relationships
- Promote child self advocacy in the area of Child Safe
- Clearly communicate and train staff in the area of Child Safe

### Value Added

In 2023, we were able to continue to;

- Support our diverse student community to see themselves as successful learners.
- Promote student advocacy for individual learning needs.
- Encourage our inclusive practices from F-6.

## Student Satisfaction

According to our school survey data provided through ORIMA, the student data indicated the following strengths for our school;

- a strong sense of belonging
- a sense that students believe staff are here to support them to feel safe, connected and respected

## Student Attendance

Attendance data is collected twice daily via an electronic platform SIMON. Parents can notify the school of their child's absence via the phone, email or in a written note. These absences are recorded on the electronic roll by the admin officer or class teacher. Parents are required to provide reasons to account for a child's absence from school.

All unexplained absences are followed up by our administration team in a timely manner on the day of the absence. If contact cannot be made with the primary carer of the child, emergency contacts are called to ensure the safety and well being of our students.

Data is regularly reviewed by the Principal to explore data trends and low attendance data. In the case of unsatisfactory attendance, a meeting will take place between the Principal & parents/guardians.

Strategies are discussed and implemented with parents/guardians to ensure school attendance. For children on personalised learning plans, attendance goals are created, discussed and signed off with all parties. Any further action including seeking support the CES will be decided upon after consultation with the Principal.

<b>Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level</b>	
Y01	91.0%
Y02	89.5%
Y03	86.3%
Y04	90.2%
Y05	86.8%
Y06	86.4%
Overall average attendance	88.3%

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## Leadership

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

In 2023, Our Lady's set the following goal in the area of Leadership;

- Continue to review processes throughout the school to ensure compliance in a range of areas including Student wellbeing, Duty of Care, Child Safety, Learner Diversity, Teaching & Learning, Leadership & Management.
- Prepare for the VRQA School Compliance Check

Our Lady's planned to do this through;

- Professional learning at a leadership team level as well as whole staff level to ensure all stakeholders were understanding the same message.
- Professional learning at the school board level to ensure stakeholders were aware of the processes within our school.
- Specific training provided in the area of Child Safety, ensuring child safety officers within the school had adequate support & training.
- School wide training for teaching staff in the area of reporting obligations, restraint & seclusion, OHS, duty of care.

### Achievements

In 2023, we were able to;

- Continue to develop knowledge in the area of school wide child safe practices including naming & identifying Child Safe Officers, providing advocacy for student voice, increasing protective conversations and empowering staff to raise concerns.
- Commence professional learning with all staff members and stakeholders in the area of child safe.
- Review and revise policies and procedures for volunteers in our organisation, ensuring our practice reflected best practice.
- Successfully ensure we were compliant in all areas of the VRQA audit.



<b>Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning</b>	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<p>In 2023, staff participated in the following professional learning opportunities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Learning Support Officers were supported by the Australian Teacher Aide Professional Learning Platform.</li> <li>• Professional learning in the development and review of Personalised Learning &amp; Student Adjustment Plans.</li> <li>• Teacher improvement sprints facilitated by Andrea O'Connor (CES Ltd) in the area of teacher questioning and learning intentions.</li> <li>• Catholic Schools Wangaratta Professional Development in Indigenous Perspective &amp; Religious Education.</li> <li>• SoundsWrite Training for 4 junior staff members.</li> <li>• Policy connect launch across the school.</li> <li>• Whole school planning days.</li> <li>• Auslan training (supporting a staff member to obtain the Diploma of Auslan)</li> <li>• CES Ltd provided training for Principal Briefings, Principal Network, Senior Leader Network, Learner Diversity and Catholic Identity Leader Days.</li> <li>• First Aide Training.</li> </ul>	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	14
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$380.00

### Teacher Satisfaction

According to our school survey data provided through ORIMA, the staff data indicated the following strengths for our school;

- An overall positive opinion on the overall social and learning climate of the school.
- Teachers feel they work positively together to improve teaching and learning.
- Staff believe they have what it takes to improve teaching and learning conditions at the school.

<b>Teacher Qualifications</b>	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	0.0%
Graduate	20.0%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	40.0%
Advanced Diploma	20.0%
No Qualifications Listed	20.0%

<b>Staff Composition</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	14
Teaching Staff (FTE)	9.2
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	14
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	9.6
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

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## Community Engagement

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

In 2023, Our Lady's set the following goal in the area of Community Engagement;

- Continue to re-engage with our parent and parish community, re-establishing past routines and events within our school life.

Our Lady's planned to do this through;

- Planning events throughout the year to engage with our parent community.
- Connect with the Parish on a regular basis through Mass & Sacramental Preparation.

### Achievements

In 2023 we were able to celebrate the following events with our community;

- Beginning of Year Mass, End of Year Mass and Graduation Mass as a whole school community with strong attendance rates at each event.
- Shrove Tuesday Breakfast supported by our volunteer community.
- Easter Presentation.
- Easter Egg Raffle.
- Cross Country.
- Book Week Parade.
- House Colours Sports Day.
- Christmas Carols Afternoon.
- School assemblies throughout the year, open to our community.

### Parent Satisfaction

Unfortunately, we had a very low response rate to our ORIMA Parent Survey. From the results, we can see the following elements;

- Families surveyed indicate that they feel family engagement is low.

- Interestingly, families surveyed feel that the barriers for school engagement are low finding staff approachable, communication high, a sense of belonging for their child is high.

Our areas of strength include a positive school climate, effective communication and a safe school for children to be in.

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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 [www3.olwangeratta.catholic.edu.au](http://www3.olwangeratta.catholic.edu.au)