



# STELLA MARIS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL POINT COOK

REGISTERED SCHOOL NUMBER: 1391



## 2013 Annual Report

TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

## Contents

Contact Details .....	2
Minimum Standards Attestation.....	2
Our School Vision .....	3
School Overview .....	4
Principal's Report .....	5
Parish Priest's Report.....	7
School Education Board Report .....	8
Education in Faith .....	9
Learning & Teaching .....	11
Student Wellbeing .....	14
Leadership & Management.....	16
School Community .....	18
Financial Performance .....	20
Future Directions .....	21
VRQA Compliance Data .....	22

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## Minimum Standards Attestation

I, **Stephen Harrison**, attest that **Stella Maris Primary School Point Cook** is compliant with all of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2007 (Vic), except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA.

23 May 2014

## Our School Vision

Creating a learning community,  
nurturing and integrating faith and life,  
in a spirit of openness.

### **Our Mission**

Developing positive relationships in a connected community, where Gospel Values, an inquiring attitude, and personalising learning are nurtured as all aspire to experience success. We cultivate passion, spirit, creativity, innovation, stewardship and global mindedness, as we engage in learning together.

### **Our Gospel Values**

Respect, Integrity, Independence, Creativity, Commitment, Cooperation, Empathy, Enthusiasm

## School Overview

Stella Maris Catholic Primary School was established as the fourth school in the Parish of Laverton. As a Catholic School, we provide education in faith and encourage our families to work in partnership with our school and parish. In 2006, we enrolled 86 students into our new school. Only seven years later in 2012, we have a current enrolment of 418 students.

Multi-culturalism is an important aspect of our community and we are proud to share experiences and grow in understanding of the many different cultures that enrich our Stella Maris family. Included in our community of 300 families, are children who were born in 21 countries other than Australia: New Zealand, UK, France, Germany, Norway, Italy, Malta, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, China, Japan, India, Sri Lanka, Canada, Mexico and South Africa.

Stella Maris is contemporary in design and has been constructed with the purpose of facilitating pedagogy of personalised learning, aiming to meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. Traditional classrooms and corridors have been replaced with contemporary adaptive and responsive learning spaces to meet different needs at different times. Our learners are organised into four learning communities: Prep Community, Junior Community (1/2), Middle Community (3/4) and Senior Community (5/6). The sense of connection between our communities is very strong, with visual connectedness through the entire school.

Our school has been innovatively planned and built to provide an environment where today's educational requirements can be met:

- Learning areas are adaptive and responsive, open and flexible.
- Easy access to indoor and outdoor learning areas and resources.
- Wireless Technology allows for immediate access in any location.
- Space provided for Performing Arts and Visual Arts.
- Large community gathering spaces.
- Environmentally friendly.

The principles of effective teaching and learning that we promote are:

- Shared Vision between staff, children, parents and community.
- Learners are central in setting goals, reflecting, evaluating and self-managing their learning.
- Learning is life long with different learning styles, and unique talents and interests.
- Promote a range of learning pathways.
- Learning environments require adaptive and responsive spaces with access to tools and resources.
- A community of learning values and promotes connectedness.
- Learners need to utilise Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a key enabler.

At Stella Maris, we look towards being people who live with respect, integrity, cooperation, creativity, enthusiasm, independence, empathy, and commitment as we live out the Gospel values and continue to build a great community together.

## Principal's Report

During our review process in 2013 we established a story of where our community sees itself and where we believe it needs to go to improve learning.

We used a combination of Insight SRC data, Enhancing Catholic School Identity data (ECSI), NAPLAN, our own internal measurement tools including Observation Surveys, Fountas and Pinnell, ENRP interviews, as well as anecdotal gatherings via observation, discussion and reflection. Our data, relative to the targets set in 2009 for this School Improvement cycle was very disappointing considering the amount of hard work and effort that had been evidence in each years' Annual Action Plan. There was some heated discussion amongst staff around the clarity of intended outcomes and the suitability of the targets but in general there was a realisation that we need to be focused on more understanding of goals, intended outcomes and targets and collective intent in the next cycle.

There was evidence of significant changes occurring at the school during this four year phase of school improvement that affected the success of our hard work; an unexpected change of Principal, enrolments growing from 190 families and 263 students in 2009 to over 300 families and 508 students in 2012 and subsequently two building programs completed, including the 'BER' (Building the Education Revolution) funded project, and a third started.

In the Insight SRC data, the four pillars of "School Climate" indicate that 'Empathy' - supportive leadership and caring, have been a relative strength across this community throughout this 2009 to 2012 School Improvement cycle. 'Clarity' - having clear expectations about what is required and how that fits into a clear sense of purpose and "big picture" has been a consistent relative weakness across the same period. Leadership at all levels of the school is caring and supportive but needs to develop higher levels of clarity through conversation, delegation and feedback.

In the 'Engagement' indicators on the staff survey, teamwork, empowerment and ownership, there is a balance of scores. The staff is highly engaged in their work and have a strong sense of ownership in the school. They value a team approach. But, based on the four year trend in the two 'learning' indicators, there is a perception that "professional growth" is coming from outside the team. There is also a need to create more opportunity for "appraisal and recognition", both formal and informal feedback from within teams.

Somewhat challenging and clarifying to the staff, were indications in the 'Outcome' measures of the staff survey that a majority of them believe the children are great here; but the way we work with them is not consistent enough. The staff feel more aligned in the way we manage curriculum than how we manage the children. Quality teaching and higher expectations are essential in the future.

In the student surveys 'learning confidence' and 'connectedness to peers' were relative strengths but 'classroom behaviour' and 'student safety' were relative weaknesses. Our children feel connected to their peers and confident about learning when in their learning areas but not happy when other children misbehave or target them. We need to clarify purpose and expectations during learning time and engage the children more rigorously in the learning environments.

The parent surveys indicate relative strengths in 'teacher morale' and 'parent partnerships'. Our parents are supportive of Stella Maris, the open space learning, and the partnerships they have with the teachers.

The Catholic Culture component of Insight SRC and the Enhancing Catholic School Identity survey (ECSI) data affirms that our community strongly supports the Catholic identity of the school and

has an active prayer life. The Catholic Culture survey indicated a perception that 'Staff behaviour', exhibiting faith based values, is a relative strength across the community and that the importance placed on and the opportunity to participate in activities around 'Social Justice' is a relative weakness.

During this four-year cycle the ECSI became a more widespread instrument and our interpretations indicate that the further development of Post-Critical Belief should best facilitate a 'Recontextualised' and 'Dialogue' school that consequently upholds the school's Catholic identity and develops it further.

Late in this School Improvement cycle, it became evident that **leadership behaviours** needed to be developed across the community, to improve the **school climate**, which would drive the **wellbeing** of teachers, students and parents, to build highly engaging and successful **student learning**. In combination with research by sources such as Hattie (2009) and Cohen (1988), who have established that "the biggest impact we can make on student learning will be to develop expert teachers", we began behavioural change across the community. The new leadership team has begun to build a coaching culture focused on:

- Coaching as well as Administrating in each context.
- Developing Prep to Year 6 Common Understandings and expectations in each Learning and teaching context.
- Operating as part of a team and not compartmentalising.
- Learning area based actions, particularly planning and pedagogy.
- Keeping succession planning in mind.

The leadership team members reflected on what an 'ideal school profile' means to our community and created a synthesis of the thoughts gathered through meetings, discussions and feedback sessions involving staff, students and parents. At Stella Maris we believe an ideal school is where:

- Gospel Values drive actions.
- A high clarity of purpose and expectations exists across the community.
- The vision of high quality learning and teaching is consistent across the community.
- Learning is personalised.
- Positive relationships are developed across the community, leading to a safe, inclusive and stimulating environment.

From interpreting our data, discussions about our ideal school profile and the behaviours we want to see "more of" and "less of":

- To develop the school's Catholic identity – ensuring our Gospel Values are explicit, active, accountable and measurable.
- To personalise learning across the community– ensuring that a coaching model is used to establish learning intentions, success criteria, feedback when personalising learning.
- To improve engagement across the community – ensuring student learning is managed consistently, re-organised to reduce noise and engaging to learners
- To improve clarity across the community – ensuring outcome orientated and clear actions and behaviors are established.
- To build a safe, stimulating and engaging external environment - ensuring clear partnership links between parents, the students, the staff and broader community.

Overall, with the consistent developments and the focus on improvement at Stella Maris Primary School there is no doubt that an exciting, challenging and clarifying time for our school is in front of us.

## Parish Priest's Report

Unavailable at this point in time



## School Education Board Report

Completed as part of the Laverton Catholic Education Community Parish Board

## Education in Faith

### Goals

- To continue to develop the school's Catholic identity

### Intended Outcomes

- That there will be a wholistic approach, emanating from the school's Catholic identity, to the integration of the five spheres of the School Improvement Framework
- That the Education in Faith program will reflect scripture, sign & symbol, ritual and living

### Achievements

- Through coaching conversations and demonstrations we are building team and individual pedagogy through an Education in Faith focus at Professional Learning Team meetings, facilitated planning and learning conversation times.
- With support from the Religious Education coach, we are ensuring that teachers are involved in critical reflection on the Catholic Faith and tradition and its meaning for students in preparation for RE units.
- All staff, senior community students and a cross section of parents in review sessions focusing on Education in Faith

During the past four years, utilising the 'BER' funding, we built a multi-purpose hall and included a 'Sacred Space'. We have worked to establish our school as a centre for the faith community and as a place to gather in this part of the Parish. We are developing our 'Sacred Space' as a focal point for the new Catholic community growing in this area. Celebrations in our Sacred Space are strongly attended, ranging between 160 to 400 participants. There is now a parish Sunday Mass held once a month.

The school's Catholic identity is very visible in our environment. We provide and promote Catholic identity by offering many opportunities for staff, parents and students to engage in and grow through our Catholic faith. Our Catholic identity is visible in our behaviours as we bring our 'Gospel Values' alive.

While members of the leadership team were involved in professional learning and interpreting the Catholic identity project, the whole staff was not. The whole staff has a strong sense of the purpose and strength of our Gospel Values due to our whole school approach but we have not defined Catholic identity together. During the review process we have realised that we need to make the connection of these values to our Catholic identity, more explicitly and more often. Due to the fact that the Enhancing Catholic Identity material is still relatively new to Catholic Education in general, as well as Stella Maris; there is obviously work to be done as a whole staff and as a broader community, focusing in on what a Post-Critical, Recontextualised, Dialogue based school means to us at Stella Maris.

When we discussed the first intended outcome with the staff, "That there will be a wholistic approach, emanating from the school's Catholic identity, to the integration of the five spheres of the School Improvement Framework", there was a lack of clarity as to what it actually meant. We believe that regular revisiting and unpacking of the new targets and intended outcomes at leadership team level and as a whole staff in our next School Improvement cycle will be an essential practice to develop.

Success particular to a "wholistic approach" was:

- In 2013, all learning community teachers are involved in the facilitated planning of the RE curriculum.
- The Laverton Catholic Education Community (LCEC) consists of four Primary Schools within the Parish. There is a Religious Education Coordinator who oversees planning with staff in each school and who works collaboratively between schools and the priests to plan the Sacraments.
- Within the Laverton Parish there are two priests who alternately attend our Friday Mass celebrations and our Sacramental celebrations.
- There is consistency across the whole school as we all use the same planning document and reporting procedures.
- A senior community choir has been developed on the initiative of one of our parents. This choir leads prayer through song at whole school and community Masses.
- When we discussed the second intended outcome, "That the Education in Faith program will reflect scripture, sign & symbol, ritual and living", it was evident that the staff were very clear on what it meant and what it looked like at Stella Maris. Success particular to our Education in Faith program was:
- In 2013, coaching and team planning focussed on implementation of the program and completion of planning documents.
- The key understandings explicitly define the standards or 'tracking tool' and are referred to in our ongoing assessment and reporting.
- To Know Worship and Love curriculum guiding us in our teaching and learning in RE.

We believe we have developed our schools Catholic identity and are moving towards our targets. When we reflected upon the intended outcomes and targets we had to take responsibility that there was a lack of awareness about the intended outcomes and targets across the community and have committed to the necessary improvement over the coming four years. When reading our Annual Action Plans there is considerable evidence of successful effort and hard work across this sphere.

## VALUE ADDED

Evidence given by staff, students and parents, relating to our success in developing the school's Catholic identity include:

- Weekly Mass celebrations as a whole school and learning communities. Celebrations are combined with learning assemblies in which the students showcase their current learning.
- Teachers within learning communities taking on the responsibility for the planning of Masses that are well attended by families.
- Every day, the whole school in their home learning areas engage in 'morning prayer' and/or meditation at the same time. The impact of this group prayer is a very rich experience. We encourage student ownership of this prayer time.
- Our Sacramental celebrations include family workshop nights, bringing the families of the students together united in a common faith. The actual celebration of the Sacraments is valued and evident by the attendance of all staff to support the students and families.
- Learning communities not involved in the Sacraments offer 'Prayer nights' for their students and families. These are extremely well attended and inclusive of both Catholic and non-Catholic parents who participate in activities and reflect on our faith.
- Whole school celebrations for events such as Father's Day, Mother's Day, Grandparents Day, Feast day celebrations, Advent and Lent reflections always include some form of liturgy and are well supported by our parents and extended families.
- Allocating money to buy religious icons during the last four years, as we realised that we had limited reminders of our Catholicity to provide a means of identifying with the Catholic faith for both our students and the community, irrespective of their faith background.
- Buying or creating artistic images of our Catholicity that challenge stereotypical images, and celebrate the diversity in our community.
- Our school website raises awareness of upcoming religious celebrations and offers an invitation to all in an endeavour to be family inclusive.
- The school newsletter always begins with a prayer/reflection, attempting to connect our everyday lives to our Catholic identity.
- The staff are expected to begin the accreditation course within five years of their starting date. This expectation has seen staff take on this study.
- Early in this improvement cycle, we built a mural at the entrance to the school, which begins with a little girl who is reading a book about the history of the area. It concludes with a group of Stella Maris students, surrounded by God's creation, taking on the stewardship.

## Learning & Teaching

### Goals

- To personalise learning for students To improve student outcomes in Mathematics

### Intended Outcomes

- That teachers will meet the needs of students through a differentiated curriculum
- That data will be collated and used to inform teaching practice That students will be actively engaged and set high expectations for their learning

### Achievements

- Began developing an ongoing and rigorous assessment and reporting process
- Continued to improve the use of performance data to identify, support and monitor student achievement through coaching conversations, Demonstration lessons and observations
- Improved team and individual pedagogy through a Mathematics, English and Inquiry focus at Professional Learning Team meetings, facilitated planning and learning conversation times
- Actively engaged students in setting high expectations for their learning
- Include all staff, senior community students and a cross section of parents in review sessions focusing on Learning and Teaching

During 2013, there has been great emphasis on changing and improving school structures and processes in order to improve student outcomes. Positive progress has been seen in areas of school leadership, personalising learning, and assessment and planning for improving student outcomes.

In school leadership, successes have been:

- Creating opportunities for teachers to personalise learning by developing a timetable that aimed to give priority for whole teams to plan with CEOM coaches, team planning and individual student conferencing time.
- Building the leadership competence of the School Mathematics Leader.
- Building mathematical content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge of the staff by assisting in the lesson studies.
- The 2009/2012 Item Analysis Report comparison data indicates significant growth in our children's ability to answer questions correctly when compared to the state. This is a direct result of the intensive support provided by Maths Coaches in developing teacher Mathematical Content Knowledge and Mathematical Pedagogy.
- To sustain gains from our professional learning we employed an experienced Mathematics coach again in 2013. In our developing climate of coaching, the willingness of staff to be learners allowed the coach to provide rich ongoing mathematical content and pedagogical knowledge.
- In 2013, the professional learning for, Learning Coaches, is developing a coaching culture at Stella Maris. Learning Coaches facilitated team planning, which continued to develop professional learning and deepen understandings of both curriculum and pedagogy in order to improve teaching practice.
- The Open Plan environment allowed for staff to share learning both visually and in a connected accessible way, which helped to build a culture of learning.

In assessment and planning for improving student outcomes, successes have been:

- Our assessment schedule was refined to include more detailed timelines, specific assessment tools for both formative and diagnostic information and data analysis.
- The further development of an assessment schedule helped to identify and track student progress.
- Further development of consistent whole school tracking tools e.g. Google docs, allowed data to be accessible to all.
- We introduced coach facilitated Data Analysis team days in the areas of Mathematics and English. This helped to identify student needs, particularly those students at risk, and inform teaching practice.
- To assist in personalising learning for students, pre-assessment and ongoing assessment before planning allowed teachers to differentiate the curriculum, and plan for enabling and extending prompts.

In Personalising Learning, successes have been:

- Mathematics Number Intervention program to improve outcomes for students at risk.
- Three-Way Learning Conferences based around student goal setting were introduced. These replaced Parent-Teacher interviews with the purpose of actively engaging students in their learning.
- One hour of individual student conference time was provided within the staffing allocation. This assisted in holding students accountable to high expectations in learning, time for goal setting and for receiving feedback.
- Using open-ended Mathematical problems increased the engagement of our students and allowed for differentiation.
- During planning, Mathematical language was identified and explicitly taught, which enabled our students to engage in tasks and articulate their thinking.
- We began to identify and display Learning Intentions and Key Understandings. This enabled both teachers and students to remain focused on the learning outcomes.
- We developed consistent whole school planning documents, which has allowed for the recording of differentiated curriculum and opportunities to collect relevant data
- To increase our staff understanding of the need for differentiation, we continued to moderate student work samples. This has helped to inform teaching practice.

We employ two Reading Recovery teachers each year. In addition we run small intervention groups using Early Reading Intervention Knowledge (ERIK) measured by the Neale Analysis assessment tool. We identified “effect size” (Hattie 2009) growth in reading accuracy (approximately 1.75), reading comprehension (approximately 0.75) and reading rate (2010 only - approximately 0.85)

Providing team time and opportunities to build capacity of teachers was important this year.

Our staff continue to develop deep understanding of the Mathematical content and pedagogical knowledge to be able to offer more rigorous learning, build high expectations of learners and develop a consistent mathematical language. We continue to strive to provide purposeful and engaging activities that include enabling and extending prompts to scaffold and personalise learning.

Using data to inform our teaching has progressed significantly. We have made efforts to develop teacher understanding of assessment and use of data to inform practice. In English and Mathematics we have scheduled data analysis days at the beginning and mid year, at community levels and whole school staff meetings. This has provided opportunities for staff to recognise the need to analyse data and has supported us in designing curriculum and differentiating learning. Effective tracking of students from Prep to Year Six is being set up, supporting decision making when offering many ways of intervening and supporting low achievers. In addition, we have accelerated two students over the past eighteen months but the provision of support for high achievers remains a challenge.

A final success to mention is that the latest building stage is consistent with our overall physical layout and philosophy at Stella Maris. Achieving this goal in a climate of limited capital funding which has led to the allocation of relocatable classrooms in other schools was very satisfying. This is a highly successful aspect of the School Improvement Plan as it allows us to continue to develop expert teachers, and engage our children in a consistent manner from Foundation to Year six.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Some gains have been made towards achieving the goals and there has been positive growth.

Working towards personalising learning for students, with the intended outcome of differentiating curriculum to meet student needs, has been somewhat successful over the last four years. In 2009 and 2010, the NAPLAN Student Achievement Level Report shows that the number of students who moved at least one VELs level increased by 8% in Reading and 10% in Writing.

In comparison to State data of 2012, Stella Maris continued to achieve greater growth in the National Band Score Mean in Reading. However, Numeracy and Writing data show slightly less growth in National Band Score Mean than the State growth, as is evident in the 2012 Student Comparison Report.

Targets have been met for Year Three Reading. Writing data shows growth. When using the NAPLAN Item Analysis Reports and comparing our students' question responses to that of the rest of the state, there has been significant growth in both Years 3 and 5. With regards to Year 3, in 2009 across the four dimensions 50% of our students' responses were at or above the state. In 2012, this increased to 87%. Year 5 results in 2009 were only 38% of student responses being at or above the state. There was also considerable progress to 75% in 2012.

The target of a percentage of students being at expected VELs level in the personal learning domain has been met, as evidenced in Student Formal Written Reports to Parents – Report Summary. Data shows an achievement of 98% or 100% for Years Three to Six

We have evidenced from the Learning Confidence component of Insight SRC Student Survey that raising the level of ‘student learning confidence’ is improving with a positive trend shown, moving from 70% to 76%.

NAPLAN TESTS	2011	2012	2011-2012 changes	2013	2012-2013 changes
YEAR 3 READING	100 %	100 %	Maintained	100%	Maintained
YEAR 3 WRITING	100 %	100 %	Maintained	100%	Maintained
YEAR 3 SPELLING	100%	100 %	Maintained	98.6%	-1.4%
YEAR 3 GRAMMAR & PUNCTUATION	100%	100 %	Maintained	100%	Maintained
YEAR 3 NUMERACY	100%	100 %	Maintained	100%	Maintained

<b>YEAR 5 READING</b>	91.2%	100%	+8.8 %	98.1%	-1.9%
<b>YEAR 5 WRITING</b>	94.2%	97.8%	+3.6 %	100%	+2.2%
<b>YEAR 5 SPELLING</b>	97.1%	97.7%	+0.6 %	98.1%	+0.4%
<b>YEAR 5 GRAMMAR &amp; PUNCTUATION</b>	91.2%	90.9%	-0.3 %	98.1%	+7.2%
<b>YEAR 5 NUMERACY</b>	96.9%	95.6%	- 0.7%	98.1%	0.7%

## Student Wellbeing

### Goals

- To improve students' knowledge, skills and behaviours in interpersonal relationships

### Intended Outcomes

- That students' behaviours reflect the school's Gospel values
- That students can reflect on their own behaviour
- That students demonstrate appropriate personal and interpersonal skills

### Achievements

- Improved consistency of practices to foster positive relationships and enhance student wellbeing
- Improved practices and procedures in the implementation of Program Support Group (PSG's) and Individual Learning Plan (ILP's.)
- Provided professional learning with staff focusing on running PSG meetings, goal setting and writing PLP's Develop a learning environment in which safety and positive relationships are strengthened
- Actively engaged students in setting high expectations for their behavior Include all staff, senior community students and a cross section of parents in review sessions focusing on Student Wellbeing

We have had success in developing behaviours reflective of our Gospel Values and the appropriate personal and inter-personal skills. Many of our children can reflect successfully on their own behaviour and can demonstrate appropriate personal and interpersonal skills.

**Absence is managed in the following manner:** The attendance roll is taken at the beginning of the day and following lunch break in the afternoon. Parents are expected to notify the office via email or phone that their child is absent. When concerns about a child's absence are raised the learning area teacher, the principal or a delegated member of staff makes contact with the family. In the event of the absence being termed 'At Risk' then as part of the Stella Maris Student Wellbeing process, the Principal or Student Well-being coach support the teacher in meeting with the family. A behavior management plan is developed in consultation with the family, which may include goal setting, punitive action and/or counselling. The behavior management plan is then managed as part of program support group (PSG) meetings. In extreme cases support may be sort from Catholic Education Melbourne or Family First Services.

### VALUE ADDED

Successful actions have included the following:

- The Wellbeing leadership role has developed into a role focusing on the whole child - spiritual, academic, social-emotional and the physical. The role includes supporting teachers in completing documentation for the referral process in LNSLN funding, liaising with and coordinating with CEOM staff, chairing PSG meetings as the Principal's Representative, overseeing Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) and tracking 'At Risk' students.
- In 2013 Elisabeth Clifton from the CEOM Western region office led whole staff professional learning and coached teachers individually focusing on iSMART goals and Personalised Learning Plans.
- Essential Agreements were drawn up in each community reflecting the Gospel Values and promoting positive interpersonal relationships. Our Gospel Values are displayed around the school and promoted as a way of being and relating to each other. They set the standards of our expectations in living out our faith and developing relationships. They are referred to in restorative conversations by both staff and students.
- CAMHS and Schools: Early Action Program (CASEA) provided strategies for students to use to manage feelings and emotions. We used a rigorous selection process including teacher and parent input. The explicit teaching of CASEA strategies in small groups built self-esteem and positive behaviours.
- Staff members attended a two-day Restorative Practices professional development course. The intention was to bring back the language of 'Restorative Practices' to the school approach. Some staff use restorative practices in the form of restorative chats.
- Interest based lunch clubs (Bug Club, Knitting Club, Comic Club, basketball and soccer) provided opportunities for children to play and interact with other students sharing common interests. The establishment of a Gardening Club provided students with the opportunity to engage with the environment. This club will be broadened in the future. During 2013, the Inside Lunch Club has provided an empowering strategy and a structured safe environment for students lacking in confidence, interpersonal skills and strategies to cope in the playground. The Lanyard Club while being a preventative measure for staff aims to build interpersonal skills through participation in computer games, reading, drawing etc., alongside others; a supporting adult supervises this club.
- Initiatives by the Student Wellbeing team included curriculum-based opportunities catering for students operating above standard to attend the Gateways program and Brainwave programs and to participate in the Australian Mathematics Competition. Participation in the Premier's Reading Challenge encouraged all students to read for enjoyment and learning. A student group, supported and encouraged by staff, worked together to produce a movie that won our school turf for the playground.

- 'OnPsych' has successfully supported many children and families, especially those demonstrating inappropriate or immature personal and interpersonal behaviours. The onPsych psychologist delivered an information session to parents outlining the services that could be provided; this session was well attended. Further support offered to parents was the school's subscription to the Michael Grose Parenting Website, which was promoted in the school newsletter.
- Our students have been empowered by their participation in Three-Way Learning Conversations and Student Led Conferences and through the sharing of their learning after their community level Masses. In the past two years, our senior students have attended leadership conferences, sports leaders have been appointed and students are recognised upon graduation with community based awards acknowledging their personal strengths and qualities.
- The formation of a senior community Choir, led by a parent, with links to the parish has provided opportunities for students to lead prayer through song and music at our school Masses.
- Other events such as middle and senior community camps, interschool sports, ride to school day, cross country run, book week dress up days, pancake making on Shrove Tuesday, buddy activities and family group activities all provided opportunities for students to engage and develop personal and interpersonal skills.
- Our Prep transition programs have continued to develop to become a process of interviews, story-time, small and large group meetings, and Prep/Year 6 buddy time that prepares both students and parents for a positive transition to school. The process of gathering information from kindergartens and pre-school settings including kindergarten visits has provided valuable information to aid the transition to school. The transition to secondary school programs, including four sessions within the Laverton Catholic Education Community (LCEC) and the transition PSG meetings, were successful in preparing our students for the transition to secondary school.

## STUDENT SATISFACTION

- Circle Time in home learning groups has provided opportunities to build trust and express emotions and feelings and build relationships, both teacher/student and students with each other; however, we have an ongoing issue according to our SRC Insight student survey data, of poor classroom behaviour and relatively low student safety. The consistency of circle time is still in need of improvement and change.
- The review process has highlighted that a consistent and shared approach to student management across our school is needed. Although we are using a process and set of behaviours, staff needs to spend time together clarifying the explicit management of our students, particularly in the learning streets and on the playground.



## Leadership & Management

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To develop a professional learning culture

#### Intended Outcome

- That there will be a balance between leading and managing
- That communication processes will be strengthened across the school community

### Achievements

- Increase the leadership capacity across the school
- Build a culture of coaching, feedback and accountability.
- Build the capacity of the leadership team to coach.
- Through coaching conversations, demonstrations and observations build team and individual pedagogy through Professional Learning Team meetings, facilitated planning and 'learning conversation' time.
- Build leadership capacity across the whole school community. Include all staff, senior community students and a cross section of parents in review sessions focusing on Leadership and Management.

There has been success on many levels of Leadership and Management this year.

Considering the above challenges of the last four years, it is quite impressive that the school leadership, staff, parents and students have created the positive and engaging environment reflected across the five spheres of school improvement. The trend of the 2009 to 2012 data indicates the community recognises that 'Empathy', supportive leadership, and 'Engagement', teamwork, empowerment and ownership, through this phase were relative strengths.

Again in 2013 the focus of the leadership team was to:

- Coach and Administrate in their Learning and Teaching context.
- Develop Prep - Year 6 Common Understandings and expectations in their Learning and teaching context.
- Operate as part of a team – not compartmenting.
- Focus on learning area based actions - planning and pedagogy.
- Keep in mind succession planning.

Over the past twelve months the new leadership team has begun to build the foundations of an effective leadership team and a coaching culture that will be successful in building the learning culture of the school. They have had success as visible leaders. They are communicating a leadership vision and behaviours, building a coaching culture and running professional learning sessions for the staff, including facilitated planning sessions. The Leadership team has worked together to outline a self-directed learning program focused on 'coaching', and then participated in five sessions each with a personal coach. The Principal employed a Maths Coach with coaching experience again in 2013. The principal completed phase 1, 2 and 3 of the Growth Coaching International accreditation this year.

Communication processes across the school have been strengthened and developed during the past four years, successful actions have included:

- Updating the website termly to include term calendar, term planner and term overviews.
- The school newsletter is distributed fortnightly and includes regular updates around the school and a "Question and Answer" section where the Principal responds to parental questions.
- The Parents and Friends Group write at least one term newsletter updating families on fundraising and related social events.
- Email and SMS is utilised to communicate with parents about weather issues, event reminders and emergency notifications.
- Display boards throughout the school environment, particularly in the central area where the Principal and Deputy Principal work, communicate "Big Picture" thinking for the community to read.

We have had success in the Business and Administrative management aspect of the school due to a changeover in staff and improved training and communication:

- The new accountant, CEOM staff and the Principal have coached the Business Administrator.
- The Principal, Business Administrator and Office Administrator now meet every Thursday, with an agenda, minute taking and feedback about progress being part of the conversations.
- Role scope and descriptions are being developed and potentially drafted by the end of 2013.
- During the past four years both the Business Administrator and Office Administrator have enrolled in and are completing new qualifications.
- An additional office staff member has been employed at 0.2 FTE.

**EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING****DESCRIPTION OF PL UNDERTAKEN IN 2013**

- Principal, R.E, Mathematics, Literacy, Deputy Principal, Student well-being network clusters
- Masters of Education
- Phase 1,2,3 and 4 Growth Coaching International training
- Mathematics Number Framework training
- Fontus and Pinnell training
- Positive Approach to Discipline training
- AUSVELS, National Curriculum, General Capabilities
- Opens paces learning
- Peri – phonological awareness
- Reading Recovery training
- Business Management Diploma
- Post Graduate Diploma in Mathematics
- Habits of the Mind
- Singing lessons
- Violin lessons
- Religious Education and Assessment
- Spiritual Enrichment for Leaders
- Assertive Discipline
- Restorative Practices
- Mathsletics training
- Deep leadership for Learning Action Research project
- Naplan Data Analysis
- 

**NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN PL****42****AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER TEACHER FOR PL****\$ 500****TEACHER SATISFACTION**

In terms of the 'Clarity' target, the results of the SRC Insight data indicate that it has been difficult for leadership to improve this aspect of the school over the previous four years. 'Empathy', the measure of supportive leadership has been a relative strength compared to 'Clarity', 'Engagement' and 'Learning'. Staff indicated the leadership of the school demonstrated an understanding of them. The staff indicated that the leadership of the school has been caring and supportive.

'Clarity', has been a relative weakness. Having a clear sense of purpose - knowing what is expected of them, where the accountability exists and how their contribution fits in, appear to be in need of improvement for the staff. It is the new leadership team's belief that the leadership of the school needs to develop conversation, delegation and coaching around the plans and measures at Stella Maris.

When a deeper look is taken at the feedback from staff on the SRC Insight survey 'Professional Growth' is consistently indicated as a relative strength compared to 'Appraisal and Recognition'. The interpretation is that the staff are learning, but it is not coming from within the team, and they are not receiving enough coaching and peer feedback. During discussions with staff they agreed that they are willing to listen and learn, and recognise the need to value and utilise the experience within the teams to compliment the external knowledge gained, for instance, through the Contemporary Teaching and Learning in Maths (CTLM) and the CEOM maths coaches.

## School Community

### Goals

- To strengthen our sense of community
- To establish processes to induct families into the school community

### Intended Outcomes

- That families will feel connected to the school community and participate in school life

### Achievements

- Utilised the diverse skills and interests of our multicultural community
- Established an clear and active fundraising model and yearly plan with the Parents and Friends executive and team
- Improved the external environment of the school
- Built teacher capacity to create shared understandings and purpose of learning with parents
- Included all staff, senior community students and a cross section of parents in review sessions focusing on School Community

Stella Maris is an Open Plan school where parents can access learning areas, and are encouraged to actively participate in their child's school life on a daily basis. This commences with parents knowing there is an invitation to gather informally from 8:30am where incidental issues may be addressed with the staff and an opportunity for parents to meet. Morning Prayer, in each Learning Area, where parents regularly stay and participate, follows this. Our main areas are 'toddler inclusive'.

When organising events we have been mindful to vary the time of events to cater for the needs of our working families. In response to parent's feedback, in 2013 Stella Maris held its inaugural Christmas Carols on the lawn following the end of school year mass.

Point Cook is a new and developing area and a majority of our families have pre-school aged children or little immediate family support. To address this need we have provided the opportunity for parents and their pre-school children to participate in weekly morning coffee sessions. This also plays a significant role in the induction process at Stella Maris. The Parents and Friends Group have organised many fundraising and social events. These events promote a strong sense of inclusiveness.

The induction process of families into the Stella Maris community is highly valued. The implementation of the Prep Transition Programs uses feedback from parents to improve its effectiveness to create stronger links between new families and the Stella Maris community.

Other successful actions to strengthen a sense of community that involved parents, grandparents and the wider community include:

- Planning the development of school grounds, volunteers being members of the Parents and Friends Group.
- Parents helping to run school Tuckshop.
- Parents now attend and help lead excursions.
- Parents now attend and help at Middle and Senior community camps.
- Parents are invited as expert guest speakers during inquiries.
- Parent representatives participate on the Parish School Education Board.

Parents continue to respond positively to opportunities to be an active participant in the learning areas. We were effective in this area because in 2011 and 2012, 25 parents were provided with the opportunity to be trained as a classroom helper to assist during English. In 2013, training sessions were also offered in Mathematics so that parent helpers were able to support 'At Risk' children. This provided enormous assistance to the Mathematics Intervention Program.

In addition we have developed Literacy and Mathematics partnerships educating parents in how to provide and support learning at home.

The highlight of 2013 was the development of the whole school and wider community Inquiry based Art Show performance. This production included, staff, students, parents and the wider community. The success of the Art Show relied heavily on a strong working and creative relationship between the school and the parents as well as the extended families. Members of the Parents and Friends Group tirelessly supported the event.

## PARENT SATISFACTION

The following, written by the Parent and Friends Executive Members are comments about achievements and future directions:

*Over the past 2 to 3 years we believe the Parents and Friends Group (P&F) has changed a great deal. As an Executive group we were given a clear directive from day one, which was to Fundraise to develop our Children's Outdoor Environment. This gave us something that we were happy to strive to and make as much money as possible as there was a goal to achieve.*

*We believe over the last couple of years we have been able to raise close to our goal each year. We have done this through trial and error of the events/fundraising items we choose. We developed a process that if an event did not work or did not achieve the financial goal we were after, we would re-evaluate this for the following year. To hold such fundraising events each year was due to the great effort provided by our fantastic parent volunteers, which has improved dramatically over the past couple of years.*

*The communication with the school's leadership team has really helped the Parents and Friends Group achieve our goals. Meeting with the Principal once a month and discussing ideas has been of great benefit for us and for the school. This opportunity to meet on a monthly basis has given us the guidance we need to move forward on our fundraising ideas.*

*Parent involvement has increased immensely. We changed our approach from trying to find one volunteer to complete one huge task to having lots of volunteers do lots of little tasks has increased parent volunteers around the school. We believe that parents have small windows of time to help out but seeing things as one big task was too much for a lot of parents.*

*We see our future vision of the P&F developing more of what we already have begun doing so well. Looking at what has worked really well and continuing to do it. The Outdoor Environment has started to see some progress this year and gives families in our community something to talk about. We are all looking forward to seeing this environment grow into a beautiful place for a children to learn and play.*

*As a P&F Executive it has been a very rewarding position to be in. To see how it has grown and how well we all work together as a team is amazing. Our personalities have all worked together and not against each other. This is what we believe has worked to get to where we are today.*

In summary, the examples above reflect instances where parents have directly participated in school life and help foster and strengthen a sense of community. However, this does not reflect parent opinion in the 'input' data. The reason for this may be, that parents do not view their contributions have a direct impact on school planning, particularly "new policies" as asked by the survey questions.

The process to build connectedness has improved. Previously all newsletters were given as hard copies whereas now all families receive an email version. In 2013 parents also received newsletters from the Parish and Parents and Friends via email.

Term curriculum overviews are posted on the school website at the beginning of each term. In the past practice this may have been inconsistent and been a contributing factor to the lack of general satisfaction and clarity felt by the parent body. In the light of the data it is imperative that we need to improve the way of communicating with parents.

There has been a marked in improvement 'Approachability'. The extent to which the school is receptive of and understands the view and concerns of parents, appears to have improved significantly. Attempts to address this have resulted in clear procedures being implemented to facilitate clear communication between school and home. This action may be the contributing factor to the improvement of data in the area of Approachability.

## Financial Performance

REPORTING FRAMEWORK	MODIFIED CASH \$
<b>Recurrent income</b>	<b>Tuition</b>
School fees	391006
Other fee income	218943
Private income	57766
State government recurrent grants	971993
Australian government recurrent grants	2842338
<b>Total recurrent income</b>	<b>4482046</b>
<b>Recurrent Expenditure</b>	<b>Tuition</b>
Salaries; allowances and related expenses	2991204
Non salary expenses	844159
<b>Total recurrent expenditure</b>	<b>3835363</b>
<b>Capital income and expenditure</b>	<b>Tuition</b>
Government capital grants	-
Capital fees and levies	64895
Other capital income	9500
<b>Total capital income</b>	<b>74395</b>
<b>Total capital expenditure</b>	<b>4972943</b>
Loans (includes refundable enrolment deposits and recurrent, capital and bridging loans)	
<b>Total opening balance</b>	<b>3499127</b>
<b>Total closing balance</b>	<b>8499617</b>

*Note that the information provided above does not include the following items:*

System levies charged to individual schools, intra-systemic transfers and diocesan supplementary capital fund (SCF) supported borrowings for primary schools. The information provided is not comparable with other educational sectors. This VRQA template is not comparable to the ACARA school-level income reporting requirements which are to be reported on the MySchool website. ACARA school level reporting requirements will require system level income from Government grants and some private income to be allocated by school. This will be a small adjustment in relation to the total level of school resources. At this stage, recurrent income from Government sources, school generated income and capital expenditure are to be reported by schools. Additionally when assessing the private income of the school include both recurrent and capital school fees.

## Future Directions

The following elements were identified as characteristics that need to be strongly reflected in the school's preparation of its strategic intent statement for the coming School Improvement Plan:-

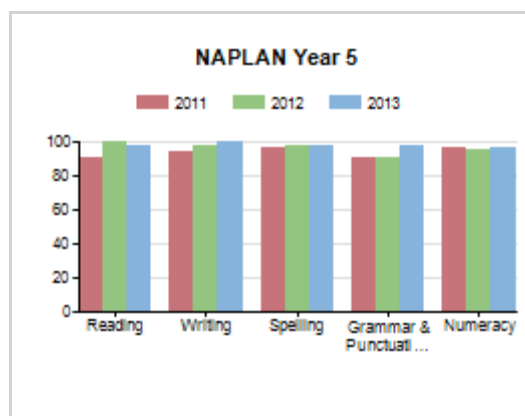
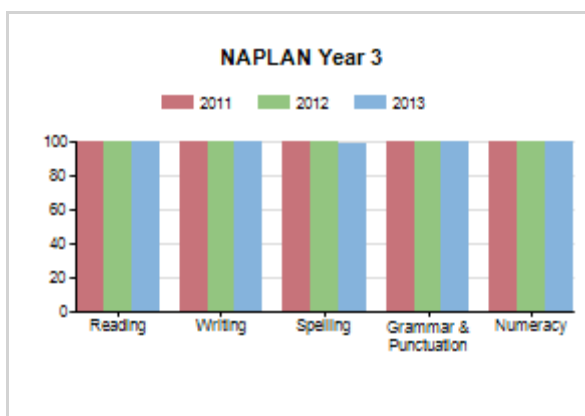
- Enhancing Catholic identity
- Quality Instruction within a personalised learning approach
- Developing a culture of feedback
- Enhancing teacher efficacy through coaching
- Building student responsibility for learning and behaviour

## VRQA Compliance Data

**E1391**  
**Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Point Cook West**

### PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS

NAPLAN TESTS	2011 %	2012 %	2011–2012 Changes %	2013 %	2012–2013 Changes %
YR 03 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0	98.6	-1.4
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
YR 05 Reading	91.2	100.0	8.8	98.1	-1.9
YR 05 Writing	94.1	97.8	3.7	100.0	2.2
YR 05 Spelling	97.1	97.7	0.6	98.1	0.4
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	91.2	90.9	-0.3	98.1	7.2
YR 05 Numeracy	96.9	95.6	-1.3	96.3	0.7



AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	%
Year 1	94.81
Year 2	95.88
Year 3	94.17
Year 4	95.09
Year 5	96.51
Year 6	93.31
Overall average attendance	94.96

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE	
Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	87.83%

STAFF RETENTION RATE	
Staff Retention Rate	78.57%



TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.00%
Masters	11.54%
Graduate	15.38%
Certificate Graduate	3.85%
Degree Bachelor	53.85%
Diploma Advanced	34.62%
No Qualifications Listed	26.92%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class	2
Teaching Staff (Head Count)	43
FTE Teaching Staff	38.910
Non-Teaching Staff (Head Count)	9
FTE Non-Teaching Staff	7.541
Indigenous Teaching Staff	0