



Diocese of Sale
Catholic Education Ltd

2024

Annual Report to the School Community



St Joseph's School

1-3 Bridge Street, KORUMBURRA 3950

Principal: Sharon Anderson

Web: www.sjkorumburra.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 999, E Number: E4010

Principal's Attestation

I, Sharon Anderson, attest that St Joseph'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 2024 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 May 2025

About this report

St Joseph'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](#).

Governing Authority Report

During 2024, more than 18,200 students were educated in 43 Catholic schools, owned and operated by Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (DOSCEL).

Across our Catholic schools 2,900 staff were employed nurturing students in their academic, spiritual, physical, and emotional development.

Working with the Bishop of Sale, the DOSCEL Board, DOSCEL Secretariat, schools and parishes, the mission to offer every student the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God while achieving their personal best, remained at the forefront of our work.

Investing in school staff and leadership teams to promote expert learning and teaching practices continued to be a priority. Efforts to develop new recruitment strategies against a national teacher shortage were also fruitful.

In 2024, we partnered with Swinburne University of Technology to launch the first Accelerated Bachelor of Education (Primary) degree. The program is tailored for staff working as Education Support Officers (ESOs) in our Catholic schools, providing a structured pathway for them to become qualified teachers. In November 2024, we welcomed 29 ESOs who will commence the program in 2025.

Reflecting on 2024, we have much to be proud of.

Ongoing significant investment in new learning facilities and refurbishments through the Capital Grants Program and school community funding continued across our schools.

In December 2024, we were thrilled to complete construction of the new St Josephine Bakhita Catholic Primary School at Clyde North in preparation for its opening in 2025. This is the 39th primary school within the network of primary and secondary schools owned and operated by DOSCEL. The project was supported by the Victorian Government Capital Funding Program (VGCFP) and a loan from the Capital Development Fund (CDF).

We also welcomed capital funding announcements from the Victorian and Australian governments to support continued school infrastructure development.

Most notably we welcomed Victorian Government funding announcements to support the building of two new primary schools in growth areas - St Oscar Romero Catholic Primary School Stage 1 at Drouin and Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic Primary School Stage 1 at Clyde planned to open in 2027. The funding support recognises the demand for Catholic education in these growth communities.

The care, safety, and wellbeing of children and young people remain a central focus and fundamental responsibility of everything we do. Child Safety Week 2024 was an opportunity for schools to share with their communities their activities and programs to keep young people safe every day.

I extend my deep appreciation to everyone involved in Catholic education within the Diocese of Sale for their commitment to our vocation of Inspiring Faith, Inspiring Learning.

Paul Velten

Director of Catholic Education - Diocese of Sale

Chief Executive Officer - Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited

Vision and Mission

At St Joseph's, we are a welcoming, nurturing and forward thinking learning community. With a focus on excellence, our Catholic Faith is at the heart of our identity.

At St Joseph's, we aim to:

- Invite our school community to develop a close personal relationship with God through a dialogical approach and experiences which are recontextualised and therefore relevant.
- Provide a rich, evidence driven learning environment facilitated by expert teachers.
- Build a community of responsible, resilient and motivated learners who confidently strive towards reaching improvement and growth.
- Nurture the skills of collaboration, co-operation and problem solving amongst our students and staff.
- Welcome all learners to our school, enhancing their strengths and recognising and supporting their challenges.
- Show respect and care for ourselves, our community and our world.

School Overview

St Joseph's has a long and proud history in the beautiful township of Korumburra in Victoria's South Gippsland. It was established in 1914 by the Good Samaritan Sisters and since then, has held a strong, highly respected presence in the community.

The school has undergone significant renovations which proudly integrate a sense of the old and the new in a vibrant and engaging learning environment. We continue to enhance the physical environment of the school to ensure that it is welcoming, safe and contemporary.

As a Catholic school in the Diocese of Sale, we service the educational needs of the families of Korumburra and the surrounding, largely farming, areas. Increasingly, we are welcoming families who have moved from the city seeking a more rural or regional lifestyle.

Our students are at the centre of everything we do. We know our children and hold high expectations for each of them. Their academic expectations are met via dedicated teachers who deliver the Victorian Curriculum with passion and expertise. We acknowledge the variation that exists amongst our students and adjust learning experiences to meet them at their point of need and ability.

Principal's Report

2024 was another year of consolidation at St Joseph's as we continued to embed a culture of high expectations, safety and respect.

Whilst the school experienced an initial dip in our student numbers, we did attract enrolments across the school throughout the year. A comprehensive learning program was maintained including specialist subjects, Physical Education, Italian, Art and STEM. Camps were provided for our senior classes (Years 3 to 6), as well as an intensive swimming program for all students across the school. In Term 3, our students participated in a Music/Dance program which culminated in a whole school concert.

Our Religious Education Curriculum, *To Know Christ Jesus* was taught across the school with an emphasis on Scripture, Prayer and Social Justice. As a Catholic school, our faith underpins our culture which revolves around Jesus Christ. This year, we welcomed Parish Priest, Father Stanly Devasia to our community and he continues to help us build our partnership with the Parish and especially St Laurence's in Leongatha and Mary MacKillop Regional College.

Literacy and Numeracy were again prioritised as well as the identification of student's individual needs. These were responded to via a targeted intervention program as well as the provision of a full time Learning Support Officer (LSO) in every classroom. With an understanding that literature transcends so many areas of the curriculum, novel studies were introduced and were met with enthusiasm from the staff and students alike.

Inquiry or Knowledge Units continue to be developed, and a rich bank of planning is building an exciting dynamic resource which will continue to have life into the future.

Teaching staff were empowered to deliver a more explicit direct approach, including the delivery of evidence driven resources, particularly in the area of Phonics. This year, we extended this foundational understanding to our senior classes. Our assessment data is indicating an upward trajectory and supports the introduction of more targeted teaching. As a result, we are observing more confident students who are curious and are able to articulate their learning clearly.

St Joseph's is a place of welcome and is supported by the dedicated work of our staff and the encouragement of our families. We continue to look to a future where our students thrive, academically, spiritually and emotionally.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

This year, we aimed to:

- Build the confidence of our teachers to create Religious Education units which were relevant to our students, encouraged dialogue and were built on an Inquiry approach.
- Embed a deeper understanding, and more consistent and relevant use of Scripture across the school.
- Create a culture of prayer in every classroom and at every staff and parent meeting.
- Strengthen the relationship we have with our local Catholic schools and our Parish.
- Increase the visibility of our Catholic Identity in the school.

Achievements

- In 2024, staff continued to refine a collaborative planning process in Religious Education, under the leadership of our Religious Education Leader.
- An Inquiry approach was used to provoke inspiring questions which aligned with the curriculum, *To Know Christ Jesus*. Staff are more confident with the process and are asking more questions about how to create dialogue and action amongst their students.
- The role of the Religious Education Leader is now shared by one person across both Parish primary schools, St Joseph's, Korumburra and St Laurence's, Leongatha. This has facilitated a successful partnership in Sacramental preparation with combined meetings and celebrations.
- The Principals of both primary schools met with the Parish Priest at a dedicated Principal/Priest dialogue day facilitated by DOSCEL.
- The Parish Priest was visible and a part of the life and Mission of the school.
- Students attended Parish Masses each week, on a Wednesday and Parishioners were invited to join us for whole school celebrations including Sacraments.

Value Added

- The combined Parish preparation and celebration of the Sacraments has been welcomed.
- The Holy Week assembly at the end of Term 1 was a poignant reflection of the core of our Faith.
- The initiation of a combined School Parish leadership team to ensure collaborative planning of events across the year.
- Student led prayer at fortnightly assemblies.

- The celebration of key days such as Harmony day, Sorry Day with a social justice lens have helped students to recognise that their faith extends beyond the school into the wider community.
- Regular attendance at the Parish Mass on a Wednesday is looked forward to.
- Outreach activities such as attendance at the ANZAC DAY Service, visits to Carinya Lodge, our local nursing home and a Christmas card/gift drop to our neighbours increased our presence and appreciation in the community.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

At St Joseph's, our students are immersed in high quality, evidence informed teaching delivered by expert teachers. Our focus has continued to be on collaboration to analyse assessment data, and to plan and deliver learning that is responsive to the specific needs of our students.

In 2024, our goals were to:

- Embed a culture of collegiality through weekly Professional Learning Team (PLT) meetings.
- Consolidate teachers understanding and use of Assessment tools such as the platform, Essential Assessment and Dibels.
- Using assessment data, we continued to prioritise the individual and trend progress of our students and responded with targeted teaching practice.
- Continue to build writing skills across the school through collegial moderation of student work produced during the "Big Write" process.
- Stretch the Junior school focus on Phonics into the Middle and Senior school through explicit direct instruction.
- Refine the practice of "Daily Review" across the school.
- Establish Inquiry units which focused on the building of knowledge and skills and which encourage creative thinking in our students.

Achievements

Our Naplan data reflected stronger results in Writing, particularly in Year 3, where we saw the impact of targeted, direct instruction and an emphasis on phonics.

Our senior (years 3 - 6) teachers built confidence in their use of the resource, PLD and continued to build their knowledge and skills through regular attendance at training webinars. They use the resource with fidelity and have a deeper understanding of the "why" behind the process.

This year, we delved more deeply into the new (Version 2) Victorian Mathematics curriculum dedicating regular PLTs to this work. While some of our teachers attended Diocesan professional learning days, it has sparked enthusiasm in all of our teachers who are providing learning experiences through modelling and active engagement with materials.

Our teachers' knowledge of assessment is always on our agenda and they are more comfortable with data. This data is being analysed at a whole staff level and is being used to directly inform teaching plans.

Our Learning and Teaching Leader has dedicated time to coaching individual teachers and teams. These opportunities continue to build trust and confidence and have had a positive impact on our teaching climate and school culture.

Student Learning Outcomes

Naplan was once again administered across our Year 3 and 5 cohorts. Being a small cohort, trend data was not established for our Year 5 cohort.

Our results were reflective of the higher level of needs in both of these groups, however we continue to respond with targeted intervention and adjustments.

We are looking forward to improved results as our priorities become embedded.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	327	32%
	Year 5	*	*
Numeracy	Year 3	405	68%
	Year 5	*	*
Reading	Year 3	384	58%
	Year 5	*	*
Spelling	Year 3	378	58%
	Year 5	*	*
Writing	Year 3	405	74%
	Year 5	*	*

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2024 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.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Student safety and wellbeing are a priority at our school and are demonstrated, articulated and reinforced continually. These are standing items on our weekly staff meeting agendas and are championed by the members of our Child Safe Committee.

In 2024, our goals were to:

- Continue to enact the Child Safe Standards and express these in Child friendly and accessible language.
- Continue to embed and strengthen our School Wide Expectations of Respect, Responsibility and Care.
- Promote the role of the Child Safe Committee and ensure regular meetings which include rigorous agendas, resulting in tangible actions.
- Introduce the Resilience Project to staff.
- Ensure that all staff complete Mandatory Reporting training.

Achievements

Our whole school expectations of Respect, Responsibility and Care are well embedded at our school. We have high expectations and our students meet them. The behaviour and attitudes of our students are recognised by families as they tour our school and are acknowledged when we are out in the community.

Our families, particularly our younger ones, are active in our school and comment on the welcoming nature of our community. We again saw more families attending our fortnightly assemblies.

This year, we stepped out into Korumburra, being more involved in local events, visiting local nursing homes and participating in Parish Masses.

We celebrated Harmony Day, Are you OK day as well as Reconciliation Week. Days like these highlight the importance of inclusion, mental health and wellbeing.

Value Added

This year we included:

- Seasons for Growth (Grief and loss peer support program)
- Weekly lunchtime activities in the library

- A dance program in Term 3
- Years 3 - 6 Camps
- Excursions
- Incursions
- A revised student leadership model which saw children choosing how they will contribute to the school, e.g. gardening, liturgy and assembly leaders or by selling icipoles and hot chocolate to raise funds for new playground equipment.

Student Satisfaction

Our Insight SRC data reflected that our children feel safe and are, for the most part, motivated to learn. Once again, they see school as a safe and happy place where they are recognised and belong.

Student Attendance

Student attendance is checked twice each day and recorded on SIMON. Parents are able to log into PAM (Parent Access) to communicate their child's absence and the reason for it. Failure to do this, results in a SMS and then a phone call to the parent by an office staff member.

In the case of unexplained or extended absences, the principal follows up with the family.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	89.4
Y02	91.3
Y03	89.5
Y04	86.7
Y05	88.8
Y06	90.7
Overall average attendance	89.4

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

The role of leadership is to provide exemplary conditions whereby teachers can teach and students can learn. At St Joseph's, we embody a team approach and recognise that we each have a role to fulfill. The leaders at our school aim to be supportive, reliable and transparent and set clear and high standards across all aspects of the school. They are active and visible in classrooms and on the playground, making time for students, families and staff.

As a small school, leadership is a shared responsibility and over recent years, we have identified teachers to lead particular initiatives. In 2024, the focus was on Mathematics as well as Wellbeing. These staff were given time and access to professional learning followed by opportunities to lead the staff at PLTs and Staff meetings.

Specific leadership goals included:

- Weekly leadership meetings where forward planning in line with the Diocesan directions was prioritised.
- Attendance of all three members of the Leadership Team at Learning and Teaching network meetings.
- A deep reflection on the work of the past four years in preparation for the school review in 2025.

Achievements

With a greater emphasis on shared leadership and the delegation of roles and responsibilities, our staff are becoming more confident in their abilities to contribute to school improvement. They are showing greater initiative and are more vocal and involved in PLTs and Staff meetings.

There is a shift in the collaborative culture of the school. Teachers see themselves as an active part of the team and although it is challenging in a small school, are less isolated. Trust is building, comparison is decreasing and there is a stronger sense of support and encouragement amongst the staff. This means that problems are seen as opportunities and whole school approaches are becoming easier to embed.

The preparation for the school review, which began late in 2024, was an opportunity to identify and measure the impact of our work. This elicited powerful conversations and created a clear vision for the future of our school.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2024	
Religious Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Closure Days (2) focusing on the Inquiry Process in Planning, Scripture and Prayer • Learning and Teaching Network Days 	
Learning and Teaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing Best Practice Conference - all teaching staff attended this day at St Paul's Anglican Grammar in Traralgon • Learning and Teaching Network Days • Mathematics (DOSCEL) followed by ongoing PL presented to staff by our Leader of Learning and Teaching, Carole Livesey • PLD (senior staff) • First Aid, including Diabetes and Anaphylaxis management 	
Various online courses and modules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Safety/ Mandatory Reporting • RE - maintenance of accreditation • Literacy • The Resilience Project 	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2024	13
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$500.00

Teacher Satisfaction

The Insight SRC data once again indicated high levels of teacher satisfaction across all areas of the survey, but particularly in the area of supportive leadership.

In 2024, we introduced termly (as opposed to annual) review meetings. These opportunities, although not compulsory, were a helpful and more relaxed way to discuss challenges and successes and to make timely plans to improve practice. These meetings did not, however, replace the ARM, but they certainly added depth to the more formal meeting which happened late in Term 3.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0
Masters	3
Graduate	3
Graduate Certificate	0
Bachelor Degree	14
Advanced Diploma	4
No Qualifications Listed	1

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	13
Teaching Staff (FTE)	8
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	8
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	5.53
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

St Joseph's has a long, proud history and has provided Catholic education to children in Korumburra and the surrounding areas for more than 110 years. We are seeking to promote our image as an inclusive, open to all school where safety and learning are our key priorities.

As such, we have been deliberate in our attempts to be outward facing and more involved in our wider community.

In 2024, we aimed to...

- Build a more active relationship with the Parish.
- Plan experiences of "outreach" into the community for the children.
- Establish representation in community groups beyond the school.
- Create opportunities for families to visit and be involved in our school.
- Forge a stronger partnership with St Laurence's Primary School at Leongatha.

Achievements

- We are more involved with the local Parish, with classes attending Mass weekly.
- We continued our presence on the Boards of local organisations including "Karmai" and the Parish Council.
- Our Principal was part of a Shire working party which developed a long term plan for the support of children across the region.
- We attended the local ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services as well as events at Coal Creek.
- We have established a "friendship" with Carinya Lodge, a nursing home which is nearby.
- With the support of a qualified parent, we have provided space for a play group which is welcoming young families from across the town and beyond.
- The reinvigoration of our Parents and Friends Association is creating opportunities for families to become involved and socialise.

Parent Satisfaction

Parents were not surveyed in the 2024 Insight SRC survey, however they have the opportunity to provide feedback at any time.

The School Advisory Committee meet each term and have expressed their support and satisfaction with the school. Their advice is highly valued by the principal.

Teachers make themselves available to families via face to face meetings, phone calls and emails, as well as platforms like See Saw. Parents find the staff at St Joseph's approachable and are grateful for these interactions which add substance to our improvement agenda.

Parent teacher conversations and Program Support Group (PSG) meetings are held each term and also provide opportunities for parents to contribute to the work being done at the school.

Financial Performance

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.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at www.sjkorumburra.catholic.edu.au