



Mercy Regional College

Camperdown

2022

Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 690

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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Sharon Gillett, attest that Mercy Regional College 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 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2022 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards as prescribed in both Ministerial Orders in effect in 2022:
 - Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools, in Semester 1, 2022;
 - Ministerial Order No.1359 - Implementing the Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises, in Semester 2, 2022.

28/03/2023

NOTE: The School's financial performance information has 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

Governing Authority Report

The Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) is now in its second year of governance of schools. In 2022 two additional schools - Damascus College and St Francis Xavier transferred their governance to DOBCEL, a total 58 schools in the Diocese are governed by DOBCEL.

Across our diocese, schools governed by DOBCEL provide distinctive Catholic education from the Murray to the Sea. This support is operationalised by Catholic Education Ballarat and is responsible for the implementation of DOBCEL strategies, policies and procedures, and overseeing the day to day running of our schools.

The role of DOBCEL is to lead, provide service to, and partner with schools to enable every student to flourish and every student, staff member and family to experience the presence of the risen Christ in our schools.

We recognise the extraordinary servant leadership of all our school staff, leaders and Principals during 2022 as they supported their school communities through a myriad of challenges that included staff shortages, covid disruption, implications of widespread flooding and Enterprise Bargaining negotiations. We recognise the commitment and focus all school staff give to the students and families in their care in the spirit of the Gospels. Their commitment has been unwavering.

We thank families for their commitment to partnership with our schools in Catholic Education again in 2022 to support all our students to flourish.

Tom Sexton

Executive Director

Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited

Vision and Mission

Vision Statement

Mercy Regional College serves a wide rural community which values growth and diversity in Catholic Education in the Mercy tradition.

Mission Statement

In the Spirit of the Gospels we commit ourselves to the core values of community, inclusiveness, learning, care, justice and mercy, excellence and achievement.

College Overview

Background and Governance

Mercy Regional College is a Catholic, regional, co-educational secondary school, serving the parishes of Camperdown, Mortlake, Terang and Timboon. It is a dual campus school of 380 students with the senior campus, McAuley, hosting Years 9 -12 and situated in Camperdown. The Junior campus, O'Keeffe, hosts Years 7 and 8 and is situated at Noorat, some 25 kilometres away from Camperdown.

Mercy Regional College is a proud school community with a rich history, strong traditions, and a deep sense of community and welcome. Our Catholic identity is best exemplified through our approach to and program of holistic and personalised education that encourages students and staff to live out the Gospel by pursuing our core values of learning, excellence and achievement, community, inclusiveness, care and justice & mercy.

The College was originally governed by the body of Parish Priests (then Governors of the College) under the supervision of the Bishop of Ballarat and was acknowledged as Catholic by his authority. Governance of the College transferred to the Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) on 1 January 2021. The Principal is supported by the Mercy Regional College School Advisory Council.

History

Mercy Regional College has a rich and unique regional community history. The College was established in 1973, when the closure of the secondary component of local Catholic primary schools, St Patrick's Camperdown, St Colman's School, Mortlake and St Thomas' School Terang, was imminent. The parishes took the initiative in developing a new concept of Catholic Education: a regional Secondary College serving local parishes, managed by a Board of Management and administered by a Lay Principal. In 1975, the College was a three campus educational institution, with campuses located in Camperdown, Mortlake and Noorat. In 1983, the Mortlake and Noorat campuses were consolidated at Noorat. In 2008, the College consolidated its educational program across its two campuses with all students undertaking Years 7 & 8 at the O'Keeffe Campus in Noorat and then Years 9 - 12 at McAuley Campus in Camperdown. The McAuley campus is co-located with St Patrick's Primary School.

Students

Mercy is the largest provider of senior secondary education in the district. Our students reside predominantly rurally, with our enrolments coming from a wide regional area inclusive of Woorndoo in the north to Port Campbell in the south and Pomborneit in the east to Framlingham in the west.

Principal's Report

2022 has been a brilliant year filled with reconnection to our community and engaging in face to face learning onsite, putting the difficult parts of Remote Learning well and truly behind us! Thankfully, our learning has also included opportunities to engage in camps, excursions, sports and many other extra curricular activities. These are definitely experiences to remember and which help to shape the character of the young people of Mercy Regional College. Year 8 had the added opportunity to go "Up the Creek" on a week-long canoe experience bringing their PEAK learning to the forefront. Students and staff headed to the snow fields for an enjoyable and educational experience in the Victorian Alpine region. Mercy Regional College cheered on the Australian Diamonds at the Constellation Cup in Melbourne and our O'Keeffe campus students roared in the crowd at an AFL game.

Our first ever Indigenous Perspectives Adventure - Culture Camp finally occurred with young people from Year 8 to Year 12 and staff experiencing the history, culture and traditions of the First Nations People of the South West as they visited local areas of significance under the guidance of Paul Wright with Albert and Clint from our experience partners Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Cooperative. Lives and perceptions were changed forever as we walked forward together in understanding and reconciliation.

We celebrated our Mercy Core Value of Community through hosting our Presentation Ball, celebrating with masses, liturgies and special event days. We celebrated the welcome and hospitality within our Mercy community with a specific focus during Diversity Week on our respected First Australian young people, staff and families as well as embracing, understanding and celebrating cultural, religious, gender and neuro diversity within our community.

Our theme for 2022 was "Opening the Doors of Mercy". We welcomed 56 Year 7 students and their families to Mercy Regional College. We were also joined by other new to the College young people and families and look forward to the years of partnership ahead. We welcomed new staff Claire Virgona, Thomas Brian, Jean Christie, Matthew Crane, Ashley Couch, Claudia Lee, Georgia Lucas and MRC Trainees Ashlee Pearson and George Beasley. We farewell and give thanks to others beginning a new stage of their careers Melissa and Ben Brisbane, Tina Jenkins and Matthew Crane. Janet Backhaus, Brendon Norman and Siggie Macleod are taking leave in 2023, before joining Maureen O'Loughlan and Sharyn Grinter on well deserved retirement after many years of dedicated service to the Mercy Regional College community. We also congratulate all of our staff who celebrated special occasions throughout the year, with many engagements, marriages and new arrivals.

With our doors wide open we have reached out to rejuvenate, create and celebrate learning partnerships with many local organisations across the South West. We celebrated our HCSN and local parish partnerships as well as those with local St Vincent de Paul chapters, Camperdown Community House, Camperdown Uniting Church and Lions Clubs across the region. Worn Gundidj were instrumental in facilitating our Indigenous Perspectives Adventure - Culture Camp. Our VCAL class worked alongside Corangamite Shire and Parks Victoria to replant and develop the Wombeetch Puyuun Reconciliation Garden in Camperdown. We are grateful for the support and expertise of Keerray Wooroong Language Learning and Research Centre and Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation in naming our Yanaya Watnanda Indigenous Scholarship. Yanaya Watnanda is translated to walking together, something Mercy Regional College is striving to genuinely achieve.

We returned to participation in Inter School Sport through the School Sport Victoria program with many students and teams representing Mercy Regional College at SSV Hampden, Greater

Western Regional and State levels. We celebrated the exceptional results of our Senior and Junior girls netball teams and Intermediate Boys netball team who all made the SSV State Finals with our Senior Girls finishing a most impressive Runners Up. Our Clay Target Shooting Team also finished RU in the Victorian Clay Target State Final. Our Athletics team saw brilliant individual performances at State level by Ruby D winning gold in the 15 Girls High Jump and Long Jump, silver for Triple Jump and Bronze in the 100m. Archie T took home silver in the 15 Boys 800m and our 16 Boys Relay team of Rhys U, Myles S, Jonty R and Ben M came third.

Mercy Regional College returned to the Debating and Public Speaking stage with Junior, Senior and C Grade teams representing us in the DAV Debating competition based in Geelong. Our Debating team also finished RU at the MEL Frayne Speech Festival held at Emmanuel College Warrnambool. Public Speakers Jackson G and Carly N were also most accomplished and impressive representatives in the Public Speaking section. Well done Mercy!

We had a large number of staff complete Post Graduate qualifications in 2022. Berni Sinnott, Daniel Lee, Jacqui Hester, Tina Jenkins and Emily Stephens completed the Graduate Certificate in Religious Education(REAP), Melanie Bouchier a Master of Religious Education and I am very relieved to have completed a Master of Business Administration (Executive). 20 staff also participated in the Mercy Leadership: Making a Difference Middle Leadership Development Program facilitated by Dr Bern Nicholls.

We began the first stage of our 10 year Master Facilities Plan with the refurbishment of our O'Keeffe campus beginning in Term 4. All Y 7 & 8 students and staff joined our Y 9 to 12 students and staff on the one site at our McAuley campus in Term 4. Whilst a little busier than we were used to, it was enjoyable to spend this time together. Our sports court at O'Keeffe campus also finally received its resurface and looks incredible.

We now look excitedly to 2023 whilst we plan to celebrate the first 50 years of CRC/MRC. We know that our strength lies in our community and the provision of engaging, meaningful and inclusive learning opportunities within an inclusive Catholic context. We are very proud of our unique history and look eagerly to our future.

Yours always

Ms Sharon Gillett

Parish Priest's Report

This chaplaincy ministry is an essential ministry to the Catholic school community. This ministry is a collaborative ministry with the school and encourages the gifts and talents of the students and to form them into a mature person. It is pastoral and spiritual, involving liturgy and prayer, preparing for sacraments, and encouraging them to witness the values of the gospel.

Mercy Regional College and its staff take seriously the Mission that Jesus gave through the sermon on the Mountain or "The Beatitudes". This call from Jesus, is echoed in their school curriculum. Staff and students from the Mercy Regional College have taken their challenge to witness and promote the values of the gospel around the college by their words and deeds. They are actively involved in some charity works and care giving gestures by delivering meals in the community.

Our parish Church is always open to them for prayer and contemplation. The quietness of the church lends well to a meditative atmosphere. Individual classes come in turn to the church for worship and is directed by a religious coordinator. And for the entire school come five times a year for common worship in the church.

Through this liturgy they learn more about a Christian celebration of Eucharist and sacraments. Here they learn about the ways by which they can imitate the virtues and attributes of their Christian faith. At other times of the year, especially during Advent and Lent special prayers and reflections are offered in the college.

My hope is to walk with the community of Mercy Regional College and be present to those who seek help and assistance in changing their life to witness the values of the gospel. The students, who are faced with variety of challenges and worries have to be addressed. So, this ministry is to encourage the whole college community to listen with compassion, to walk with those who are struggling in love and empathy. Life can be difficult, and we have to be like Jesus make them feel comfortable in talking care of them and to provide the extra support and encouragement. May God bless and protect you and your loved ones.

School Advisory Council Report

It gives me much pleasure to present this report to the Mercy Regional College community on behalf of the School Advisory Council.

It has been another busy and rewarding year at MRC. We have worked with our architects and staff to develop site plans for both Mercy campuses, with the first stage of our redevelopment to commence at the end of 2022 at the Noorat campus. We have been reviewing the school's vision, mission and mantra, a property at 9 Henderson Street was acquired which will provide options to enable future expansion of the facilities at our Camperdown campus, and around the board table we have also discussed enrolments, staffing, school policies, and teaching and learning.

We would like to acknowledge the wonderful leadership of our Principal, Ms Sharon Gillett, who is very passionate about MRC. Sharon, together with her leadership team and all members of staff, work together to continually enhance the programs offered to our students to inspire and enable our young people to achieve their best. They invest so much time into our school and our students, and we are extremely grateful for all of their contributions.

I would especially like to thank all members of the School Advisory Council during 2022 for again volunteering their time and skills for the betterment of the College. Alison Kenna, Xavier McKinnon, and Olga Petrovskaya were this year joined by Shane West, Stephen Sinnott and Greg Conheady, while we farewelled John Pekin and Rebecca Alexander. Thanks also to the Building, Planning and Finance Committee members; Maree Beasley, Olga Petrovskaya, Berni Sinnott and Jordy Muller. We are also very grateful for the assistance and guidance provided to us by Mr Tim O'Farrell (Catholic Education Ballarat), Mrs Jude Muffitt (Business Manager) and Mrs Nicole Darcy (Board Secretary). We also give thanks to DOBCEL for our school governance.

In 2023, we will celebrate 50 years of Mercy Regional College. This will be a wonderful opportunity for the Mercy community to look back at all that has been achieved over the past 50 years, whilst envisaging all that can be achieved into the future.

On behalf of the members of the advisory council, I wish you all a wonderful Christmas break.

Mrs Julie Finney

School Advisory Council Chair

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To continue to recontextualise our Catholic Identity
- To continue to support teachers and leaders who are entering and continuing their service in Catholic education to develop the knowledge and skills that will support authentic witness in our school community
- To lead, participate in and act for social and ecological justice, community outreach and sustainability

Achievements

Whole School Prayer Renewal Project

In 2021 and 2022, we were part of a pilot of a Whole School Prayer Renewal Project (PRP), an important project that has been developed in response to the Enhancing Catholic School Identity (ECSI) Research.

The Prayer Renewal Project team consisted of 5 MRC staff members, Parish Priest Terang/Mortlake and two Year 10 students. We were also provided with support from our diocesan PRP Working Group representative.

The team decided that the project they would focus on would be to write a recontextualised 'Whole School Prayer' - this is to be used for many varied occasions throughout the school year. The team met as a group (along with Sharon Gillett) and wrote a draft of the prayer. The PRP team then sought feedback from some of our major stakeholders in our students - the whole year 7 group as well as the whole year 11 group (2022) as well as staff - they looked at the draft prayer and spent some time giving feedback.

The whole school prayer has now been developed in its final form and is ready for use by our school community.

Retreats / Seminar Days / Faith Days

In 2022, our Year 12s spent three days at the beginning of the year together at Cave Hill Creek in Beaufort. This was a new venue for our Year 12s and it was a beautiful setting. We had lots of activities including canoeing, initiatives and low ropes and hut building. We also had dinner together with a 'op-shop formal' theme. We also celebrated together on the final day with a liturgy.

In 2022, our Year 12 cohort also participated in Seminar Days. A highlight of these days was being able to welcome guest speakers / facilitators to St Patrick's Church to help with this. Our Year 12s also had Paul Watkins (a local adventurer) come and speak with them - and his message of 'The shortcut is to - Do The Work!' was well received by the group. Year 12 students also had Mr Nasir Sobhani - The Streets Barber speak with them as part of their Seminar Day on Feast Day.

Staff Formation - TAP / REAP

We had 6 staff members in 2022 complete their REAP training - Accreditation to teach RE / Lead in a Catholic School. We also had a staff member complete her Masters in Religious Education in 2022.

Post Graduate Study in RE - REAP

In 2022, we had a 6 staff members from 2022 complete their training / postgraduate study in Religious Education in order to teach RE/Lead in a Catholic School. This is fully sponsored by CEB.

VALUE ADDED

ECSI Prayer Renewal Project

In 2022, we continued on with our participation in the ECSI Prayer Renewal Project. This was designed to help us to move to the theologically preferred position: a recontextualised Catholic identity developed through dialogue with diversity and supported by strong post-critical belief.

The end result of this project will be a recontextualised whole school prayer.

Staff Formation Day

In 2022, we had a school closure day for our students on Monday October 3rd. This was around the theme 'Walking Forward Together in Reconciliation" We participated in a smoking ceremony with Lee Morgan. We also looked at bridging the gap between the 'secular' and the 'sacred' with a session run by Matthew Crane.

We were then lead in a session with Emma Stenhouse she helped staff understand the role that cultural background and heritage play in shaping individual perspectives and experiences. The session provided opportunities for staff member to engage with the interconnections between art, culture, and spirituality, which are central to Catholic beliefs and values.

In the afternoon all staff chose an 'elective' for them to participate in - the electives that they could choose from included:

- Understanding the past tour with an indigenous lens (local historical places of significance tour)
- Native planting hands on project (at local golf club)
- Cooking which celebrates bush tucker
- Creative Art – MRC Dreaming Art Room
- Aboriginal, Books, Poems and music

Retreats / Seminar Days / Faith Days

In 2022, our Year 12 students were able to participate in a 3-day Retreat. This was at Cave Hill Creek near Beaufort. Year 12s also participated in Seminar Days and Year 7s in Faith Days. A highlight of these days was being able to welcome guest speakers/facilitators to St Patrick's Church to be able to do this. Sam Clear, from Walk4one, was a highlight for both year 7s and 12s, as well as local adventurer Paul Watkins.

Our Year 11 students participated in a Retreat - this was facilitated by the Youth Ministry Team from Melbourne. This day was based around the theme of leadership. Our Year 10 students were able to go to Anglesea again after a couple of years off, due to Covid. Our boys went to Burnside Camp and had 'The Man Cave' present to them for a large part of this Retreat. The girls went to Araluen Camp also in Anglesea and had guest speaker 'Melissa Barbieri' present to them as part of their Retreat.

Our Year 9 Retreat was planned with Sr Karon Donnellon set to present around the theme M.A.D - Making a Difference! Our Year 8 Students had their Retreat Day in Term 4 in 2022 - this was based around the theme 'Justice and Reaching your potential'. Students were lucky enough to have Kristi Davidson present to them as part of this day. She is the founder of the offspring project.

Our Year 7 students had a series of 'Faith Days' as part of their RE curriculum. We were lucky enough to have activities such as learning about the history of MRC, visiting churches in our local area and also the Benedictine Abbey in Camperdown. In Term 3, we were also able to celebrate 'Special Person's Day' with grandparents visiting our school and sharing some special memories and times with our Year 7 students.

Masses / Liturgies

In 2022, Masses and liturgies continued to be celebrated and it was lovely to be able to come together in person more often to celebrate in this way. We celebrated our Beginning of the Year Mass in the stadium - were we celebrated our incoming Senior, Middle and Junior leaders - as well as welcome our Year 7 students.

In Term 2 we celebrated our 'Feast Day' Mass in May - this coincides with Catholic Education Week and also 'Our Lady Help of Christians' feast day. In September we celebrated our Mercy Mass together as a whole school with mass in Camperdown. Our end of the year mass was celebrated in November.

Feast Day Celebrations

Our Feast Day started in 2022 with a whole school Mass at St Patrick's Church in Camperdown. This Mass celebrates our Feast Day which is Mary, Help of Christians, who is also the Patron of Australia. This day also coincided with Catholic Education Week for the Ballarat diocese.

This day also coincided with the Year 7 Faith Day when our guest speaker Rev. Kevin Yeverton led our students in visiting the Uniting and Catholic Churches in Camperdown and helping them understand the importance of Jesus in each sacred space. The Year 12's also had their final Seminar Day on this day was guest speaker Nasir Sobhani - they also facilitated a 'second-hand clothes stall' called 'Re-cycled' on Feast Day - with all proceeds going to the Lismore Flood Appeal.

Social Justice

Lent saw the continued tradition of Mercy Regional College's commitment to supporting Caritas - Project Compassion in our school. An increased focus in 2022 was on informing the students of the story of those the Caritas team have recognised. Information was shared with the students in Religion and Mercy classes. Financial donations were made by the staff and student community to the Project Compassion boxes located in the classrooms.

In 2022 we also asked homeroom groups to consider bringing along 40 items which could be shared with / donated to / recycled with groups in our community. We collected clothing items for St Vinnies and Lifeline, socks for organisation Upcycle, running shoes and apparel for Nike

'Re-use a shoe program' and e-waste (printers, cartridges etc) for Officeworks. This was all then donated to the different charities.

During Term 2, we had a 'Winter Woolies' casual clothes day and winter clothes/blankets as well as non-perishable food items drive. All donated goods were delivered to our local St Vinnies. We also had an online and virtual St Vinnies Winter Sleepout. All participants were involved in an online Google Meet which explained the purpose of the sleepout and some of the St Vinnies projects. Monetary donations were also raised and donated directly to this cause.

Christmas Appeal

As in past Christmas seasons, the staff and students of Mercy Regional College supplied gifts for disadvantaged families in the area. In 2022, we donated gifts to both the Camperdown and Terang conferences of St Vincent De Paul. We focused on donating vouchers (rather than piles of gifts) which was very well received by SVDP.

Ecological Justice Catholic Earthcare Schools Program

In 2022, we became a part of the Catholic Earthcare Schools Program. This involves a commitment and movement to care for creation and implement the principles of Laudato Si in our school. This involves online network meetings (via Zoom), a newsletter once a term, resources and professional development. Ms Claire O'Connor along with her Environment and People Year 10 elective students helped to conduct a Catholic Earthcare - Environmental Review. We were also successful in gaining our Level 1 accreditation in 2022.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To improve student engagement, feelings of success and achievement of learning growth through the development, adaptation and creation of meaningful learning programs with particular focus on the academic learning program at Years 9 and 10, as well as enhancing Social Emotional Learning for all students.

Achievements

Math Pathways Review

In 2022, we conducted a detailed review of the Math Pathways Program. Math Pathways was introduced at MRC in 2019 and had been implemented from Years 7-9.

The original reasons for introducing MPW at Mercy (as identified by the mathematics teachers) were:

- To allow for greater differentiation in the classroom and to cater to widely mixed ability groups
- To extend our brighter students
- To increase engagement and interest in Maths (especially at Years 7 & 8)
- To provide opportunities for students to develop critical thinking mathematical skills which can be applied to unfamiliar situations and contexts.

The purpose of this review was to evaluate the efficacy of the Math Pathways program at 7 – 9 in relation to its stated goals.

Scope of the Review

1. Review MP objectives – why was it introduced?
2. Conduct a 'gap analysis': To what degree does MPW achieve the objectives?
3. Determine the satisfaction of stakeholders
4. Determine the project's costs and benefits
5. Identify to what extent the original MP objectives were met
6. Report findings and recommendations

Stakeholders

1. 7 – 9 Students
2. 7 – 10 Parents
3. MPW teachers
4. Year 10 Mathematics teachers

Methodology

This review used a mixed methods approach, relying on both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather data from stakeholders. All stakeholders were interviewed or surveyed online using questions derived from the initial program goals. The questions asked them to reflect on to what degree did they feel that MPW achieved this goal. All respondents were also given the opportunity

to voice additional views not addressed in the questions. All students were randomly selected and consisted of half boys and girls.

The review found that the program was not adequate in terms of meeting all four goals. While it did allow for teachers to differentiate and target instructional levels, the main drawback was the lack of engagement in Mathematics being exacerbated by the program. It is important to note that there is no data to support the notion that MPW has negatively impacted on student achievement levels in Mathematics. On the contrary, the program did in fact enable consistent continuity of learning in Mathematics throughout the extended lockdowns of 2020 and 2021.

The review was tabled with the College leadership teams and the School Advisory Council for comment and all agreed that Math Pathways would discontinue at the end of the year.

Victorian Aboriginal Languages planning for 2024

Victorian Aboriginal Languages is proposed as an elective language option at Year 9 for 2024. This is a move towards a growing interest in formalising the teaching of First Nations languages in schools.

The subject is designed as semester long for 4 periods per cycle. The primary focus is on the Gunditjamarra languages but also from other areas of Victoria. We are receiving considerable support from Ballarat Catholic Education and local indigenous partnerships to develop our learning program.

Topics covered will include:

- Whose land are we on
- Greetings
- Place names
- Questions - where and what?
- Commands
- Body parts
- Art and symbols
- Seasons and weather
- Animals and plants

ILSY Project

In 2022, key Mercy teachers continued to participate in the second year of the Improving Literacy in the Secondary Years (ILSY) project. A partnership between DOBCEL and leading literacy and leadership experts from The University of Melbourne, ILSY aims to improve student learning outcomes through a whole school approach to disciplinary literacy. Participants engaged in a series of face-to-face and online workshops, team coaching and action learning to build disciplinary literacy practices in their own schools.

Domain Leader for Science and Mathematics; Leanne Delahunty spearheaded the project this year with a focus on improving the quality of written practical reports in Science classes by ensuring explicit teaching around subject specific vocabulary, worked examples and modeling and scaffolding.

Tutor Learning Initiative

The Tutor Learning Initiative is designed to support students whose learning has been disrupted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and continued into 2022. Schools were provided with funding to engage tutors to provide targeted teaching to students identified as needing support. Mercy Regional College leaders used schools ACER data to target students in Junior and Middle School with support in English/Literacy and Mathematics. Three tutors were engaged at various times throughout the year. Junior and Middle school students were selected and worked with students in small groups on targeted areas of practice.. At junior school, the tutors worked on specific skill gaps for a period of time using pre and post testing. Feedback was provided on SIMON to engage and inform parents of progress. In Middle school, students worked on vocab extension and written expression.

Debating and Public Speaking

Debating has made a return to extra-curricular life at MRC in 2022. Joining the DAV Geelong Region with two teams (A and C Grade) competing in the five round competition. MRC's rhetoricians also took on our fellow Mercy schools in the 2022 Frayne Speech Festival. After a two-year, pandemic-induced hiatus, the Festival was again in full swing with competitions in public speaking, debating and voice choir. After an early scratching- MRC once again wowed the competition, knocking out hosts Emmanuel College Warrnambool and friendly rivals Sacred Heart College Geelong (who had defeated us in another competition a month earlier) to enter the finals against the Academy of Mary Immaculate. In a tightly fought battle over the topic 'That the world is too selfish to change its ways,' MRC conceded defeat by a couple of points in the impromptu round. Our College Captains Carly and Jackson also proudly represented MRC in their prepared speeches on the benefits of the pandemic and a response to a quotation from Maya Angelou.

PASS

To support the transition to full time onsite learning, supervised and supported study sessions in our McAuley Library after school each Monday and Wednesday from 3.30 to 4.30pm were introduced in 2022. The purpose of PASS is:

- To provide opportunities for busy young people to complete their homework and study at school to free up more time for sport, work, and rest
- To provide extra teacher support for senior students
- To provide an opportunity to support students to deepen/strengthen/extend their knowledge in specific areas
- To support families to spend more quality time together
- To enhance our school's learning culture by making study 'visible', warm and inviting

MERCY
REGIONAL COLLEGE

Personally
Assisted
Study
Support

PASS is an after school program that Mercy Regional College is setting up to start in Term 2 2022.

MRC teachers will be on hand to tutor students, help with homework or assignments, or students can work independently so that they do not have homework to take home.

BOOST YOUR LEARNING

Program Details

DAYS: Monday & Wednesday
TIME: 3.15pm - 4.30pm
LOCATION: John Tindley Resource Centre at the McAuley Campus, Camperdown

To support parents, MRC will provide a snack for students and 2 bus runs to transport students home (drop off location will be central):

1. Cobden/Timboon loop
2. Terang/ Derri/Lismore loop

Students will be able to sign up to PASS via Mercy Services and permission forms will be sent home prior to the session. Session sign ups will close the day prior - Friday for the Monday session and Tuesday for the Wednesday session.

Step Up Into Teaching (SUIT)

Due to teacher shortages, considerable work is being done at the system level to attract young people into teaching. Australian Catholic University Ballarat developed a program to engage young people intending on pursuing teaching as a career early - as Y 11 students.

The opportunity has been created for those expressing interest and meeting the capability requirements to complete 2 tertiary level units before finishing secondary school that will be given credit in their first year of teaching training. The units are studied as week long intensives in Ballarat in the September and January school term breaks. It is a blended mode with pre reading required. The opportunity is fully sponsored by CEB and each member school inclusive of unit costs and accommodation.

In 2022, 3 students from Mercy entered the SUIT program.

VCAL- Reconciliation Garden Project

The senior and intermediate VCAL students worked hard with the Corangamite shire to restore the Wombeech Puyuun Memorial Garden in Camperdown to its former glory. They learned all about the history of the area, created project goals, and negotiated official documentation of the collaborative project with the council. They have also got their hands dirty with some significant clearing and weeding taking place over the course of the year. Students have been documenting this process and improving their drone photography skills.

PEAK

An exciting addition to the Year 8 curriculum in 2022 was the PEAK program. PEAK stands for 'Passion, Exploration, Advancement and Knowledge', and the program centred around student led, project based learning. Across each fortnight students have a single period with their homeroom, and then a double period where the whole cohort is able to gather and work

collaboratively. The initial focus for students is team building, following the challenging past year. Next, students are getting to know more about themselves and their passions, as they work towards understanding what drives them to be curious and seek more knowledge, identifying and solving problems and creating supportive networks. Over the course of the year students had the opportunity to listen to guest speakers, design a project of their own and see it to fruition, before presenting their process and finished product to peers, families and our school community.

Year 12 English - Strive for 25!

The paradox of VCE study is the focus on the whole person of the student, and highlighting that they are not defined by their results at the end of Year 12. The paradox comes into play when tertiary study is considered, especially in regards to the Study Score requirements for university course entry- usually 25 out of a maximum of 50.

With over 47,000 students a year completing Units 3&4 English, achieving a score of at least 25 is no easy feat, and something to be commended! Achieving this score is a key to options for a school leaver in many ways- giving them the option to study or pursue a path they want, rather than having to seek an alternative.

Considering the disruptions to study that the pandemic and remote-learning experience have thrust upon us, our focus for the class of 2022, particularly in their English studies, is to 'Strive for 25.' This will be achieved through a number of small steps and adjustments in our teaching and learning; with the emphasis being on empowering our students to carefully track their progress over the course of the year, to ensure that they are aware of their likely outcome.

Additionally, support study sessions after school- a mainstay of VCE life at MRC have returned and are open to all students. More information about VCE, English, VTAC and the life after MRC can be found on the Careers Page of the Website, and at upcoming VCE information sessions.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

NAPLAN 2022

Whole School NAPLAN Data Snapshot 2022*

School wide spread of scores

	90th	75th	50th	25 th	10 th /Tail
7 Reading	11%	15%	26%	24%	24%
9 Reading	11%	14%	24%	26%	25%
7 Numeracy	11%	18%	23%	20%	28%
9 Numeracy	10%	15%	23%	27%	25%
7 Writing	8%	18%	26%	22%	28%
9 Writing	5%	20%	28%	22%	25%

* no growth data available in 2022

Comparative data

	State Mean	School Mean	Students ABOVE National Min Standard	Students AT National Min Standard	Students BELOW National Min Standard
7 Reading	551	547	94%	4%	2%
9 Reading	586	585	84%	12%	3%
7 Numeracy	554	550	93%	7%	0%
9 Numeracy	591	586	90%	8%	2%
7 Writing	542	522	80%	17%	4%
9 Writing	570	565	72%	18%	10%

Yellow shading - comparison with state not statistically significant

Red shading - comparison with state is statistically significant

Areas for improvement:

- Writing across the school but especially with our current Year 7 cohort who have low mechanical skills (spelling, punctuation and grammar)
- Reading re-engagement in the Middle School
- Continue to focus on growth for all students - reducing the 'long tail'

Actions forward:

- Whole school literacy plan
- Item data analysis in domains to identify specific lagging skills
- Data reflection process with all staff to triangulate NAPLAN data with ACER data and teacher judgment data derived from SIMON.

Senior School Results

School Programs:

Number of VCE 3-4 Units with enrolments	28
Number of VET certificates with enrolments	18
Offers the International Bacculaureate (Diploma)?	No

Student Cohort:

Number of students:	
Enrolled in a VCE 3-4 Unit	91
Enrolled in a VET certificate	75
Enrolled in VCAL	26
Percentage applying for tertiary places	74

Student Achievement:

Percentage of satisfactory VCE completions	100
Number of students awarded the VCE (Bacculaureate)	-
Percentage of VET units of competency completed	96
Percentage of VCAL units completed	94
Median VCE study score	25
Percentage of study scores of 40 and over	0.5

COHORT DATA

46 students finished Year 12

38 successfully obtained the VCE.

8 successfully obtained the Senior VCAL

ATAR DATA

28 ATAR Rankings

Median ATAR - 57.2

Mean (average) ATAR - 58.7

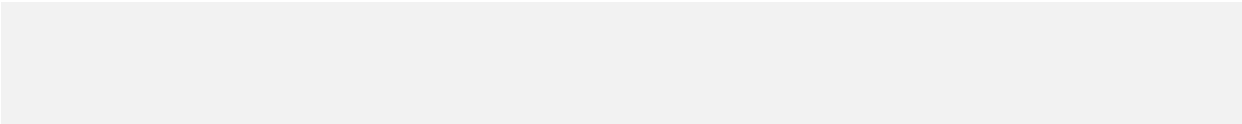
ATAR Rankings	No. of Students	Percentage of Students
90 - 100	0	0
80 - 89	2	7%
70 - 79	6	21%
60 - 69	3	11%
50 - 59	6	21%
40 - 49	9	32%
30 - 39	2	7%
20 - 29	0	0

STUDY SCORE DATA

State mean for each study score is set at **30**
40+ is considered the top 9% of the state
38+ is considered the top 15% of the state
23 - 37 is considered the broad mid range

Number of scored 3/4 units - **194**
 Median Study Score - **25**
 Mean (average) Study Score - **25**
0.5% of Study Scores 40 & above (VCE Honour Roll)
25.7% of Study Scores 30 & above

State Averages		Mercy Regional College Results	
45+	2%	45+	0
40+	9%	40+	0.5%
35+	26%	35+	4.6%
30+	53%	30+	29.3%
25+	78%	25+	54.6%
20+	93%	20+	80.9%



MEDIAN NAPLAN RESULTS FOR YEAR 9	
Year 9 Grammar & Punctuation	568.0
Year 9 Numeracy	584.6
Year 9 Reading	587.7
Year 9 Spelling	571.6
Year 9 Writing	572.9

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2020	2021	2020 – 2021 Changes	2022	2021 – 2022 Changes
	%			%	
	*		*		
YR 07 Grammar & Punctuation	-	94.4	-	98.1	3.7
YR 07 Numeracy	-	97.2	-	100.0	2.8
YR 07 Reading	-	98.6	-	98.1	-0.5
YR 07 Spelling	-	94.4	-	92.6	-1.8
YR 07 Writing	-	91.4	-	96.3	4.9
YR 09 Grammar & Punctuation	-	91.4	-	91.4	0.0
YR 09 Numeracy	-	100.0	-	98.3	-1.7
YR 09 Reading	-	93.2	-	96.6	3.4
YR 09 Spelling	-	94.3	-	89.7	-4.6
YR 09 Writing	-	90.0	-	90.0	0.0

* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

** Data cannot be reported for this year as the number of students that sat the test was below 5 and the data has been suppressed for privacy reasons in accordance with the ACARA NAPLAN data reporting provisions.

*** No students sat the NAPLAN tests in this year level and in one or both of the relevant years.



Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

At MRC, we are dedicated to caring for one another, as is evident through the Mercy tradition. To further support our students and their families upon returning from Remote Learning, we are committed to offering a nurturing and supportive environment.

Moreover, we strive to build on the implementation of our Positive Behaviour management program, consolidating student voice and agency. Our M.E.R.C.Y class and wellbeing program are designed to cultivate a positive environment for our students, building on a curriculum based around Positive Education, Resilience Project, and Respectful Relationships. By implementing these programs, we are able to respond to any current student community issues that may arise throughout the year.

Overall, our school is committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where students can feel empowered to learn and grow. Through our commitment to the Mercy tradition, we will continue to prioritize caring for each other as a community.

Achievements

Teen Mental Health First Aid - Year 11

To address the impact of COVID-19 and other mental health issues, our school offered the Teen Mental Health First Aid (TMHFA) course to all Year 11 students in 2022. This opportunity was previously missed by the Year 10 cohort of 2021 due to the pandemic.

The TMHFA course equips our students with essential skills and knowledge to provide mental health first aid to support their peers. Research has shown that young people often prefer to share their problems with friends, and our program responds to this need.

Through the TMHFA course, students will learn how to address common mental health challenges faced by teenagers. By providing our students with the necessary tools, we are empowering them to support their peers who may be struggling with mental health issues.

Overall, our school is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students. By offering the TMHFA course, we are providing a valuable opportunity for our students to learn and grow as empathetic and supportive members of the community.

Pat Cronin

The Be Wise education program goes beyond introducing young people to Pat and his story by encouraging them to create solutions to Be Wise, Think Carefully, and Act Kindly. The program addresses the psychological, social, and economic impacts of violent acts, such as the Coward Punch, and encourages students to reflect on attitudes and behaviours around anger and aggression. Together, they discuss strategies to deal with these issues personally, as well as with mates and bystanders. The program is designed to leave participants feeling empowered to develop their action plan to Be Wise and never use violence. Our Year 11's and 12's found this program insightful and thought-provoking.

Respect Cup

The Year 9 students in MERCY classes took part in the "Respect Effect" program, which focuses on healthy relationships. They explored their values and cultural norms, and how societal factors

such as history, policies, and media affect their relationships with others. They also examined current issues like gender equality and domestic violence.

As part of the program, students from three local schools (Mercy Regional College, Emmanuel College Warrnambool, and Trinity College Colac) gathered at Emmanuel College to compete for the Respect Cup, which celebrates commitment to respectful relationships. The Year 9 students worked on projects to tackle issues that they identified as barriers to respectful relationships. They presented their ideas to peers, staff, and a panel of judges who provided feedback and suggestions on how to implement their projects.

The day also featured a mixed netball tournament, which added a fun and competitive element to the event. We commend all the students who participated in Respect Cup 2022 and congratulate Emmanuel College for retaining the cup this year.

Positive Behaviour Program

Throughout the 2022 school year, our school continued to implement lunchtime behaviour reflection sessions, which are based on Restorative Practice. This program is designed to promote personal student growth in social and emotional behaviour.

The Restorative Practice system has proven effective in developing positive relationships between staff and students, while also promoting student engagement. It provides a supportive environment for students to reflect on their behaviour, with the assistance of staff.

In addition, the Positive Behaviour Program has been instrumental in assisting students in transitioning back into the school structure after remote learning in a home setting. By promoting positive behaviour and interactions, we are able to support our students' emotional and social wellbeing.

Overall, our school is dedicated to promoting a positive and supportive environment for all students. The Restorative Practice-based lunchtime reflection sessions, coupled with the Positive Behaviour Program, serve as valuable tools to foster personal growth, positive relationships, and student engagement.

GRIP Leadership Conference

Our newly elected 2023 Senior student leaders had the opportunity to attend the GRIP Leadership Conference at Federation University in Ballarat on Friday 4 November. This conference is designed to provide student leaders with a clear understanding of their role and vision within the school community, and to inspire their passion for leadership. Our Senior leaders joined other schools from Ballarat and Geelong to learn about leading with inclusivity, organising events, conflict resolution, teamwork, and creating opportunities for growth. The conference featured interactive sessions and activities, allowing students to network and exchange ideas with other leaders. Our students came away with new skills and perspectives, and gained numerous tactics for improving inclusivity and project involvement.

M.E.R.C.Y (Mindfulness, Empathy, Resilience, Care, You)

Over the course of the year, we have devised a MERCY pastoral care program that incorporates initiatives like Resilience Project, Respectful Relationships, and Positive Education, to be implemented in 2022. The program builds on the existing content, with a particular emphasis on cultivating respectful relationships. Our staff has access to a comprehensive program spanning from Year 7 to Year 12, covering a wide range of themes to promote the well-being of our students. Additionally, students from Year 7-9 will be provided with a school diary that includes lessons from the Resilience Program, which will supplement the MERCY program.

The Street's Barber

Mercy provided an inspiring opportunity for students in Year 7 to 9 to hear Nasir Sobhani, also known as The Street's Barber, speak about his incredible journey. Nasir's story is one of kindness, acceptance, and empowering others, which aligns with Mercy's Core Values of community, inclusiveness, care, justice, mercy, excellence, and achievement.

Nasir's talk served as a tangible example of these values, and it was engaging for our young people to learn them through the experiences of others who have walked different paths. While Nasir's talk touched on topics like drug abuse and adult themes, the main message was about overcoming challenges and living with the purpose of showing kindness and acceptance to others.

Child Safety Committee

The Child Safety Committee, comprising representatives from Mercy Regional College and St Patrick's Primary School, met once a month to discuss child safety matters that may affect both schools. As both schools share common concerns, it was crucial for them to collaborate and address any issues together. The committee members included the Principals of both schools, along with Mercy Regional College's Deputy Principal and St Patrick's Primary School's Assistant Principal.

Again, due to COVID-19, these meetings were sporadic and occurred infrequently. However, phone calls and incidental conversations between the committee members continued to take place to ensure that child safety matters were addressed promptly.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, both schools remained committed to upholding their commitment to child safety. The sporadic meetings and ongoing communication between the committee members allowed them to continue to work together to address any concerns and ensure the safety and wellbeing of their students.

Staff Wellbeing

The school Chaplain and Counsellor facilitated the session, allowing staff to share their thoughts and concerns, and begin working on a support plan for 2022.

ReLATE

MRC recently participated in the ReLATE program, a two-day initiative that aims to create meaningful and long-lasting changes in schools to improve teaching, learning, and overall wellbeing for students, staff, and the wider school community. The program recognizes the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on a child's developing body and brain, and its lasting impact into adulthood. ReLATE equips educators with the tools, knowledge, skills, and resources to understand and address the impact of adverse experiences on learning, engagement, health, and wellbeing.

The program combines educational research, social science, behavioural theory, and neuroscience to help teachers implement practical strategies in their classrooms. ReLATE places great emphasis on wellbeing as a crucial precondition for quality teaching and learning. It supports the creation of safe, supportive, and predictable learning environments where both students and staff are not only known but deeply understood.

The ReLATE model is a commitment to creating sustainable and positive cultural changes in schools, advocating for shared responsibility towards enhancing learning in the school environment.

Empathy and Staff Wellbeing - Staff presentation

The Wellbeing Team conducted a survey with staff to gather feedback on the return to the classroom following the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey focused on identifying the positive

aspects as well as the challenges encountered during this transition. In the subsequent session, the team shared the survey results and facilitated a discussion on the importance of empathy rather than sympathy. The conversation highlighted the differences and benefits of adopting an empathetic approach towards colleagues and students, particularly during challenging times.

VALUE ADDED

Throughout the year, a range of Staff Wellbeing programs are provided, including:

- Mercy Regional College staff induction programs
- Commemorating staff milestones and honouring those who have passed away
- MRC RUOK? day activities and Diversity Days
- Workplace Mental Health First Aid course
- Different staff activities such as staff challenges, appreciation events, and social gatherings
- Bree Gorman presentation on Gender Identity and Inclusion

Several Parent Wellbeing programs are available throughout the year, including:

- Junior school's Welcome evening
- Wellbeing and e-safety information accessible on the Mercy website, with after-hours phone numbers available for parents' convenience
- Regular updates on college news via newsletter
- Information sessions conducted on Google Meet and virtual presentations
- Acknowledgement Days to recognize and appreciate parents' contribution to the school community

A selection of Student Wellbeing programs offered during the year:

- Year 7 Camp
- Year 8 Camp
- Year 9 Camp
- Year 11 Job Camp (held at School) & single day Melbourne University/TAFE excursion. TMHFA
- Pat Cronin - One punch presentation
- Year 12 Retreat
- Resilience Project Lessons
- GEM programs
- Positive Education Lessons
- RUOK? Day
- Bullying No Way Day

- Respect Cup
- Mental Health BBQ and Mercy Dip for Mental Health
- AFL excursion student connection
- Junior Boys and Girls Health Talks
- Continued funding and appointment of NSCP Chaplain (Pastoral Worker)

STUDENT SATISFACTION

Results from our School Improvement Student Survey as follows:

Scale for Survey is 1 - Strongly Disagree to 5 - Strongly Agree

- Average response for 'I feel good about being a student at this school' was 3.4
- Average response for 'My teachers provide help and support when it is needed' was 3.4
- Average response for 'My teachers put a lot of energy into teaching our class' was 3.5
- Average response for 'My teachers make learning interesting' was 2.9
- Average response for 'I think I am generally successful at school' was 3.3
- Average response for 'Continuing or completing my education is important to me' was 3.8
- Average response for 'I get on really well with other students at my school' was 3.6
- Average response for 'I have been teased in an unpleasant way recently at my school' was 2.2
- Average response for 'The behaviour of some students in class makes it hard for me to do my work' was 3.2
- Average response for 'Being at a Catholic school is very important to me' was 2.1
- Average response for 'I receive nasty online messages from other students at this school' was 1.6
- Average response for 'At this school I have the opportunity to learn about the Catholic faith' was 3.8
- Average response for 'Staff at this school always care about others' was 3.4
- Average response for 'This school provides opportunities for me to show compassion to others' was 3.4
- Average response for 'This school raises my awareness of social justice issues' was 3.2
- Average response for 'My teachers have been very supportive during the coronavirus' was 4.2

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Attendance rolls are kept for all classes and study periods. Parents of students who are absent are required to contact the College on the day of the absence by 9.00am via phone or PAM. Extended absences must be requested in writing to the Principal. Students who arrive late are required to sign in at reception. If a student is absent from school and no reason has been provided, this will necessitate a SMS message from the College. Parents are requested to respond to the SMS message with an explanation for the student's absence.

In 2022, student absences were impacted by COVID-19. Students who tested positive for COVID-19 were required to self-isolate, which affected their attendance percentage. To address this, MRC implemented an SAA (School Acknowledged Absence) for these students, ensuring that their attendance records were not adversely affected.

YEARS 9 – 12 STUDENT RETENTION RATE

Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	65.7%
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AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Y07	89.0%
Y08	85.8%
Y09	87.6%
Y10	88.7%
Overall average attendance	87.8%

SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES

VCE Median Score	25.0
VCE Completion Rate	100.0%
VCAL Completion Rate	94.0%

POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS AS AT 2022	
Tertiary Study	18.0%
TAFE / VET	9.0%
Apprenticeship / Traineeship	24.0%
Deferred	24.0%
Employment	21.0%
Other – The category of Other includes both students Looking for Work and those classed as Other	3.0%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

As a result of Ministerial Order No. 870, all schools (Catholic, Government and Independent) were required to respond to a number of Child Safe Standards – seven in total. The Catholic Education Office Ballarat provided all diocesan schools with significant support in this endeavour in the form of templates, workshops – in person and through videoconferencing – as well as the support of Education Consultants.

The second year of COVID-19 and continued remote learning highlighted the fact that MRC needs to continue to be vigilant and compliant around Child Safety and the digital classroom and world.

Achievements

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including effective leadership arrangements

The safety and wellbeing of children is of utmost importance at this college, and this is reflected in our commitment to child safety, which is prominently displayed on our website. Additionally, our Deputy Principal, Berni Sinnott, delivered a presentation to all students about child safety and provided them with help-seeking advice for any child abuse matters.

To ensure the safety of our students, we have established an e-safety committee, and we have designated Child Protection Officers in Berni Sinnott, Matthew Crane, and Sharon Suhan. Our Child Safety Standing Committee at Leadership level collaborates with St Patrick's Primary School to ensure the safety of all children in our community.

We maintain our commitment to child safety through our website, Staff Handbook, and PAM, which provide access to Child Safety policies and procedures. Our Child Safety team, led by our Child Safety Officers, meets regularly throughout the year. With the implementation of the new Child Safe Standards in July 2022, our Child Safety team has reviewed the new standards and created an action plan to ensure compliance of the College.

To ensure compliance, all policies relating to Child Safety were reviewed by the Child Safety team, the Wellbeing team, and Compliance Officer. All staff new to the College are taken through child safety expectations and shown where to access further information. They are also required to sign the Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct, which outlines acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. Additionally, all staff have completed the DOBCEL SALT online learning modules relating to child safety, reportable conduct, and risk management, as well as the DET Mandatory Reporting Module.

Finally, all meetings continue to have child safety as an agenda item, ensuring that the safety and wellbeing of children remains a top priority in our College community.

Mercy Regional College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children. The organisation takes steps to support and guide staff, volunteers, and leaders to understand, respect, and value Aboriginal culture. This understanding is crucial to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children, and the organisation recognizes the importance of this.

To actively support and facilitate the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal children and their families, Mercy Regional College recognizes and celebrates Aboriginal peoples, their achievements, communities, and cultures. Additionally, the organisation ensures that instances

of racism are consistently identified and addressed, creating a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal children within the organisation.

Mercy Regional College also identifies actions needed to fully implement Standard 1, considering the steps already taken and any gaps identified. A plan of action is put in place, which identifies the person or team responsible for taking action, the resources available, and the timeframe. By taking these measures, Mercy Regional College demonstrates its commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children, especially those from Aboriginal communities.

Standard 2: A child safety policy or a statement of commitment to child safety in the school

We have adopted and fully accepted a comprehensive child safety policy, which can be found on our school's website. Our child safety policy outlines the processes and procedures that we follow to ensure that all students are protected from harm and that our staff is well-equipped to identify and respond to any potential risks.

In addition to the official policy, we have also developed a child-friendly version in collaboration with our young people. We believe it is essential that our students understand the importance of their safety and wellbeing and have a say in shaping our school's policies and practices.

Through our commitment to Standard 2, we strive to create a safe and inclusive environment for all our students, where they can learn and grow free from harm and with the assurance that their wellbeing is our top priority.

Standard 3: A child safety Code of Conduct

To ensure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities and accountabilities, we have established a robust system of annual sign-off and training.

All our staff members, including permanent, full-time, and part-time employees, are required to sign the Code of Conduct annually. This process ensures that everyone understands the College's expectations and is committed to upholding the values of Mercy Regional College.

For CRTs (Casual Relief Teachers) and short-term contract staff, signing the Code of Conduct is a precondition of commencing work at our school. We want to ensure that everyone who works at Mercy Regional College understands the importance of the Code of Conduct and is committed to upholding it.

To further support our staff members in their adherence to the Code of Conduct, we explain it annually to everyone on staff. This training is designed to clarify expectations and provide additional guidance on how to uphold the standards of behaviour and conduct in our school community.

By implementing these measures, we are committed to ensuring that all members of our staff understand and comply with the Code of Conduct, which in turn supports the safety, wellbeing, and success of our students.

Standard 4: School staff selection, supervision & management practices for a child safe environment

Mercy Regional College is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for our students, staff, contractors, and visitors. In line with the new CECV Guidelines on the Employment of Staff in Catholic Schools, we have implemented several processes to ensure compliance and promote the safety and wellbeing of our school community.

One of the key elements of compliance is ensuring that our recruitment processes align with the guidelines. This includes advertising new teaching roles, developing a new teaching role

description, and conducting reference checks. We also have an induction program for new staff members, which includes an outlining of the Child Safety Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

To maintain a register of all contractors, cleaners, and visitors to the College, we have established a school register. This ensures that all visitors to the College are properly accounted for and have been appropriately screened before entering the school grounds.

Relevant staff and volunteers who have direct contact with students are required to have current working with children checks. This is a critical component of our compliance efforts and is designed to ensure that anyone who interacts with our students has been properly vetted.

Our compliance efforts also extend to the employment of contractors and volunteers. All interviews, whether internal or external, and referee checks include questions specific to child safety to ensure that anyone who works with or around our students understands their responsibilities and is committed to upholding the standards of the College.

Guests to the College are encouraged to have a Working with Children Check (WWCC), and anyone who does not have a WWCC is always accompanied by a College staff member while on site. This ensures that all adults who are interacting with our students are properly screened and monitored.

By implementing these processes and compliance measures, we are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for our school community. We believe that these efforts are essential to promoting the wellbeing and success of our students, staff, contractors, and visitors.

Standard 5: Procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of expected abuse.

In addition to complying with the CECV guidelines on the employment of staff in Catholic schools, Mercy Regional College has also implemented processes as recommended by CEB to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students and staff.

One of these processes is the availability of a Complaints Policy for staff to report any concerns related to child safety. This policy outlines the steps to be taken in case of a complaint and ensures that all complaints are taken seriously and addressed promptly.

In Term 1 of each year, staff are informed of the child safety procedures in place at the school during a staff meeting. This includes the use of a new 'PROTECT' document developed across systems, which outlines the steps to be taken in case of a child safety concern.

The school also ensures that students have access to information, support, and complaints processes related to child safety. This includes educating students about online and physical environments available to promote child safety and wellbeing.

Overall, Mercy Regional College is committed to implementing processes and policies that promote the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff, and to ensuring that everyone at the school is aware of the steps to be taken in case of a child safety concern.

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Mercy Regional College has introduced a comprehensive risk management strategy to identify risks to children and ensure timely action to address them. This includes strategies to prevent abuse and recognising indicators of harm, as well as the formation of the Child Safety Committee. All staff are required to complete a mandatory reporting online module annually, and the College has made a public commitment to child safety.

The risk management planning and procedures are implemented to identify possible risks to the safety of young people, with action taken to eliminate or reduce risks. The MRC Child Safety Standards Risk Register was created and is checked annually by the Child Safety team.

Additionally, all staff are Level 2 first aid trained and have refresher training annually in CPR, anaphylaxis, and asthma.

The College continues to incorporate and further develop the principles of Resilience, Rights, and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) into curriculum and pedagogy in line with Standard 7. Risk management planning includes Child Safety references specifically around supervision ratios relating to gender and students with diverse learning needs.

To further support child safety, staff participated in external professional learning, including ReLATE Trauma Informed Practice, the Information Sharing Schemes, and Adult and Youth Mental Health First Aid. Additionally, a more detailed risk management checklist was introduced to be used by staff when planning excursions/incursions in line with DET guidelines. This included consideration of COVID risks.

Overall, the College takes child safety very seriously and has implemented a variety of measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students.

Standard 7: Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation

In addition to the measures mentioned earlier, Mercy Regional College has implemented further strategies to promote child safety. For instance, the College has introduced a comprehensive risk management checklist that staff must use when planning excursions/incursions. This checklist includes a risk assessment of the activity, venue, transportation, and medical requirements. The checklist also takes into account the unique needs of each student, including any medical conditions or disabilities.

Moreover, the College has established procedures for responding to incidents of harm, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Staff members are required to report any concerns or incidents to the designated child safety officer, who will then investigate the matter and take appropriate action. This could involve notifying relevant authorities, offering support and counselling to the affected student, and implementing new strategies to prevent future incidents.

To ensure that students are aware of their rights and have access to support and complaints processes, the College has developed age-appropriate resources that explain child safety principles and the procedures for reporting concerns. Students are also encouraged to speak to their teachers or other trusted adults if they have any concerns about their safety or wellbeing.

Finally, the College regularly reviews and updates its policies and procedures in line with current best practices and legislation. This includes ongoing training and professional development for staff members to ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote a safe and supportive learning environment. Overall, Mercy Regional College is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all students, where their wellbeing and safety are always a top priority.

New 2022 standards

Standard 1

Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

Mercy Regional College (MRC) recognises the importance of cultural safety for Aboriginal children and children of all cultures. This commitment is publicly shared on the College website and is reflected in the policies and procedures related to child safety and wellbeing, such as the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

The policy describes MRC's commitment to respecting and valuing Aboriginal children by encouraging and supporting them to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights. The policy also ensures that staff and volunteers actively support and facilitate the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal children and their families in the organisation. The policy emphasises that racism will not be tolerated within the organisation and outlines the organisation's response to incidents of racism, including potential consequences.

In addition, MRC's Code of Conduct and position descriptions outline expectations of staff and volunteer behaviour, including zero tolerance of racism and the support of children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.

Furthermore, MRC has developed a plan of action to establish a culturally safe environment by 1 July 2023 in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children are respected and valued.

Overall, MRC is committed to creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students, including Aboriginal children, and recognizes the importance of cultural safety in promoting their wellbeing and learning.

Standard 2

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

Mercy Regional College demonstrates a strong commitment to embedding child safety and wellbeing into the leadership, governance and culture of the organisation. A public commitment to child safety is available and displayed on the College website for public access, highlighting the importance placed on this issue. The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy sets out the school's expectations and practices in relation to each of the Standards, providing a clear framework for staff and volunteers to follow.

A Code of Conduct is in place to set expectations regarding the behaviour of staff and volunteers with children, and in promoting and maintaining child safety and wellbeing. This includes expectations around reporting concerns and prioritising the safety of children as part of everyday practice. Leaders, staff, volunteers, members and children in the organisation champion and model a child safe culture, with a clear understanding of their obligations around information sharing and record keeping.

In addition to the official policy, we have also developed a child-friendly version in collaboration with our young people. We believe it is essential that our students understand the importance of their safety and wellbeing and have a say in shaping our school's policies and practices.

Leaders promote a culture of reporting, encouraging all staff and volunteers to report any concerns they may have regarding the safety and wellbeing of children. Governance arrangements mean that senior leaders regularly review the organisation's performance in delivering child safety and wellbeing. They also supervise whether risk assessment and management at MRC properly focused on identifying, preventing and reducing risks of child abuse and harm.

The Code of Conduct is communicated to all staff and volunteers, with leaders holding them accountable for complying with it. This ensures that all members of the school understand their responsibilities in promoting and maintaining a child safe environment. Overall, the commitment to child safety and wellbeing is evident in the policies, procedures, and culture of Mercy Regional College, ensuring that all children are protected from harm and can thrive in a safe and supportive environment.

Standard 3

Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Age-appropriate and easy to understand documents are easily accessible and support children to understand their rights, how adults in our school should behave, the complaints process, and support services available for children. The organisation's policies and procedures promote children's empowerment and participation and embed support for the rights of children. Staff and volunteers engage with children to help them understand their rights, complaints process, and support services. Staff and volunteers are provided with information to help them understand, recognise and act on signs of child abuse or harm. Where relevant, Mercy provides access to sexual abuse prevention programs and other relevant information to children in an age-appropriate and accessible manner. MRC creates opportunities for children to express their views and participate in decisions that impact them. What is heard and learnt from children influences how the organisation works. Staff and volunteers are supported to develop knowledge and skills to help children participate, express their views, and raise their concerns.

In addition to these measures, Mercy Regional College has implemented a comprehensive risk management checklist that staff must use when planning excursions/incursions. The College also has established procedures for responding to incidents of harm, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. The College provides age-appropriate resources that explain child safety principles and the procedures for reporting concerns. Finally, the College regularly reviews and updates its policies and procedures in line with current best practices and legislation. The College is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all students, where their wellbeing and safety are always a top priority.

Standard 4

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

Mercy Regional College policies acknowledge the crucial role of families and communities in promoting child safety and wellbeing, and provide guidance on ways to involve them.

The complaint handling policies include procedures for informing families while maintaining confidentiality and privacy obligations. MRC encourages families and communities to actively participate in promoting and maintaining child safety and wellbeing by communicating about their role in the organisation.

MRC maintains transparency with families and communities by:

- Providing easily accessible information about child safety and wellbeing policies and practices.
- Providing information about the school's governance, operations, complaint handling, disciplinary actions, and risk management.
- Families are given opportunities to participate in decision-making processes that impact the safety and wellbeing of their children. The communication with families considers the diversity of families' backgrounds to ensure everyone's participation.
- Creating opportunities for families and community members to provide feedback on policies, procedures, and practices related to child safety and wellbeing.
- We value and take into account the feedback and involvement of families and communities in improving its policies, procedures, and practices.

Standard 5

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

MRC recognises that every child is unique and may come from diverse backgrounds and circumstances. To ensure that all children are safe and supported, MRC takes steps to understand and respond to the diverse circumstances and needs of children who engage or may engage with the organisation.

Staff and volunteers are provided with information and guidance about children's diverse circumstances, including factors that can increase a child's vulnerability to harm. This includes training and resources to help them identify and respond to signs of abuse or neglect. Staff and volunteers are also provided with information on how to promote equity and safety for all children, regardless of their background or circumstances.

MRC takes action to support and respond to children who are experiencing vulnerability. This includes making inquiries and responding where there are signs of increased vulnerability. Staff and volunteers are trained to take a proactive approach to safeguarding and to report any concerns about a child's welfare to the designated child safety officer.

To uphold equity for all children, promote children's safety, and prevent child abuse and harm, leaders at MRC set clear expectations around achieving equity and respect for diversity. The school ensures that all children are reasonably supported to participate in all activities and programs. This includes providing appropriate accommodations and accessibility measures for children with disabilities or special needs. The Learning Diversity Team leads this space.

MRC also works to create a culture of respect and inclusion where every child feels valued and respected, regardless of their background or circumstances. We recognise the importance of engaging with and learning from the diverse experiences and perspectives of children and young people.

Standard 6

People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

MRC's commitment to child safety and wellbeing is included in employment advertising. Position descriptions clearly outline the role's requirements, duties, and responsibilities related to child safety and wellbeing.

The school's recruitment, human resources, and volunteering policies provide information on recruitment practices that ensure the appointment of suitable people to work with children. Pre-employment screening practices, such as interviewing, referee checks, Working with Children Check, and other background checking are checked. The policies also outline the requirements for an induction on the school's child safety practices.

Induction documents for staff and volunteers include the school's Code of Conduct, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, information on the organisation's child safety practices and complaints process, and reporting, record keeping, and information sharing obligations.

Before recruiting new staff and volunteers, the child safety and wellbeing requirements of each role are assessed. This includes the qualifications, experience, and attributes required, duties and responsibilities with children, and measures required to manage any child abuse or harm risks, such as screening, training, and supervision requirements.

Leaders are given guidance on the steps to take when managing staff or volunteers whose behaviour raises child safety concerns. Staff and volunteers receive an induction that is tailored

to their role's requirements, duties, risks, and responsibilities related to child safety and wellbeing. This includes information on the organisation's child safety practices and complaints process, as well as reporting, record keeping, and information sharing obligations.

Standard 7

Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.

At Mercy Regional College, the complaint handling policy prioritises child safety and wellbeing, and ensures that any complaints made by adults or children are handled promptly and thoroughly. The policy covers a wide range of concerns including alleged abuse or harm of children, breaches of the school's Code of Conduct, and record keeping obligations, and is accessible to all members of the school community. Support and assistance are provided to those making a complaint.

The school also ensures that all staff and students have access to information and support related to child safety. Staff are informed of the child safety procedures in place at the school annually, while students are educated about online and physical environments that promote child safety and wellbeing.

Records are kept of all complaints made to the school, including concerns raised about the safety of children and disclosures about alleged abuse or harm of children, and actions taken to respond. MRC also consults with children, families, and communities when designing and reviewing complaint handling policies and procedures, and regularly reviews these policies and procedures to ensure their effectiveness.

Mercy Regional College is committed to promoting the safety and wellbeing of all students and staff, and to ensuring that everyone in the school community is aware of the steps to be taken in case of a child safety concern. Additionally, the school implements processes recommended by CEBallarat and complies with CECV guidelines on the employment of staff in Catholic schools to further promote child safety and wellbeing.

Standard 8

Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

The training plan for staff and volunteers at Mercy Regional College covers essential topics related to child safety and wellbeing, such as the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, recognising indicators of child abuse and harm, supporting individuals who disclose harm to a child, responding to child safety issues, creating culturally safe environments, and more. Guidance materials are provided to support their understanding and knowledge of child safety, and completion of training is recorded in a register. Staff and volunteers are required to undergo child safety training during induction and at regular intervals, and supervision and management include identifying child safety training needs. SALT modules support and provide information for staff and volunteers in this space.

In addition to training, Mercy Regional College implements several processes to ensure compliance with the new CECV Guidelines on the Employment of Staff in Catholic Schools and promote the safety and wellbeing of the school community. These include aligning recruitment processes with the guidelines, conducting reference checks, establishing a school register of all contractors, cleaners, and visitors, requiring current working with children checks for relevant staff and volunteers, conducting interviews and referee checks that include questions specific to child safety, encouraging guests to have a Working with Children Check, and monitoring adults who interact with students.

Standard 9

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

A risk assessment is conducted to identify risks of harm in both physical and online environments associated with MRC. The risk management plans outline the actions that the organisation will take to prevent or reduce each identified risk of harm. The Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy specify how Mercy ensures the safety of children in physical and online environments, particularly in higher-risk activities.

MRC's risk assessment and management plans are developed in response to the views and concerns of staff, volunteers, and children. These plans aim to balance the need to manage the risk of harm and abuse against children's rights to privacy, access to information, social connections, and learning opportunities. Whenever identified, staff and volunteers take steps to prevent and reduce the risks of child abuse and harm.

We regularly review risk assessments and management plans to keep them up-to-date and to learn from complaints, concerns, and safety incidents. The Leadership team and governance arrangement ensures that risk assessment and management are focused on identifying, preventing, and reducing the risks of child abuse and harm. When negotiating contracts with third parties, the contracts must include terms allowing the organisation to take action if the third party fails to meet expected child safety and wellbeing standards.

When third-party contractors are engaged, our school assesses whether, and to what extent, their engagement poses risks of child abuse and harm. Depending on the level of risk posed by third-party contractors, we take appropriate actions to prevent or reduce risks of child abuse or harm. Such actions may include requiring third-party contractors to comply with the organisation's policies and procedures, monitoring compliance, working together to identify and reduce risks, and, where necessary, terminating the contract to protect children.

The organisation provides appropriate information to staff, volunteers, parents, carers, and children about online safety and the risks present in the online environment, such as online grooming, cyber bullying, and sexting. Support is given to those who report negative experiences or concerns.

Standard 10

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved

All policies and procedures undergo a regular review, which is indicated in the documents. The organisation generates reports that document any reviews and findings related to child safety and wellbeing. Records are maintained for complaints, concerns, allegations, and actions taken to address them. In case of complaints, concerns, safety incidents or significant breaches of policy, such as the Code of Conduct, the organisation investigates to understand the causes and identifies any flaws in the policies, procedures, and practices that contributed to the problem. Any flaws or failings identified are addressed to prevent the problem from recurring. The organisation regularly reviews policies, procedures, and child safe practices and makes improvements based on an analysis of complaints, concerns, safety incidents, and significant breaches of policy, as well as feedback from staff, volunteers, children, families, and communities. The organisation also considers whether it has fully implemented each of the Child Safe Standards. Reports about the findings and actions taken in response to reviews of the organisation's child safe practices are shared with staff, volunteers, children, families, and communities.

Standard 11

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

To ensure the safety of children and young people, the organisation has implemented several policies and procedures. These include a Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy that outlines the expectations and practices in relation to each of the Child Safe Standards, as well as a Code of Conduct that outlines the expected behaviour and responsibilities of staff and volunteers. Additionally, the school conducts regular risk assessments and management plans to address any risks of child abuse and harm. The complaint handling policy and processes are also in place to ensure the organisation responds appropriately to any complaints or concerns. The recruitment, human resources, and volunteering policies have a clear focus on child safety.

The school regularly consults with all stakeholders to ensure that everyone is involved in maintaining child safety. The input received from these consultations, as well as available information on creating child safety and wellbeing, is used to help develop, review and update policies and procedures related to child safety. All policies and procedures cover all Child Safe Standards and address any risks to the safety of children that are specific to the organisation and its environment. Lastly, policies and procedures are designed to be easily understood and accessed by everyone.

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Leadership in a Catholic school is a vital ministry that embodies the mission of the Catholic Church. It promotes a collaborative and positive culture among staff and the community, ensuring a shared sense of direction and purpose. Our school's leadership prioritises effective resource utilisation to enhance student learning outcomes, support teacher development, and meet external accountability standards.

Mercy Regional College prioritises collaborative, consultative, and transformative leadership, supporting staff in their roles and aspirations. We foster a culture of shared responsibility for student learning and success, promoting continuous professional improvement and collective teacher efficacy. MRC's improvement agenda is grounded in research, internal data, and measurable student outcomes, with a commitment to wise resource stewardship to meet the needs of all staff and students.

In accordance with our Mercy Regional College School Improvement Plan 2021 - 2025, the goals and intended outcomes for leadership and management were driven by the following strategic priorities:

Priority One - Vision and Mission: Ensure all guiding documents are reflective of the College's current context and vision for future provision of Catholic education

- Review and Renew Vision, Mission, Values and Mantra
- Develop MRC Learning and Teaching Charter, MRC Wellbeing Framework and MRC Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Priority Two - Leadership and Stewardship: Ensure the development of the appropriate structures, roles and facilities to drive a culture of shared leadership, quality learning, expert teaching and learning engagement

- Design and implement a professional and personal learning program inclusive of coaching and mentoring for POL holders and staff wishing to develop their leadership skills and capabilities.
 - Mercy Leadership : Making a Difference - Year 1

Priority Three - Learning and Teaching: Enhance the MRC learning culture to inspire and enable all to achieve their best

Achievements

Developing leadership behaviours and skill to enhance leadership capabilities remains a priority and all staff were encouraged and supported to continue professional learning and personal development. The College invested significant resources to enable the largest number of staff to participate in leadership capacity, confidence and capability building onsite led by external consultant and MRC learning partner Bern Nicholls Lead Learning - Mercy Leadership - Making a Difference.. A total of 19 staff took up this volunteer opportunity.

The College architect Baldasso Cortese led the enactment of the Master Facilities Plan. The staged plan prioritised our O'Keeffe Junior campus for initial redevelopment and refurbishment. Whilst this was planned to be completed in Term 4, 2022, scarcity of contractors and materials have postponed commencement of this stage until Term 4, 2023.

The College has aligned with CECV accreditation policies to provide its staff with increased opportunities to pursue professional development. The staff can now work towards acquiring accreditation for teaching in a Catholic school, teaching Religious Education (RE), and leading in a Catholic school. The College has also explored various content and delivery options that facilitate the completion of mandated hours. In addition, the College has supported five staff members in completing postgraduate study, resulting in their achievement of a Graduate Certificate of Religious Education (REAP) and one staff member to achieve Master of Religious Education.

The College, in partnership with Catholic Education Ballarat, strongly encourages and provides comprehensive support for postgraduate study. As such, two staff members pursued their studies in the Master of Business Administration - Executive program offered by the Australian Catholic University. The principal completed this qualification in 2022. Moreover, one staff member obtained formal qualification by completing their Bachelor of Education. One staff member was accepted into the inaugural ISMAPNG - Mercy Emerging Leaders in Integral Ecology Fellowship. Additionally, four staff members completed their Certificate IV in Training and Assessment to be able to teach VCE VET, while two other staff members completed their Certificate IV in School-Based Education Support.

The College continues to offer Traineeships to graduating students. These young people remain an important and valued part of our community and currently gain a Certificate IV in either School Based Education Support or Sport and Recreation although other certifications are also possible.

To attract and retain high-quality staff and cultivate leadership potential, the College has improved its Induction and VIT Early Career Teacher Mentor programs with two staff completing professional learning designed to gain VIT Mentor accreditation.

In order to facilitate the effective implementation of the proposed Catholic Education Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2022, the College has initiated planning efforts. This involves intensifying its efforts to assist teachers, leaders, and teams in improving their work practices and creating greater efficiency, as well as developing new systems, incorporating technologies, adjusting communication protocols, and re-imagining ways of working.

At the College, staff are provided with extensive opportunities for professional learning to ensure that their professional knowledge and practice remain up-to-date and in line with the latest school development and improvement trends. This is achieved by building the capacity and capability of all staff, embedding professional learning in work contexts, empowering staff to personalise their PL program, and encouraging collaboration among staff to share their skills, knowledge, and expertise.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2022

Professional Learning activities for 2022

- Unit 3 Media Online Seminar, Online
- VCAA Senior Pathways Webinar, Online
- VCE Biology Conference, Online

- VCE Health and Human Development – Delivering Unit 3 School-based Assessment, Online
- Teen Mental Health First Aid, Mercy Regional College
- STAV VCE Chemistry Conference, Online
- SWTAFE VETDSS PLANNING DAY, WARRNAMBOOL
- VCTA Business Management update, Treacy Centre, 126 The Avenue, Parkville
- L4L Presentation Planning, O'Keeffe Campus
- TAE40116 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment Qualification - Registered Secondary School Teach, Online
- NAPLAN training webinar, Online
- ILSY Program Executive Leader's Program, St Brigid's Horsham
- GCTRE (REAP) Day 2, Ballarat
- SLL Network Meeting, Online
- L4L Presentation, MacKillop Rooms-Ballarat
- CEB Leading 4 Learning Presentation Day, Ballarat
- SLL Network Meeting, Online
- Elevate Meeting, Online
- ILSY 2021 cohort Network Meeting, Online
- Respect Effect - Staff PD, Emmanuel College / Virtual
- H&HD PD Session, Online
- Clean Air in Educational Spaces Webinar, Webinar
- Mercy Education Deputy Principal's Seminar, Online
- Aboriginal history and culture seminar/ Theatre Royal, Camperdown Theatre Royal
- Aboriginal culture tour, Camperdown and Surrounds
- LDL CEOB Meeting, LDL CEOB Meeting
- VCE English PD, Online
- VCE Network from coursework to exam, Online
- Legal Studies Teacher Toolkit, Online
- VCTA Reviewing the exam - Business Management, Webinar
- Jacaranda VCE Biology SAC Workshop, Online
- Mercy Leadership : Making a Difference, McAuley
- VCTA Legal Studies exam review, Webinar
- SIMON Training, Ballarat - CEB
- DOBCEL - CEB Leadership Gathering Horsham, Horsham

- ILSY Project Learning Area Leaders Day 1, The Red Lion Ballarat
- Cura Education Meeting- 10 English 2023, Online
- Graduate Teacher Program, Horsham
- Preparing for 2023 Study design English, Online
- Meeting with DP Mentor, Zoom
- Meeting with Bernie Tolan DOBCEL to review RE curriculum Documents, McAuley Campus
- MAV meet the assessors, Online
- Wellbeing Network Meeting, Emmanuel
- SLAV Meeting, St Joseph's Primary School Warrnambool
- Ballarat Tech Hummingbird PL, MRC McAuley
- REAP Session 2, Ballarat or online
- ILSY Project Learning Area Leaders Day 2, The Red Lion Ballarat
- Prayer Renewal Process, MRC - Boardroom
- Careers Network Meeting No. 1, Warrnambool
- VIT mentor meeting, McAuley Campus
- PAVCSS General Meeting - New Agreement, Virtual
- MBAE Corporate Finance, Catholic Leadership Centre
- REL Cluster Meeting, online
- ATOM PL: VCE MEDIA SAT, Graduate House, University of Melbourne 220 Leicester Street Carlton, VIC 3053
- Secondary Principals EBA Discussion, CLC
- Unit 4 Legal Studies PL, Webinar
- LTAV Inservice and Annual Meeting, Timboon P12
- ILSY Project Learning Area Leaders Day 3 (online), Online
- Universal Learning Program Australian Conference / Visit to SHC, Melbourne and Geelong
- All staff Meeting - Gender, Identity, Diversity and Inclusion - Bree Gorman
- Indigenous Art in the Classroom, Webinar and workshop
- VCE Business Management Unit 4 PL, Webinar
- New Evidence informed practise in Teaching English, Online at school in board room or class room
- 2022 VCE Legal Update, Webinar
- DOBCEL SLLN Meeting - HORSHAM, St Brigid's College Horsham
- SLLN Meeting- Horsham, Horsham

- Indigenous Perspectives Adventure, South West Victoria
- MRC Aboriginal Culture Camp, Framlingham and Warrnambool
- Teaching Poetry - opportunities for Poetry in Education , Via Facebook - at home
- MRC Aboriginal Culture Camp, Lake Condah and Budj Bim
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art in the Classroom PL, Online Webinar
- DOBCEL Principals Meeting, Mildura
- MAV New VCE Methods Study Design Webinar, My computer
- LDL Secondary Meeting - Horsham, Horsham
- Reviewing and Redesigning RE Awakenings Units, McAuley - classroom
- SLLN Meeting , Online
- Designated Teacher Training, Online
- 7-10 Resource Sharing Webinar, Online
- HCSN Principals Meeting, Mortlake
- YR 12 Cross Marking, Warrnambool College
- Immerse Me Languages PD, Videoconference
- Multi species pasture and healthy soils workshop, Bamba Hall
- RE VCAL PD , Online
- SIMON PD, Ararat
- Vic Parliament law reform panel, Webinar
- ILSY Project Learning Area Leaders Day 4 (online), Online
- ReLATE Meeting with Ben, online
- ILSY Meeting- MRC and Melbourne Uni, Online
- VTAC Webinar, Online
- DOBCEL Leadership Gathering, Horsham
- REAP Session 3, Ballarat on-site
- VCAA Business Management - implementing the new Study Design (2023) , Webinar
- Edutech, Melbourne
- BDSP Meeting - Hamilton, Hamilton
- REL Conference, Mercure Hotel Ballarat.
- ACER Research Conference , Online
- Ballarat Principal Consultation, Ballarat
- VCAA- VCE-VM & VPC PL, Warrnambool Bowls Club
- Wellbeing Leaders Network Day, Swan Hill

- Southern Zone LDL,Koroit
- Countdown to the Bus Man exam,Webinar
- VCAA Chemistry New Study Design Webinar,Online
- Countdown to the Exam - Legal Studies,Webinar
- ISLY Project Learning Area Leaders Day 5,The Red Lion Ballarat
- Careers Network Meeting for Term 3,SW TAFE Warrnambool
- MRC Vision, Mission, Values and Mantra Working Party,McAuley Library
- Managing Student Disability - Adjustments, Behaviour & Discipline,Online
- LawSense Managing Student Behaviour & Discipline - Non-State Schools,School
- Staff Retreat,Santa Casa, Queenscliff
- Peak Phys Ed Exam Preparation Webinar,Online
- VCE Media Units 3&4 Exam Revision Seminar,Webinar
- VCD U3&4 Exam Revision Lecture,online
- Meeting with SW Llens leaders,MRC Library
- Scope and Sequencing for Respectful Relationships curriculum,Webinar
- Melbourne Business Manager Briefing- Interim wage increase,Online
- ISLY Program Executive Leaders online day,Online
- Managerial Marketing MBA Unit,Online
- De-escalation Training,Cranbourne
- Building Data Literacy in Our Schools,Ballarat
- Presentation with Tania Rowen - ADHD
- Anaphylaxis Auto Injector Course,Camperdown College
- Ballarat Diocesan Leadership Gathering,Horsham
- VTAC ATAR and Scaling,Online through VTAC
- DOBCEL Senior Leaders of Learning Network Meeting ,Online
- PD on new English study design ,Melbourne
- Meeting with Susan Rampling (DOBCEL),Online
- VCAA Unit 3 & 4 HHD Exam Entry,Camperdown College
- Visit to Marymede Catholic College - PB4L,Marymede Catholic College Morang
- BDSP Leadership Gathering,Colac
- Elevate Meeting,Zoom Meeting
- VAL DOBCEL Mapping,Meeting Room 1
- Mercy Education Deputy Principal's Seminar,ECW (Wed and Thurs) MRC (Fri)

- CDES Psychology New Study Design,Online
- SWTAFE PLANNING DAY,WARRNAMBOOL
- 2023 Transition - Grade 6 teacher meetings,McAuley Boardroom
- VCAA Examination Meetings,Online
- Literature Curriculum Planning for 2023 - Units 1 to 4,576 Vic Parade, East Melbourne
- VAL DOBCEL Mapping,Meeting Room 1
- REL Cluster Meeting
- Edrolo textbook webinar,office
- Online conference - Innovations in Attendance ,Online
- VCAA VET Statewide Online Webinar - Online Module 1,Online
- Learn, Energise ,Connect 2022,Scoreseby. Melbourne
- VET PD webinars,McAuley campus
- VCAA VET Statewide Online Webinar - Online Module 2,Online
- MAV Math Conference,La Trobe University, Bundoora
- VCAA VET Statewide Online Webinar - Online Module 3,Online
- Marion College Visit,Marion College Ararat
- Cultural Safety in the Classroom,Webinar

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2022	47
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$335

TEACHER SATISFACTION

Results from our School Improvement Teacher Survey as follows:

Scale for Survey is 1 - Not at all to 7 - All the Time

- Average response for Teachers feeling positive at school was 4.8
- Average response for Teachers feeling stressed at School was 3.8
- Average response for Teachers feeling energetic at School was 4.8

Scale for Survey is 1 - Strongly Disagree to 5 - Strongly Agree

- Average response to 'There is good communication between staff and leaders in this school' was 3.0
- Average response to 'The leaders in this school can be relied upon when things get tough' was 3.6
- Average response to 'The school's leaders have a good understanding of the challenges which occur at my school' was 3.3

- Average response to 'I am always clear about what others in this school expect of me' was 3.3
- Average response to 'I am clear about my professional responsibilities' was 3.7
- Average response to 'There is good teamwork in this school' was 3.3
- Average response to 'Staff frequently discuss and share teaching methods and strategies with each other' was 3.3
- Average response to 'The staff are committed to the school's goals and values' was 3.5
- Average response to 'I am encouraged in my work by praise, thanks or other recognition' was 3.3
- Average response to 'I receive regular feedback from a range of sources about my performance in this school' was 2.7
- Average response to 'There are opportunities in this school for developing new skills' was 3.5
- Average response to 'Staff in this school experience a lot of stress' was 3.4
- Average response to 'The rules and sanctions relating to discipline in this school are well understood by staff and students' was 2.8
- Average response to 'Students are treated with respect in this school' was 4.2
- Average response to 'Students are generally well-behaved in this school' was 3.8
- Average response to 'Students at this school are really motivated to learn' was 2.8
- Average response to 'Teaching practice in this school engages students in their learning' was 3.3
- Average response to 'The staff in this school communicate effectively with parents' was 3.2
- Average response to 'The curriculum in this school is well planned' was 3.1
- Average response to 'Teaching at a Catholic school is very important to me' was 3.7

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	90.2%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	82.5%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	17.1%
Graduate	39.0%
Graduate Certificate	12.2%
Bachelor Degree	78.0%
Advanced Diploma	7.3%
No Qualifications Listed	14.6%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	43.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	34.1
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	38.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	26.7
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	1.0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

At Mercy Regional College, we understand that authentic community engagement thrives on a powerful and significant partnership between the school and parents, caregivers, and families. This involves a shared vision and goals for the education and well-being of students, with active participation and involvement from community members, including parents, caregivers, alumni, local organisations, and businesses.

Effective communication and collaboration among all stakeholders are essential to building a strong and genuine community connection, enhancing both the sense of belonging and safety for young people and all community members. This can be achieved by establishing open lines of communication, encouraging and facilitating active engagement in school activities and events, and opportunities for community members to contribute their skills, expertise, and resources to support holistic student learning.

Authentic community connection requires a commitment to inclusivity and diversity, with an appreciation and respect for different cultures, backgrounds, abilities, identities and perspectives. This involves creating a welcoming and inclusive school environment that values and celebrates the diversity of the community, and actively works to promote equity and social justice.

Our objectives encompass:

- Continuing to foster stronger relationships with parents, caregivers, and families through regular communication and collaboration, such as parent-teacher- student conferences, family engagement events, and volunteer opportunities.
- Developing partnerships with local organisations, businesses, and community leaders to provide direct support for student learning, such as community action projects, visits to local businesses and business operations linked to learning, volunteering, mentorship programs, work experience and work placement and VCE VET and VCAL projects and learning experiences.
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive school environment that values and celebrates diversity, through initiatives such as diversity week, diversity training for staff and students, and student-led initiatives that promote inclusion and equity.
- Increasing participation and engagement in school events and activities, such as sports, milestones celebrations, liturgy, and academic competitions, by promoting these events to the wider community through social media, newsletters, and community outreach.
- Enhancing opportunities for community service and civic engagement, through partnerships with local non-profit organisations and community service initiatives, such as volunteer days and events and fundraising events and therefore amplifying the positive reputation of MRC in the wider community.
- Establishing regular communication and collaboration with both our HCSN Catholic Primary School and State feeder schools, to ensure a smooth transition for students entering MRC and to promote a cohesive learning journey from primary to secondary education whilst creating a Foundation to 12 Catholic learning experience.

- Enhancing our school advisory council in order to provide input and feedback on school policies, programs, and initiatives, and to serve as a liaison between MRC, the HCSN and the wider community.

Achievements

Mercy Regional College has continued to place great importance on strengthening our partnership with parents, carers, and families in regards to the language and practice of schooling. This has been achieved through the ongoing enhancement of the SIMON and Parent Access Module (PAM) which are used as our primary source of information for parents. We also introduced The Week Ahead for all year levels. The use of SMS messaging has also proven effective in capturing parent and carer attention to important emails, letters, and employment advertising. We adopted a mixed-mode format for parent-teacher-student learning conferences, allowing for both face-to-face and virtual conferences to better meet the needs and preferences of parents and carers.

Our social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, have developed as informative and promotional instruments for the school. These platforms have seen sustained growth in followers, promoting and engaging the community in the learning activities of the school. In addition, a dedicated alumni page has been created to enhance the alumni group following and support.

We are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse community at MRC. We are proud to offer a quality education that is accessible to all, and we are constantly seeking new ways to promote and enhance the learning experiences of our young people. We have adopted an expanded marketing approach that highlights the positive learning journey, diverse pathways, and outcomes available to young people who join our community.

We believe that an education at MRC is one that should be accessible to all young people. We have worked to increase our community reach, accessing enhanced services to ensure that each household in the region receives our invitational flyer to join our community. We developed an Equity and ATSI Scholarships Program with the aim of making an education at MRC more accessible to a diverse range of individuals.

This year, Mercy Regional College (MRC) held its inaugural Diversity Week, aimed at celebrating and raising awareness of various forms of diversity within our community. The event focused on promoting and recognising cultural and religious diversity, gender diversity, linguistic diversity, and neurodiversity. The week served as an opportunity for students and staff to celebrate and learn more about the diverse backgrounds and experiences that exist within our community, fostering a greater sense of inclusivity and understanding.

Our VCAL students' partnership with Parks Victoria, Corangamite Shire Council, and Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation to care for the Wombeech Puyuun Reconciliation Park is a remarkable example of community involvement in learning. We take great pride in this project, which received grant funding from the Victorian Junior Landcare and Biodiversity Grants Program, as well as a VCAL Innovative Community Partnership Grant. This initiative not only demonstrates our commitment to the community but also provides our students with valuable hands-on experience and opportunities for personal growth and development.

We greatly value our membership in local sport and learning networks, including the Hampden Secondary Schools Sports District and both South West TAFE and Corangamite Trade Training Cluster, which enhance our educational offerings and provide our students with a well-rounded and engaging learning experience. Our involvement in these networks allows our students to participate in community events, enhance their skills through VET classes offered onsite and at

partner institutions, and engage with students from other schools. We have expanded our VET onsite learning opportunities to include students from other schools in the region and aim to host VCE students in the future through a shared VCE tuition program. MRC is a Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited governed school, a Catholic Education Ballarat secondary school, and a Mercy Education Limited affiliate school, and we highly value these community networks.

We highly value our membership in local sport and learning networks, including the Hampden Secondary Schools Sports District and the Corangamite Trade Training Cluster. Our involvement in these networks allows our students to participate in community events, enhance their skills through VET classes offered onsite and at partner institutions, and engage with students from other schools inclusive of other local Catholic Secondary Colleges in Trinity College Colac and Emmanuel College Warrnambool. Our VET onsite learning opportunities have expanded to include students from other schools in the region, and we aim to host VCE students in the future through a shared VCE tuition program. These partnerships enhance our educational offerings and provide our students with a well-rounded and engaging learning experience. MRC is a Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited governed school, a Catholic Education Ballarat secondary school as well as a Mercy Education Limited affiliate school, two community networks we greatly value.

We continue to value our membership of local region sport and learning networks. Participating in the Hampden Secondary Schools Sports District events as part of School Sport Victoria provides our young people an opportunity to enhance their community involvement through sport. Our Y 10 -12 students also join with students from other Corangamite and Moyne Shire schools in VET classes offered extensively onsite at MRC as well as at South West TAFE and through the Corangamite Trade Training Cluster. MRC VET onsite learning opportunities also include students from Trinity College Colac and Emmanuel College Warrnambool. We hope that in the future MRC will host VCE students from the many local State Secondary College's through a shared VCE tuition program.

At MRC, we greatly value our membership in the Hampden Catholic School Network, which has continued to grow in effectiveness. Our Taster Day initiative is an important part of our efforts to enhance the transition experience for HCSN primary school students. We invite these young people onto our campus once each term, providing them with the opportunity to become familiar with our learning environment and bus transport system, as well as the chance to meet students from other HCSN primary schools.

We recognise that many of our Year 7 students attend a range of state primary schools across our region. To provide a similar transition opportunity for these students, we introduced an invitational "Discover and Connect" program for students in Year 5 and 6. This program allows these students and their teachers to access some of our excellent STEAM facilities and equipment, providing them with a glimpse into the learning opportunities available at MRC.

We are committed to creating a seamless and supportive transition for all students who join our community, regardless of their background or previous schooling experience. We believe that these initiatives will help us to achieve this goal and foster a strong sense of community within the Hampden region.

We greatly value the work and support of our College Advisory Council. To ensure the council was representative of our community, we implemented a comprehensive recruitment strategy that emphasised diversity, knowledge, and connectivity among parents and community members. Through this approach, we have cultivated a more diverse and knowledgeable board that understands the needs and perspectives of all students and families in our community. As a result,

the council has made more informed decisions, increased transparency, fostered greater community engagement, and ensured effective stewardship of the college's resources.

VALUE ADDED

Community Information and Engagement:

- MRC Community Book Club
- MRC Presentation Ball
- MRC Graduation
- Lions Youth of the Year Quest
- Mercy Regional College Open Day
- Catholic Education Week
- MRC Arts and Technology Exhibition
- ANZAC and Remembrance Day Community Events
- Camperdown Uniting Church Community Meals
- MRC Community Meals
- Wombeech Puyuun Reconciliation Park Care and Maintenance Partnership - Eastern Maar, Parks Victoria and Corangamite Shire
- MRC Staff Aboriginal Perspectives and Community Connection Professional Learning Experience - Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Co-Operative Ltd, native Planting at Camperdown Golf Club, First Nations local history retelling

Experiential and Extra Curricular Learning Opportunities:

- Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Co-Operative Ltd Welcome Smoking Ceremony
- Indigenous Perspectives Adventure - All-ages Culture Camp - Collaboration with Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Co-Operative Ltd
- Alpine Ski Experience
- School Sport Victoria - SSV HSSSD and Greater Western Region Sport
- Schools Clay Shooting and Golf
- Y 7, 8, 9 Camps, Y 11 Job Camp, Y 10 and 12 Retreats
- MRC Student Leadership Development Program - GRIP Conference
- DAV Debating
- Frayne Speech Festival
- CEP Rural Youth Ambassador Program
- Australian Mathematics Competition
- Australian Science Competition

- White Card Training
- RSA and First Aid Certification for senior students

Curricular Programs:

- Y 12 Seminar Day program
- Y 7 Faith Days
- House Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country Events
- MRC and House Feast Days
- Y 11 Careers Expo
- Y 8 PEAK

PARENT SATISFACTION

Results from our School Improvement Parent Survey as follows:

Scale for Survey is 1 - Not at All to 7 - All the Time

- Average response for 'The academic standards at this school provide adequate challenge for my child' was 4.0
- Average response for 'My child's homework helps them with their learning' was 3.6
- Average response for 'My child enjoys the learning they do at school' was 4.0
- Average response for 'My child looks forward to going to school' was 4.6
- Average response for 'My child is developing good social skills' was 5.4
- Average response for 'My child gets on well with other students at school' was 5.9
- Average response for 'My child has been teased recently at school' was 2.7
- Average response for 'There is good two-way communication between the staff and parents at my child's school' was 3.3
- Average response for 'I have an opportunity to get involved in planning and deciding things at this school if I want to' was 3.4
- Average response for 'My child's school reports are very helpful' was 2.9
- Average response for 'Overall, I am satisfied with the education my child receives from their school' was 3.9
- Average response for 'The teachers at my child's school manage student behaviour fairly' was 3.7
- Average response for 'The teachers at my child's school are very good at making learning fun' was 3.6
- Average response for 'The teachers at my child's school are extremely dedicated' was 4.0

- Average response for 'The behaviour of other students interrupts my child's learning was 4.3
- Average response for 'The staff in this school collaborate effectively with parents to optimise the learning of students' was 3.4
- Average response for 'My child is well prepared for the next stage of their education' was 4.1

Scale for Survey is 1 - Strongly Disagree to 5 Strongly Agree

- Average response for 'My child attending a Catholic school is very important to me' was 2.7
- Average response for 'Staff at this school are always fair to others' was 2.7
- Average response for 'Students at this school always care about others' was 2.4
- Average response for 'My child has the opportunity to participate in social justice activities' was 4.1