



**St Margaret
Mary's School**

Preschool to Year 6



2023 Principal Report

Kelly Campbell

St Margaret Mary's School and Preschool were in a very strong position in 2023 and we were excited to be able to introduce some new and innovative learning programs across the school. Guided by our Annual Improvement Plan, our focus was continuing to deepen the learning experiences of all students, enhance wellbeing, increase visibility of our Catholic Identity and continue to build our resources and infrastructure.

St Margaret Mary's School is founded in the Josephite Charism. Staff focussed on making our Charism and tradition more visible in our community. We began with a whole staff day in January, facilitated by Luka Parry, to take us through our wellbeing program and culture of our school. We identified that we wanted to make our charism more visible and enhance our school values. Our staff reflection day was held in Kensington and we immersed ourselves in the story of St Mary MacKillop, the Josephite story and the history of the school. From our day, staff decided that we would rename our sports teams to reflect this history. We re-launched our teams: MacKillop, Grady, Daly and Margaret. We continue to work to make our values more visible in the school and explicitly teach these to all our classes. Increased signage and visibility of our values has been achieved and this is continuing through our work with PBIS (Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support).

We began our journey with PBIS in 2023. PBIS is a 3-tier framework to support schools to create a positive culture of behaviour for all in the community and support for students who may need intervention. We have a team made up of teaching staff, leadership and ESOs. Our values: Compassion, Integrity, Justice, Responsibility and Perseverance form the basis of our whole school matrix. This matrix will be launched in early 2024. To support our agreed matrix, we are working through explicit lessons and procedures to enhance safety and wellbeing for all in our community. In 2024, we will begin our focus on tier 2, specific support for students who may need interventions and support.

The Catholic Identity of our school is further enhanced through good learning and teaching in Religious Education. In 2023, Kylie Rivera and Matthew Harrison were a part of a CESA Collaborative Inquiry Project: Assessment and Moderation in Religious Education. They have explored rich assessment in RE and moderation of Crossways Curriculum Units.

Quality Teaching and Learning continue to be a focus across all areas of St Margaret Mary's School. In 2023, we focussed on examining our data and evidence of student learning to identify areas of improvement. We have been pleased with the improvement in student learning in literacy. A strong focus on Re-Igniting Writing in all year levels has shown some improvements. Teachers are supported in planning their genre writing, explicit teaching and modelling of good writing texts by Lucy Krause, EAL/D teacher. Teachers plan for assessment and moderate using rubrics based on the LEAP levels and the Australian Curriculum. Daily writing and increasing the stamina of students in this area is an ongoing goal.

We expanded our MultiLit suite of resources in 2023, with the introduction of MiniLit, the intervention program to complement InitialLit taught in Years R-2. In our second year of InitialLit implementation, we saw good gains in student results, with our school being identified as one of the schools with a high level of growth in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check. I'd especially like to thank our R-2 teachers for their hard work and dedication in implementing this program. We also now have 4 fully qualified ESOs to plan and deliver our MiniLit and MacqLit literacy intervention programs.

In 2023, we were excited to introduce 2 new learning programs for our students. All R-6 students were able to access their STEM curriculum with a STEM specialist teacher. This program was designed for both the classroom teacher and specialist teacher to teach this part of the curriculum. The aim is to embed STEM more fully across

the curriculum. This program will continue in 2024, with a strongest focus on digital technologies. St Margaret Mary's School now also has a strong Gifted and Talented program for learners in Years 2-6. Greg Parker, our Gifted and Talented Educator, works with identified students in the areas of Philosophy and Ethics for Children and non-routine Mathematics. Students are identified by teacher, parent and peer nomination as well as from data and evidence of curriculum learning. This program was enhanced through participation in the state Primary Mathematics Challenge. Our Year 2-4 Extension group were recognised with the State Winning Entry in their category, and Year 5/6LO gained Highly Commended. The Gifted and Talented Program also offered selected 5/6 students the opportunity to be in the State Tournament of Minds program. They prepared for 3 months and presented admirably at the state competition in September.

Students are continually supported in their learning and wellbeing through adjustments made in their learning and teaching. Some students require some tailored support for their learning and this is offered in a variety of ways including: small group work in the classroom, adjusted tasks and assessment, alternative level curriculum, speech and language programs, intensive intervention, 1-1 ESO support for learning or wellbeing, movement/OT support. Many students are also supported by allied health professionals that may be funded through NDIS. We have a good working relationship with these professionals and take the opportunities to work in partnership. We had been supported by a speech pathologist once per week through the Partnerships in Practice program (CESA) in 2022 and 2023. This has concluded and we are working towards utilising other allied health professionals to continue to offer this additional service to families. Student receiving additional support have a Personalised Plan for Learning (PPL). Teachers document and plan adjustments and intervention through PPLs. Parents/carers and allied health also have input into these plans. Each semester, teachers meet with families to monitor and review progress.

In 2023, we began the introduction of Case Management Meetings. These are an opportunity for staff to discuss a student in their class that they may like some support with. It does not necessarily have to be a struggling student but is often a student that they believe is not always reaching their full potential. The discussion is focussed on strategies to try and teachers invite a colleague to these conversations. Our aim is to ensure every child has the chance to fulfill their potential and to tap into the wisdom of colleagues.

Our Preschool is an integral part of St Margaret Mary's School community. Our excellent learning program and purpose-built facilities continue to offer a high-quality Early Years Program. This program is supported through our Playgroup and Occasional Care Program. In 2023, we consulted the community and have made changes to our preschool hours. We were finding that half days were becoming increasingly difficult for working families and now offer the 15 hours per week in a 5-day fortnight. Our Preschool underwent an assessment and rating process in March. This process ensures that we are meeting all the Quality Area Standards and involved submission of plans, documents, policies, procedures, as well as a 2-day observation from the Education Standards Board. We are pleased that we met all standards. A special thank you to Maria Iovino, Alicia Boylan, Julia Pollifrone, Chloe Van Mourik and Vicky Manalo for all their hard work in preparing for the assessment.

At the end of Term 2, we farewelled Assistant Principal, Alicia Boylan. We undertook an extensive recruitment process and were very pleased to appoint Belinda Elliott to this permanent position in Term 3. Our school is guided by the School Quality Performance Team. This team meets fortnightly and plans for school improvement and works for the smooth functioning of our school. Our SQPT is supported by CESA School Performance Leaders and Amanda Humeniuk sometimes joins these meetings. Our SQPT consists of Kelly Campbell (Principal), Belinda Elliott (Assistant Principal), Rebecca Braidwood (Leader of Learning) and Matthew Harrison (APRIM). In 2024, we are expanding our SQPT to include Maria Iovino (Preschool Leader) in recognition of the vital role the Preschool plays in our community and learning program.

Our preschool is part of a three-year action research project focused on Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogies with UniSA and Western Sydney University. We developed a research question 'how can engaging with families strengthen our understanding of children's language assets?' Through this project we have learned that informal ways of connecting children and families offered more depth and understanding about children/family's life worlds, e.g., encouraging families to spend time within the space and with their child. Capturing moments of children listening to and using language other than English, supported the learning community in valuing cultural difference, improving children and families' sense of belonging.

In 2023, we extended our use of the Student Management System, SEQTA. All teachers prepared their assessments and reporting using SEQTA. This system allows teachers to plan for and input assessments to assist in moderating grades for students. It also allows for greater consistency in absentee records and extracurricular activities. Thank you to Michelle Leonardi and Belinda Elliott for guiding us through this new system.

We continued our improvement of the facilities in 2023 by completing the playground project. The oval space was resurfaced and the hard play area was resurfaced and painted. The under-croft area is the final part of this project and then we start on our new plan! We have engaged Detail Studio to work with us in developing our New Master Plan. Our Master Planning process is a chance to look at our current facilities, review their suitability and plan for the next stage of development of the school. The Master Plan process will include all stakeholders: students, parents, wider parish and staff.

We finished 2023 in a positive position with steady enrolments, allowing us to increase our classes in 2024. We continue to make decisions about structures of classes based on student need, best practice pedagogy and wellbeing of students. We are excited to be able to offer a wide range of experiences for our families whilst keeping our fees unchanged for the past 3 years.

Some of the experiences offered in 2023 include:

Journey to Emmaus	Year 1 Nature Education Incursion
Reception zoo excursion	Year 2 zoo excursion
Year 3/4 zoo excursion	Year 5/6 camp
ReLat – Year 4s	Drumbeat wellbeing program
What's the Buzz social skills	Children's University
Masses and Liturgies	Parish Sacramental Program
PPL reviews with families	Whole School Sports Day
Student Leadership Team	Harmony Day
Pulse wellbeing surveys	Preschool, Foundation and Reception transition
NAPLAN/PAT/InitialLit assessments	Community Event
Lacrosse Carnival	Year 6 Aquatics
R-5 Swimming	Talk Money incursions
Whole School Assemblies	Robotics Incursions
Bookweek activities and parade	Catholic Schools Music Festival
Outreach Day	Interschool Soccer
Interschool Basketball	Netball carnival
Interschool Swimming	Interschool athletics
Year 6 podcasting	Green Adelaide Project
Diwali Festival	Mid-Autumn Festival
Preschool Celebrations of Learning	Year 6 Lunch and Graduation
Italian Incursion performance	School Disco

I'd like to thank the wonderful members of our school board who volunteer their time to assist in the continuous improvement of our school: Anita Herzig (chair), Fr Charles Lukati (President), Michelle Leonardi (Staff representative), Anh Nguyen (Deputy Chair), Truc Tran (finance), Sharyn Gromitsaris (finance), Scott Nguyen, Mandy Webb and Carly Lewis. A special thank you to Ody and Sharyn Gromitsaris for their coordination of the Green Adelaide, Adopt-a-Verge Project.

All staff at St Margaret Mary's School work tirelessly to ensure a safe, inclusive and quality learning environment for all members of our community. They keep the child at the centre of everything we do and are dedicated to

supporting every child. They all take on extra responsibility to make sure all children have a wide variety of rich experiences at school. I thank them for their amazing efforts throughout the year.

Thank you to all our parents and carers for entrusting your precious children to our care. We are very grateful to be working and in a community that promotes authentic partnership and open communication.

Thank you for your continuing support,

Kelly Campbell

Principal