



St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School The Basin

2020

Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 1857

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Contact Details

ADDRESS	1264 Mountain Highway The Basin VIC 3154
PRINCIPAL	Peter Steward
PARISH PRIEST	Fr Mirek Knap
SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR	Jennifer Kennedy
TELEPHONE	03 9762 5135
EMAIL	principal@sbthebasin.catholic.edu.au
WEBSITE	www.sbthebasin.catholic.edu.au
E NUMBER	E1328

Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Peter Steward, attest that St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School 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 2020 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

21/05/2021

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

Our School Vision

Alive in the Spirit,

We journey with Christ.

Striving for excellence,

We shape our future.

School Overview

St Bernadette's is a Catholic Parish Primary school, situated in the outer eastern suburbs of Melbourne, and is one of two primary schools in the Parish of Boronia. The school is located in a semi-rural setting, in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. Pupils come from residential estates, both new and established, as well as large rural blocks with access to the wildlife of the Dandenong Ranges. Within this setting, the children enjoy a range of recreational activities.

At the August Census the school had an enrolment of 203 students from Foundation to Year 6. This included 2 Prep classes commencing their primary school education. The school is supported by active parent groups, some of which include: The School Advisory Board, Parents and Friends, Landcare/School Working Bee, Hot Lunch Group and numerous parents who volunteer to assist in the classroom. At St Bernadette's, we believe that teaching is a relational activity ~ it's about people and their interactions. We seek to cultivate a sense of belonging, co-operation and compassion. We strive to draw students, parents, staff and the parish priest into an essential partnership that promotes growth of every individual and the health of the whole community.

Here at St Bernadette's, staff are 'Alive in the Spirit', working in a collaborative manner, sharing the vision, encouraging professional interchange, collaboration and networking with other schools. Staff, children and parents are encouraged to foster openness and trust as we 'Shape our Future'.

Through the development of our School Improvement Plan after our 2016 School Review we identified five key goals to improve student outcomes, these include:

- To promote a strong professional learning culture within the Catholic school context.
- To strengthen the collaborative partnership between home, school and the wider community to enhance the learning and wellbeing of students.
- To empower students to be motivated, resilient and responsible learners with a strong connectedness to school.
- To improve student outcomes through expert teaching and evidenced based practices within our Catholic context where every student believes in their ability to achieve.
- To strengthen St Bernadette's as an authentic Catholic community in which all are supported and encouraged to live their faith in a contemporary world.

Principal's Report

The following Annual Report to the School Community is based on data and evidence from the 2020 school year. We hope that you find this information valuable and a reflection of the substantial achievements of St Bernadette's School, The Basin, in 2020.

The annual report of 2020 will have many references to the impact of COVID19 on the school as this was the reality of the challenges that were being faced by the wider community. The staff of St Bernadette's are very proud of the manner in which our school built upon the strong partnerships with all families to continue learning throughout the challenges of 2020.

St Bernadette's has always recognised the primary role of the family in education. Families are the first educators of their children and this is why it is important for families and schools to work together in partnership. This partnership was essential to the success of the learning program that was delivered to our community during extended periods of remote learning and on return to onsite learning throughout 2020.

The teaching and learning program provided during COVID19 school closures was very well-received by the students and parents. All staff at St Bernadette's were committed to ensuring that support was provided to every student and all school families to ensure continuity of learning and developmental growth. There were over 100 school laptops and Chromebooks loaned out to families to enable multiple students from the same family to access the learning program at the same time. Google meets were held at regular times throughout the school day to ensure that students stayed connected with their teachers and classmates and maintained face to face instruction. St Bernadette's teachers and Learning Support Officers also provided google meets for small group work and additional support for students who otherwise may not have been able to experience success. There were whole school assemblies held online each week to ensure that our whole school community was able to maintain connection with fun themes to brighten up the week.

Supporting the emotional wellbeing of all members of our community was the main focus during this year of uncertainty and challenges. On the return to onsite schooling, staff prioritised providing learning opportunities for students to reconnect with each other and make up for experiences that they missed. Students were still able to celebrate a Book Week Parade live-streamed to the parents, Whole School Athletics Day, Onsite Camp Experience, End of Year Mass and Year 6 Graduation in a COVID compliant, yet memorable way.

Throughout the year, the school undertook a School Review as part of the four-year cycle for school improvement and planning. Gilbert Keisler was the school reviewer who worked with the Leadership Team, numerous staff, parents and student representatives. The feedback from this process was extremely positive and recognised the significant achievements in recent school improvement initiatives whilst providing future direction for the school.

The school continued the process of educational transformation with Dr Lyn Sharratt around using the 14 parameters to increase all student's achievement. Dr Sharratt is a highly esteemed and internationally recognised educational leader from Canada who has written numerous books around developing high impact school improvement approaches that are being used widely around the world. St Bernadette's was able to continue planning future school improvement initiatives with Dr Sharratt from her home in Canada in a virtual capacity.

St Bernadette's received the necessary funding to build a state-of-the-art contemporary flexible learning area for senior students. The school community is looking forward to commencing this build in 2021.

We thank our parent community and the wider community for their support as we continue to strengthen links and partnerships that are for the benefit of all children at St Bernadette's School.

Peter Steward

Principal

Education in Faith

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals

- To strengthen St Bernadette's as an authentic Catholic community in which all are supported and encouraged to live their faith in a contemporary world.

Intended Outcomes

- That student learning and engagement in Religious Education will improve.
- That staff, students and parents will grow in their appreciation and understanding of the importance of believing in Catholic faith and traditions in their daily lives

Achievements

The school's Catholic identity is highly valued and nurtured at St Bernadette's. The religious life of the school is balanced and coordinated to empower the community in bringing faith and culture together into a coherent synthesis. The school has invested significantly in ensuring its religious dimension is enriched and enlivened through the many opportunities offered for prayer, worship and celebration. Students pray daily and iconography is rich throughout the learning spaces of the school.

Leaders support planning and teachers are confident in integrating religious education topics into the Inquiry units of work planned for each term. The shared leadership roles in RE allow for the school, teachers and students to receive support from highly committed and dedicated professionals across all dimensions of the RE programs.

Throughout 2020, staff collaboration and confidence in teaching religious education remained a priority, as teachers engaged with students within a challenging remote learning context. The inquiry based approach to planning and teaching Religious Education through the Pedagogy of Encounter cycle continued to provide structure and balance across all levels. Emphasis was placed on teacher understanding and confidence in re contextualising Catholic faith in ways that encouraged engagement and open dialogue. Teachers were able to moderate and assess against the Religious Education standards with consistent practice across all levels.

Opportunities for each Year Level to participate in:

- Class Buddy Masses
- School Masses throughout the year, including streamed services during remote learning
- Holy Week and Easter prayer services
- Daily Christian Meditation and Formal Prayer in every classroom
- Regular Professional Learning Meetings to support teacher practice
- Participation in St Vincent De Paul Mini Vinnie's project with a highly active student team fundraising for community needs, including the annual Christmas donation collection
- Participation in Family Week projects
- Whole school approach to the Sacraments: Reconciliation in year three, Eucharist in year four and Confirmation in year six.

- Parent participation in the Sacramental life of the school
- Regular meetings with the Religious Education Leader of St Bernadette's and St Joseph's to plan and review Sacraments and Masses
- Teachers consistent use of the Pedagogy of Encounter approach to deepening their faith understanding and at of the students
- Familiarisation and implementation of the new RE framework.
- Assessment in Religious Education utilising the learning descriptors

Students at St Bernadette's Primary School strengthened their faith commitment through the Sacraments of Reconciliation (Penance), Eucharist (First Holy Communion) and Confirmation. Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation is a partnership between the family, the school and Parish.

While preparation for these Sacraments was school based, parents played an active part in this process by attending Sacramental information sessions, commitment masses and sacramental workshops.

VALUE ADDED

Religious activities which added value to the achievement and spiritual development of our students included:

- Encouraging parents to be more actively involved in their children's Faith Development.
- Sacramental evenings provided opportunity for interactive engagement between parent and child, increasing their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the Sacraments and their role as primary faith educators.
- Ensuring the link between faith and life was made explicit in all school activities. For example, the connection between all social justice activities is underpinned by our Catholic Social Teaching, so that our students understand the importance of Social Justice through their participation in our fundraising activities such as our Mini Vinnie projects.
- Building of teacher capacity to include contemporary approaches to learning, teaching, assessment and reporting in Religious Education in light of the renewed Religious Education Curriculum Framework and the use of an Inquiry approach to religious education. This was enhanced through adoption of the new 'To Know Worship and Love' digital resources, professional development and a consistent teaching practice.

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals

To improve student outcomes through expert teaching and evidenced based practices within our Catholic context where every student believes in their ability to achieve.

Intended Outcomes

- That student outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy will improve, with all students demonstrating expected levels of growth.
- That every student is engaged, challenged and believes that they can achieve.

Achievements

[LTAchievements]

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

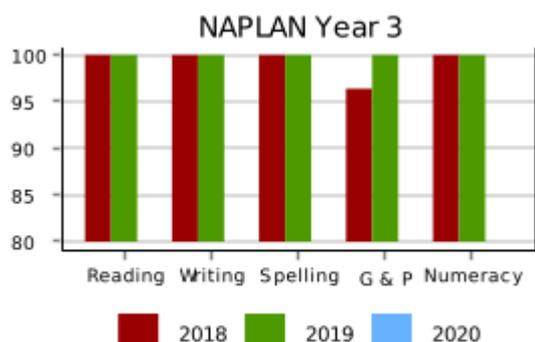
There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place. In the absence of NAPLAN, St Bernadette's used other school based measures to track student progress.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019	2020	2019 – 2020
	%	%	Changes	%	Changes
			%	*	*
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	96.4	100.0	3.6		
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	96.2	94.3	-1.9		
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Reading	96.3	97.1	0.8		
YR 05 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Writing	100.0	94.1	-5.9		

* 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

Goals & Intended Outcomes

That students are empowered to be motivated, resilient and responsible learners with a strong connectedness to school.

Achievements

The Student Wellbeing team has worked collaboratively with the whole school community to ensure that students are able to reach their full potential within a safe, caring and supportive environment.

Through classroom programs teachers have strengthened and built on the students' social and emotional learning.

Student Wellbeing Initiatives have included:

- Continuation of the Resilience Program.
- Providing teachers with resources to teach resilience skills and strategies to promote Social Emotional Learning.
- Informing staff of current Catholic Education Office initiatives including published documents related to Student Wellbeing.
- Implementation of Values Education through the Gospels, Foundation to year 6.
- Displaying Gospel Values Education throughout the school.
- Continuation of work by the eSmart team in the area of Cyber Safety.
- Emergency Management Plan communicated to all staff and students, with drill and practice timetabled across the year.
- Continued Teacher liaison with secondary schools to ensure a smooth transition for our Year 6 students to Year 7.
- Transition program for all new students enrolling at St Bernadette's.
- Transition program for students as they prepare to move into new classes at the end of the year.
- Counselling service provided for referred students. This was continued virtually during Remote Learning.
- Student wellbeing plans implemented for at risk students
- Christian meditation across the school
- Student Representative Council.
- Daily student wellbeing check in's during Remote Learning.
- Two to Three sessions per week focussed on social and emotional wellbeing during Remote Learning

- Social/emotional small group sessions with a Learning Support Officer during Remote Learning
- Family wellbeing check in's by phone during Remote Learning.
- Supporting vulnerable students document completed by all teachers to identify those students at risk

VALUE ADDED

Student Wellbeing Activities which added value to the Wellbeing of our students included:

- Values Education which underlies the curriculum throughout the year.
- SEASONS, a program for students experiencing grief or loss in their life, coordinated by a trained facilitator.
- School counsellor available for individual student referrals, onsite each Friday of the school term.
- Social and emotional Small group sessions met virtually during Remote Learning
- Activities focussed on exercise and mental health during Remote Learning.
- Daily wellbeing check in's during Remote Learning

STUDENT SATISFACTION

During Remote learning St Bernadette's conducted staff, student and parent surveys to ensure we were providing the best possible wellbeing program during this time. The student survey were aimed at year P-2, with a different survey given to years 3-6 students.

The results were very positive, providing insight on our students mental health, feelings about remote learning and any worries they had about returning to school.

Student results from years P-2 survey

- In response to how the students were feeling about the help they had during Remote learning 46.2 % reported to be feeling good, they had help when they needed it. 25.6%

reported to be feeling ok. They could use some more help at times and only 1.3% saying they really needed more help.

- In response to how students were feeling about learning from home 14.6% were feeling great and 41.6% were feeling alright. Only 7.8% of students were not feeling good.
- When asked if they had any questions about returning to school, the overwhelming response was "When can we come back?"

Student results from year 3-6 survey

- In response to how the students were feeling about learning from home, 15.3% reported to be feeling great, 58.6% were feeling alright and only 2.7% were not feeling great.
- When asked how they felt about the support they received during Remote Learning, 63.6% feel good and have support when they need it, 25.5% reported they felt great and very supported and only 3.6% said they were not feeling good and would like more help.
- When asked if they had any questions or worries about returning to school, the overwhelming response was No, and that they were just looking forward to it.

Parent Survey Results; Key takeaways

- Parents feel learning is a true partnership.
- Parents loved knowing what their child is learning each week and being able to help them at home.
- Parents valued the teacher videos, showing instruction.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

At St Bernadette's, we recognise that the Principal has a responsibility to ensure that attendance records are maintained and monitored at school.

All student absences are recorded in both the morning and the afternoon by teachers, using the school electronic attendance roll.

Parents have a responsibility to notify the school as soon as possible on the day of absence using one of two methods. Completing an absentee form on the Skoolbag App or telephoning the school office. The Victorian government requires the school to notify parents/carers as soon as practicable on the same day, of any unexplained student absence.

Parents will be contacted via an automated SMS message of any unexplained student absence. The Principal has a further responsibility to ensure that unexplained absences are investigated and that high levels of absenteeism are adequately explained.

During Remote Learning students were marked in attendance when they were present at the first Google Meet of the day.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y01	95.9%
Y02	95.3%
Y03	97.4%
Y04	95.8%
Y05	96.9%
Y06	97.4%
Overall average attendance	96.5%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To ensure that all students are protected from all forms of abuse and neglect within a safe and nurturing school community.
- To ensure that all students have the right to a thorough and systematic education in all aspects of personal safety, in partnership with their parents/guardians/caregivers.
- To ensure that all adults in our school, including teaching and non-teaching staff, clergy, volunteers, and contractors, have a responsibility to care for children and young people, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any kind of harm or abuse.
- To implement policies, guidelines and codes of conduct for the care, wellbeing and protection of students based on honest, respectful and trusting relationships between adults and children and young people.
- To ensure that policies and practices demonstrate compliance with legislative requirements and cooperation with the Church, governments, the police and human services agencies.
- To ensure that all persons involved in situations where harm is suspected or disclosed must be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.
- To ensure that staff, clergy, volunteers, contractors, parents and students feel free to raise concerns about child safety, knowing these will be taken seriously by school leadership.
- To ensure that appropriate confidentiality is maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally or pastorally.

Achievements

St Bernadette's has worked towards meeting the Child Safe Standards requirements by:

- Developing and implementing policies related to 'Child Safety'.
- Raising the awareness of Child Safety with staff, students and parents.
- Developing a code of conduct for students, staff and parents.
- Ensuring that all staff complete an annual external Mandatory reporting course and are aware of their obligations to report suspected child abuse.
- Reducing/removing risks of child abuse.
- Publicising relevant information to the parent community.
- Staff Professional development related to the Reportable Conduct Scheme and new expectations and responsibilities in this area.
- Introduction of VPass (an electronic visitor monitoring system) for all visitors, contractors or parents remaining on the grounds during the school day.

Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals

To promote a strong professional learning culture within the Catholic school context.

Intended Outcomes

- That the performance and development culture of the school is strengthened.
- That teamwork at all levels is enhanced with a view to improving learning outcomes for all.

Achievements

At St Bernadette's, we have established and maintained a School Leadership Team, representative of the five spheres of learning, Education in Faith, Learning and Teaching, Student Wellbeing, Leadership and Management and School Community, with meetings held regularly. Agendas and minutes are kept as a record of the Leadership Team's work so that there is a coordinated approach to the development and implementation of shared goals. The school undertook school review in 2020 which occurs every four years and is a process that enables the school to review its current practice and plan for further development in the next four-year cycle. The resulting School Review Report was extremely positive and reflected the staff members commitment to educational transformation in order to increase all student's achievement.

St Bernadette's went through a consultation process with Baldasso Cortese to develop a Masterplan to upgrade facilities. These plans focus upon Flexible Learning Areas with shared breakout zones and collaborative zones. The school has received confirmation of funding to begin the process of upgrading the current senior school facilities in 2021 which will be a significant boost to our school community.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

During the extended periods of remote learning due to the pandemic, all staff of St Bernadette's undertook extensive professional learning related to using ICT to support student achievement. The development of staff capabilities in this area was profound and will assist St Bernadette's learning and teaching programs into the future.

When onsite schooling resumed, professional development opportunities were provided for staff through Professional Learning Teams with a particular focus on Religious Education, Literacy, Mathematics and Technology. There was a strong focus upon how staff could build upon the lessons that we learnt through remote learning to strengthen the partnership and support structures that exist between school and home.

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	26
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$315

TEACHER SATISFACTION

As part of the School Review process that the school undertook during 2020, the external reviewer noted the following in his report after gaining feedback from all staff.

"Staff value the current positivity and clarity of purpose directing the school. The 'consistency' focus adopted by the school is highly valued and respected by staff and parents. There is a strong sense that staff are 'on the same page' across the school and this has brought about a highly professional culture from which the community goes about its work. Staff see the many changes at the school as contributing to a 'very happy place with a positive culture'."

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	99.0%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	92.9%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	21.4%
Graduate	21.4%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	78.6%
Advanced Diploma	28.6%
No Qualifications Listed	7.1%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	18.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	13.1
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	11.1
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

School Community

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals

To develop and strengthen the community partnership between home, school and the wider community to enhance the learning and wellbeing of students.

Intended Outcomes

- That parents will be engaged with their child's learning, and have an active role in the journey of their child's learning.
- That links between home, school and the parish community are strengthened, benefiting student learning.

Achievements

St Bernadette's have celebrated many achievements as a school community, The strong partnership of our Parish, School and Parent Community is attributed to the success of these achievements. These successes include:

- Pastoral Care of students and support given to families within our school, through the Resilience Program and Seasons Program.
- Teacher representation at the Early Year's network meetings, to ensure the successful transition of Preparatory students to our school.
- Parent Information sessions (online and in person) for all parents of children attending St Bernadette's in the coming year.
- High parent attendance levels at school events such as the annual family Working Bee and Mass services, and online at virtual school assemblies.
- Use by Parents of the on-line booking system for parent/teacher exchange and student testing appointments.
- Implementation of online platforms to conduct PSG and Parent teacher conversations during online learning.
- Implementation of social media pages run by the school to communicate the success of the school community.
- Continued use and implementation of Skoolbag and Class DOJO Applications as a means of facilitating efficient communication between the school and parents.
- Re-introduction and use of the Veggie Patch (Garden Club) as a parent-driven initiative.

PARENT SATISFACTION

As part of the School Review process that the school undertook during 2020, the external reviewer noted the following in his report after gaining feedback from a group of parents.

"Parents are involved in the life of the school. They are offered the opportunity to be involved in decision making and value the work of the staff in the directions taken for improvement. There has been a strong emphasis on building connections and seizing opportunities to reinforce partnerships with parents to enhance confidence and rapport for greater engagement in the life of the school. A culture of welcome and hospitality at the school is valued by parents. Across the community they all feel known and valued. The school offers events, celebrations and activities across all areas and year levels. They look to embrace the opportunities that support student learning and community building to enhance the culture of their community."