



# 2023

## Annual Report to the School Community



### St Michael's School

Queen Elizabeth Drive, TALLANGATTA 3700

Principal: Lisa Hitchcock

Web: [www.smtallangatta.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smtallangatta.catholic.edu.au)

Registration: 1583, E Number: E3039

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## Principal's Attestation

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I, Lisa Hitchcock, attest that St Michael's School is compliant with:

- The minimum standards and other requirements for school registration and school boarding premises (if applicable) as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic).
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2023 school year under the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth) and the Australian Education Regulations 2023 (Cth).
- The Child Safe Standards as prescribed in Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards, Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises.

Attested on 13 May 2024

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## About this report

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St Michael's School is registered by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). The Annual Report to the School Community (ARSC), provides parents and the wider community with information about the school's activities and achievements throughout the year including information about various aspects of school performance. The Report is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the school community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students. Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can also be obtained from the [My School website](#).

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## Governing Authority Report

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The 2023 Catholic Education Week theme “Let the Words You Speak Always Be Full of Grace” reminds us of Pope Francis’s call to be a synodal Church in which our understanding of others and respect for diversity is shaped by respectful dialogue borne from deep listening.

Catholic Education Sandhurst continues to be committed to providing contemporary and innovative learning environments that value diversity and promote care, respect and co-operation. In 2023 we launched the CES Ltd Strategic Plan 2023-2027 which sets out directions and priorities that will guide the way in which our Catholic schools pursue excellence in fostering the development of each person in all the dimensions of human existence: intellectual, spiritual, emotional, bodily, relational, environmental and cultural.

Schools have begun the process of developing School Improvement Plans aligning their local strategic planning to the CES Strategic Plan, under the direction of Principal Consultants and in response to schoolbased review findings.

Our governance structure continues to mature, with both CES Ltd and SCECEC Ltd committed to ensuring the highest quality student outcomes in a safe and nurturing environment.

Our learning data has identified pockets of excellence in school communities across the diocese but also highlighted greater scope for improvement in the future. The development of the CES Ltd Catholic Learning and Teaching Framework will promote greater collaboration and focus on student learning growth.

The nation-wide shortage of teachers continues to impact all schools demanding new and innovative ways to attract and retain high quality and committed Catholic educators. Strategic initiatives will prioritize workforce placements that are sustainable and ongoing with particular attention given to our remote and smaller communities.

CES Ltd has a small number of schools with low enrolments and personnel and the Catholic Education Office works closely with leadership in these schools to ensure continued viability. An incentive scheme to attract and retain educators has been initiated and the CES Ltd Board has taken a robust interest in the way small schools are promoted through the CES Ltd Marketing Strategy.

I am extremely grateful for the commitment and professionalism that is clearly identified by the efforts throughout 2023 of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd - our schools and personnel in the Catholic Education Office. They continue to work tirelessly for the students and families in our schools, true bearers of the Mission to which they have been called.

PAUL DESMOND

Executive Director, Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited

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## Vision and Mission

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### Identity Statement

The St. Michael's Catholic Primary School Community follows the Josephite tradition of being a learning and supportive environment that challenges the landscapes of our hearts and minds.

### Vision Statement

The St. Michael's Catholic Primary School Community believe in:

- The partnership of significant stakeholders is enriched by our Gospel values and our faith.
- Encouraging risk-taking and offering challenging opportunities to enhance success for all in an ever-changing world.
- The development of the whole person academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually using Jesus as the example.
- Accepting differences and valuing the opinions of others in a safe, caring, loving and learning environment.
- Providing a safe, secure and supportive environment for all students to flourish in a trusting community.

### Graduate Outcomes

The St. Michael's Catholic Primary School Community endeavours to educate children who:

- Are resilient, confident and independent lifelong learners.
- Have challenging minds based on creative thinking and problem-solving.
- Have respect and safety for themselves, others and all life.
- Are voices for justice and peace following the example of Jesus and his Church.
- Are generous in service, gracious givers and grateful recipients.
- Approach life enthusiastically with an open mind to opportunities.

- At all times strive to be the best person they can be.

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## School Overview

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St. Michael's Primary School was opened in February 1958, not long after the township of Tallangatta was moved to accommodate the building of the Hume Weir. The school was constructed at the same time as a new Church and Convent.

The building of a Catholic school was the initiative of Fr. George Sait, who invited the Sisters of St. Joseph to staff the school. The first enrolment was 71 students in Years Prep to Form 2 (Year 8). The school now has students in Grades Foundation to Grade Six. The student population of St. Michael's has fluctuated over the years, in line with the district's ever-changing demographic.

The original school buildings still remain as the main classrooms, with the addition of a foyer, administration office, staff room and library in 1992. An original Parish meeting room was upgraded for use as the school's Multipurpose Room in 2007. A library was a welcome addition to the school in 2010 as part of the Federal Government Building the Education Revolution (BER). Through the BER project, the student amenities were also replaced and upgraded.

Between the years of 2021 and 2023, the school enrolments doubled. In 2023 the school installed a demountable building to accommodate the school's growing numbers.

The staff and students at St. Michael's Primary School believe strongly in reinforcing positive behaviour and have clear, school-wide expectations that are understood by all. The culture at the school is that of a welcoming and caring atmosphere, with students who want to learn and demonstrate our school motto of "Courage, Compassion and Community" on a daily basis.

As educators, we strongly believe that limited interruptions should occur within learning time.

Our timetable is designed to ensure that all classes are with their classroom teacher for the first three hours of each day. Students are also given the opportunity to participate in specialist subjects including Library, the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program and



The Arts. As part of the North East Small Schools Association, our students participate in opportunities that may not be possible, including Cross Country, Athletics and Swimming.

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## Principal's Report

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The Annual School Report for St Michael's Primary School, Tallangatta represents a snapshot of the life of the school in 2023.

St Michael's Primary School is a faith-based community of students, parents, staff and our local priest who explicitly witness Catholic beliefs, values and traditions. Promoting the development of positive relationships; mutual respect; an understanding of individual and communal rights; and responsibilities and practices, which promote inclusiveness and acceptance of individual differences. We share, as one welcoming community in the universal evangelising mission of God.

St. Michael's Primary School continues to flourish and grow in enrolments, blessed with many moments of joy in 2023. We pride ourselves on delivering teaching and learning experiences that capture the landscapes of our student's hearts and minds. As such we have undertaken Professional Development regarding Literacy and continued working on our positive behaviour practices. We remain committed to well-being through the Resilience Project (Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness), approaches as well as explicitly teaching the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) curriculum.

In the rural location of our school, we struggled initially to entice staff to the picturesque Tallangatta area. We began the year as a four-classroom structure. Due changes to staffing circumstances, we were able to remodel our school structure to three classrooms. We achieved this through the development of three Learning Communities. These communities allowed students to be in a community that would best assist them with their education and well-being.

The communities consist of; The Explorers with Marsha Ardern as the teacher and Ann Wright and Kirsten Steele as the LSO, The Discovers with Amy Bilston as the Teacher and Kirsten Piper as the LSO, The Inspires with Mez Moffet as the teacher and Ren Wyatt as the LSO. During term 3, we welcomed Jo Hook who worked with all the communities as the Science and Health teacher.

We thank all staff members for their immeasurable dedication and commitment to our school and Catholic Education.

St Michael's is a school with a strong sense of community, students are encouraged to adopt and put into practice key Catholic values in their everyday lives by living a sustainable life, committing to solidarity and working for justice. As such we enjoyed the chance to partake in Mass and whole school liturgies with Father Jun-Jun and Father Adi as one extended faith community.

Our school re-ignited our commitment to reconciliation with our Student Representative Council students in years five and six committing to FIRE (Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education) Carrier Project. A program designed to help students learn, teach and grow in their understanding of Aboriginal Spirituality by promoting respect, fairness and inclusion for Aboriginal people.

I am deeply grateful for all staff, students and families who give so generously of their time and talent to ensure St. Michael's is a life-giving community for all to enjoy and thrive. We look forward to continuing the mission of our school, as compassionate, courageous and community-minded individuals.

Wishing you God's blessings.

Marsha Ardern

Acting Principal

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## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal 1: Strengthening the bond between home, school, and parish by offering occasions for families to engage in and observe faith-centred experiences.

Goal 2: Enhance the Catholic identity and prominence of the school within the broader community.

Goal 3: To re-ignite the school's commitment to the FIRE carrier project.

### Achievements

#### Achievements In 2023.

Our Religious Education Leader for 2023 was Amy Bilston. With Amy's lead, the whole staff worked to ensure that our school joined with the community more regularly through the Parish and wider community.

Easter liturgies were conducted for the whole school on site and then individual Teachers took their classes to the church to view the Stations Of The Cross and learn more about Good Friday's sequence of events.

Our St Michael's Feast Day was celebrated with students and families to develop a deeper link to the St Michael's Parish. The whole school was invited to a picnic lunch and the Yr. 3-6 students ran a range of activities (linked to their Inquiry Unit of work).

Staff were involved in a Professional a development session in Religious Education run by Georgia Gordan, Education Officer: Religious Education, from Catholic Education Sandhurst.

The Sacramental Program was offered for and 3 students participated in Reconciliation. Mrs Moffat who was a member of the Wodonga Parish Sacramental Team for many years was able to run the sessions here at St Michael's with students and their families.

#### VALUE ADDED

St Michael's attending Mass for the following events in 2023

- Opening School Mass
- Ash Wednesday
- St Michael's Feast Day
- End of Year Mass & Awards

Our students and staff engaged in Catholic Identity formation and Spirituality with Maria Ford from Catholic Education Sandhurst.

Students participated in local ANZAC and Remembrance Day commemorative services within the school.

#### **Value Added**

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## Learning and Teaching

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal 1: To embed an evidence-based systematic phonic framework across the Early Years.

Goal 2: To instil and teach Emotional Intelligence across the school, especially regarding the importance of Resilience for our students.

### Achievements

#### Achievements

The Little Learners Love Literacy program has had a positive impact on literacy outcomes among Early Years students. As evidenced by assessments and observations, students in the Foundation grade on average were meeting benchmarks and there were some gains in their reading and writing abilities in grades 1 and 2. Teacher observations display students as better equipped to decode words, comprehend text, and express themselves in writing, setting a strong foundation for future academic success.

As our school continues to prioritise emotional literacy as an ongoing focus, it is evident that students are responding positively to initiatives such as the Resilience Project and the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) program. However, recognising the importance of sustained learning in this space, there is a clear need for continued investment and reinforcement of these programs to maximise their impact on student well-being and resilience.

### Student Learning Outcomes

St Michael's Primary School uses a variety of assessment tools to measure and record student progress. Assessments used include; NAPLAN, Essential Assessment (Literacy and Numeracy), Writing Moderation and Rubrics, Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) and Reading Benchmarks: PM and Fountas Pinnell.

Most students in Years 3 & 5 were at the expected level in Reading, Writing, Numeracy, Grammar & Punctuation overall. Spelling however remains an area of concern, but the school has a future directive and focus on Literacy for the next three years.

<b>NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards</b>			
<b>Domain</b>	<b>Year level</b>	<b>Mean Scale score</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	454	36%
Numeracy	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	454	36%
Reading	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	463	45%
Spelling	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	420	27%
Writing	Year 3	*	*
	Year 5	443	45%

\*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2023 due to participation not meeting these criteria or no students were assessed. Participants include students who were assessed, including non-attempt, or those exempted from the test.

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## Student Wellbeing

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal 1: To provide education and information to our parents and the wider school community in regard to School-wide positive behaviour support framework (SWPBS) and school-wide operations.

Goal 2: Continue to embed an understanding of the link between inclusion, Catholic Identity and Social Justice.

### Achievements

#### Achievements

St Michael's made adjustments in regards to their Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Program (PBiS) to explore a school-based holistic approach using a School Wide Positive Behaviour support framework. This approach has continued to strengthen St. Michael's Primary School students to feel safe, welcome and supported at school.

Our school continues to work on the use of intrinsic motivation and a growth mindset to our students and the wider community.

We explicitly linked, where possible, our SWPBS with our Catholic Identity and Catholic Social

Teaching principles making a link between our faith and our behaviour.

### Value Added

#### VALUE ADDED

- Intrinsic Motivation and Growth Mindset Approach
- School Wide Positive Behaviour Framework
- School Awards - SWPBF and GEM (Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness)
- Common language within school community to support the delivery of SWPBS



## **Student Satisfaction**

### STUDENT SATISFACTION

The ORIMA research report highlights St. Michael's School's exceptional performance in teacher-student relationships and school climate, as it highlighted St Michael's as above the average when compared to the CES. This achievement reflects the dedication of the school's staff in creating a nurturing and inclusive learning environment.

## **Student Attendance**

### STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Every classroom teacher marks the classroom attendance roll each morning and afternoon via the platform SIMON. This data is checked and monitored daily by the office, with any unexplained absences followed up with parents via phone call each day by 9.30am.

All attendance data is actively monitored by the Principal. This information is also used to ascertain trends and monitor periods of sustained absence. All families are encouraged to contact the office to explain any upcoming absences to make this process a community expectation. The importance of school attendance and the impact of non-attendance is actively promoted through all social media and newsletter platforms. Any students "at risk" with attendance are closely monitored via our Well-being Team Meetings or Parent Support Meetings.

<b>Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level</b>	
Y01	88.5%
Y02	85.3%
Y03	87.1%
Y04	87.7%
Y05	80.4%
Y06	71.9%
Overall average attendance	83.5%

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## Leadership

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal 1: A focus on staff, engagement, and retention practices of quality staff members who align themselves with the Mission of the Church

Goal 2: To continue our authentic consultation with students, the wider school community and the school advisory board regarding updated Graduate Outcomes for St. Michael's Primary School.

### Achievements

In the year 2023, St. Michael's School underwent some significant staff changes. In response to these changes, the leadership team took proactive steps to ensure the well-being of all staff members. To foster a positive environment and prioritise staff welfare, the leadership team initiated meetings with all staff members. These meetings aimed to introduce a fresh approach to the school's operations, with a primary focus on staff well-being. Learning Communities were developed as a result of these meetings.

One of the key initiatives introduced was the implementation of regular leadership meetings. These meetings were designed to address critical aspects such as staff retention, recruitment strategies for the upcoming year of 2024, and the enhancement of graduate outcomes for St. Michael's students.

<b>Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning</b>	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING	
Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
The following Professional Learning opportunities were provided to St Michael's staff in 2023:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious Education Accreditation</li> <li>• Enhancing Catholic School Identity (ECSI)</li> <li>• Reformation and Contextualisation of Catholic Schools</li> <li>• Student Duty of Care</li> <li>• Occupational Health &amp; Safety</li> <li>• First Aid/Asthma and Anaphylaxis Training</li> </ul>	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	6
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$260.00

## Teacher Satisfaction

### TEACHER SATISFACTION

St Michael's School | Tallangatta

At the beginning of 2023, informal meetings were undertaken with all staff members regarding

their experience and satisfaction at St Michael's Primary School.

These conversations offered a perceived insight into the overall satisfaction at the school whereby teachers were happy with the communication delivered to families and felt that the school environment was welcoming. Additionally, it was noted that leadership responded

swiftly to student well-being concerns/behaviours in order to avoid escalation.

St Michael's School is in a very strong position moving in 2024, as interest and enrolments rise steadily, largely due to the strong leadership and wonderful staff.

<b>Teacher Qualifications</b>	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	0.0%
Graduate	0.0%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	50.0%
Advanced Diploma	0.0%
No Qualifications Listed	50.0%

<b>Staff Composition</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	7
Teaching Staff (FTE)	6.6
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	7
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	6.1
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

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## Community Engagement

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

#### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal 1: Partnerships with families and communities to support student learning, well-being and safety.

### Achievements

#### Achievements

In 2023, we implemented several strategies to ensure a consistent approach to students' well-being and to provide meaningful support for their academic growth both at school and at home.

In order to foster a positive and respectful learning environment, we have taken steps to clearly communicate our school expectations to all students and their families. Through newsletters and other communication channels, we have shared our School Wide Positive Behavior Framework. Monthly focuses were shared as well documents and research to assist families in understanding the reasons why.

Revised Homework Procedures were explored to recognise the importance of supporting students' learning beyond the classroom. St Michael's provided optional homework assignments that were both achievable and meaningful, whilst avoiding a large workload that would cause strain on the students and their families. Through these revisions, we aim to ensure that homework tasks support student learning and provide opportunities for students to practice and reinforce their skills.

### Parent Satisfaction

#### PARENT SATISFACTION

In 2023, no formal data was gathered on parent satisfaction. However, it is evident from the substantial fee collection, informal discussions with current families, and the consistent attendance at Parent-Teacher Interviews that overall satisfaction across the school is notably high. This can be largely attributed to the perceived value placed on transparent and dependable communication between the school, parents, and the wider community. Access

to events and critical information has been streamlined through the school, fostering strong relationships with families at St. Michael's Primary School.

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## Financial Performance

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The school's financial performance information and a report of the financial activities of the school's boarding premises (if applicable) have been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au).

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at [www.smtallangatta.catholic.edu.au](http://www.smtallangatta.catholic.edu.au)