

DIOCESE
OF
BALLARAT
CATHOLIC
EDUCATION
LIMITED



2023

Annual Report to the School Community



MERCY
REGIONAL COLLEGE

Mercy Regional College

Henderson Street, CAMPERDOWN 3260

Principal: Sharon Gillett

Web: www.mercy.vic.edu.au

Registration: 690, E Number: E2033

Principal's Attestation

I, Sharon Gillett, attest that Mercy Regional College 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 08 May 2024

About this report

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

Governing Authority Report

The Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) governs 52 primary schools, one F – 8 school, and five secondary Colleges, educating around 13,500 students and employing more than 2,200 teachers and staff, from Mildura in the north, Portland in the south, and west to Edenhope and Nhill.

Now in its third year of operation, DOBCEL continues to work diligently to ensure all its schools flourish fully in their mission to provide high-quality, affordable, faith-based education opportunities for students and families in safe, supportive, and secure learning environments, that value diversity and promote cooperation, care, and respect for all.

During 2023, I was fortunate to visit all of our schools as the DOBCEL Board held meetings in different venues across the diocese. The spirit of harmony and sense of community, along with cultures of care for students and staff I experienced, was extremely encouraging. These school visits were also a reminder of the calibre of young people we have in our education system.

The role of school Principal continues to grow in complexity, demanding an increasingly diverse skillset and knowledge base. I am proud and deeply grateful for the exceptional dedication and professionalism of our 58 Principals, who, along with leadership colleagues and staff, work tirelessly to deliver education services for the families and communities they serve.

Enterprise Bargaining Agreement negotiations continued this year, involving staff from schools and human resources teams giving many hours and great effort to the process. Working with the inter-Diocesan bargaining group, DOBCEL continued to support efforts to finalise the Agreement with the Independent Education Union (IEU) as expediently as possible. DOBCEL continues to recognise the extraordinary work of staff in our schools and offices, and the substantial changes to the Agreement are intended to have a positive impact on staff and their workload.

As mandated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), the development of clear policy and procedural documents continued apace, with schools required to utilise DOBCEL foundational work, yet contextualise documents to suit the specific needs of each school. I express my gratitude to the team at Catholic Education Ballarat, who are both talented and conscientious in delivering this vital work.

During the year we saw the end of an era with the closure of St Brendan's Primary School, Dunnstown. Over 160 years of schooling was celebrated through speeches, laughter, and the sharing of many memories. Pleasingly, we also saw the refurbishment and opening of several new school buildings across the diocese this year.

I continue to be extremely grateful for the ongoing dedication, professionalism, and support of our personnel at Catholic Education Ballarat. I particularly acknowledge the commitment of our school leadership teams and their staff in nurturing and empowering the students in our care, as together we work to bring to life our vision: As partners in Catholic Education and open to God's presence, we pursue the fullness of life for all.

Tom Sexton

Executive Director DOBCEL

Vision and Mission

Inspired by faith and our Catholic heritage, we nurture growth through purposeful and empowering learning.

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 375 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 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 community, inclusiveness, respect and excellence.

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

We are 50! 2023 has been a wonderful year of celebration and community connection. Our student leadership team provided a most engaging theme to guide our Jubilee celebrations, Celebrating our Past, Inspiring our Future. This was accompanied by a most inspiring quote from Saint Pope John Paul II, "Remember the past with gratitude, Live in the present with enthusiasm, Look to the future with confidence".

Across 2023 we have focused on recognising the amazing milestone of our school providing Catholic Secondary education for 50 years. This achievement is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our founders, parish and wider community, teachers, staff, school board members, parents and families, as well as the commitment and perseverance of our young people. As we look back on the past 50 years - 1973 when CRC was established to 2023 where we are MRC - we see how much our school and the world have changed. Our school has seen new buildings erected, new campus structures and new opportunities for learning whilst the world has witnessed new technologies emerge, new discoveries made, and new future pathways and opportunities opening up for young people. One thing that has remained constant through this newness however is the importance of education. It is through education that our young people gain the knowledge, skills, competencies, critical thinking abilities, dispositions and character needed to navigate the complexities of the world and make a positive impact on our communities.

Our celebrations included many special events which you will see captured throughout these pages. Of note were our celebrations through our Catholic tradition of Mass, with a Mass dedicated to former Parish Priests and Principals on our Mercy Feast Day and another dedicated to the work and commitment of the Sisters of Mercy in September. Staff member Lachie Lee authored a history of our school aptly titled A Special Spirit. We commissioned two pieces of art by renowned artist Christine Sage to be permanently displayed in our College grounds - one at McAuley campus and the other at O'Keeffe campus - with symbolism co- created from the ideas of our student, staff and community. Our Jubilee Day in November included a day of celebration with the installment of a time capsule to be opened in another 50 years and the planting of an Elm tree generously donated by current Principal of Emmanuel College, Warrnambool and former student Peter Morgan. Celebrations continued at our Jubilee Dinner where our inaugural Spirit of Mercy and Young Spirit of Mercy Alumni Awards were presented.

We celebrated when ground was finally broken at our O'Keeffe campus to allow the commencement of our much awaited facilities refurbishment to better cater to the needs of our Junior school. Excitingly this also included an environmentally friendly worm farm waste system to facilitate sewage and organic waste conversion by our colony of active compost worms.

The year has been filled with learning and opportunity alike for our young people and staff. We were very grateful to be able to include some of the traditional experiences of life at Mercy Regional College with a wonderful return to the stage for our production of The Addams Family and a return to experience the spiritual wonder of Uluru and Central Australia.

2023 saw us bid a fond farewell to Danny Gordon, our esteemed Property Manager, who gracefully transitioned into retirement after dedicating an impressive 26 years of his time, effort, and expertise to the advancement of Mercy Regional College. Mark Evans, our dedicated Grounds Officer, also takes his leave after 17 years of devoted service to our community. Additionally, we express our heartfelt gratitude to teacher Lesa Thornton for her 36 dedicated years and Narelle Williams for her invaluable contributions over 13 years, as they take some well earned long service leave to begin 2024 and then embark on new journeys.

It continues to be my great privilege and pleasure to reflect on our school year as Principal of Mercy Regional College.

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 2023 we were able to launch our 'whole school prayer' which was developed as part of the ECSI Prayer Project. It has been printed and is in use around our school and in the wider community. This prayer was collaboratively written by students, staff and parents as part of our participation in the whole school prayer renewal project.

Value Added

ECSI Prayer Renewal Project

We were able to launch and use our recontextualised whole school prayer. This has received excellent feedback from both students and staff and was written as a direct result of our participation in the ECSI prayer renewal project.

Staff Formation Day

Our staff formation day was held on Monday 21st of August. We were lucky enough to engage with some wonderful guest speakers as part of this day.

Sr Cathy Solano led an engaging and thought provoking morning around the topic of interculturality. Interculturality is a theology that calls us to embrace the rich cultural diversity that God has created for our world. It provides us with the practical tools to address the fears that fuel so many of the problems in our world such as racism, conflicts, inequality, marginalisation and exploitation.

In the afternoon we moved through two sessions with Gina Bernasconi (DOBCEL - Education Officer - Enhancing Catholic School Identity (ECSI) and Bernadette Tolan (DOBCEL - Education Officer (Secondary)). These sessions were based around the topic of "How Catholic Identity is formed in the classroom."

Retreats / Seminar Days / Faith Days

In 2023, 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 in September. They had two guest speakers work with them on the day. Fr Andrew Hayes spoke to the students about the process of supporting the building of a mosque in the community of Ararat. He also spoke about ethical decision making from the Christian perspective.

Kgshak Akec is an author, storyteller and artist who spoke to the students in the afternoon. She was able to share her story with our students focusing on her insights on being a migrant/Sudanese-Australian/ daughter of refugees in Australia.

Our Year 10 students in 2023 attended Burnside Camp in Anglesea for a combined Retreat and Year Level Camp. This was held in June. We were able to take our students away for two nights and three days. During the evening we had some guest speakers work with the students. Nasir Sobhani 'The Streets Barber' had a message of aspiration towards hope, community and kindness, by promoting the goodness of all humans. We had Sonya Karras from 'a Whole New World' present to the young people in the evening. We also participated in other team building activities as well as camp run activities - high ropes, paddle boarding, mountain bike riding. We also ran some sessions with the group to promote team building and goal setting.

Our Year 9 Retreat was facilitated by Sr Karon Donnellon (RSM). She along with MRC staff Jo Saunders and Josiane Gardner planned and facilitated this day. There was a focus on the work of Mercy Works. There was a special shared lunch with all students as well as hands on activities including collecting and delivering items to our local St Vinnies.

Our Year 8 Students had their Retreat Day in Term 4 in 2023 - 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, as well as a special Retreat day facilitated by Sam Clear from Walk4One. In Term 3, we were also able to

celebrate 'Special Person's Day' with grandparents and special persons visiting our school and sharing some special memories and times with our Year 7 students.

Masses / Liturgies

In 2023, Masses and liturgies continued to be regularly celebrated. We appreciated that we can still gather in this way. We begin each year with our staff gathering to celebrate mass with the staff from each of the Hampden Catholic Schools Network schools. A special part of this gathering is recognising the milestone years of service of staff to the HCSN in increments of 5 years.

We celebrated our Beginning of the Year Mass in Term 1 where we celebrated our incoming Senior, Middle and Junior leaders as well as welcoming our Year 7 students.

In Term 2 we celebrated our 'MRC Feast Day' Mass in May - this coincides with Catholic Education Week and also 'Our Lady Help of Christians' feast day. Our Lady Help of Christians is the chosen patron Saint of MRC. To recognise our Jubilee, we invited former MRC Principals and Parish Priests to join us.

In September we celebrated our Mercy Mass focusing on the contribution to our College of the Sisters of Mercy. To recognise our Jubilee, we invited Sisters of Mercy who taught at MRc(CRC) and our Hampden Catholic Schools Network Primary Schools to join us.

Our Year 12 students and families were welcomed to our Graduation Mass in October. This is always a very special evening.

Our Mass of Thanks Giving was celebrated in November with students in Years 7 to 11. This is always a wonderful opportunity for our community to give thanks for the educational year.

We finish our year with a Staff Mass in December where we give thanks for our wonderful community and our colleagues and farewell those that will not be working with us in the following year.

MRC Feast Day Celebrations

Our Feast Day started in 2023 with a whole school Mass at St Patrick's Church in Camperdown. This was a celebration of 50 years of MRC. This Mass celebrates our chosen patron saint, Mary, Help of Christians, who is also the Patron of Australia. This day also coincided with Catholic Education Week for the Ballarat diocese.

During the middle part of the day our students listened to a wide range of alumni speakers from across many decades of MRC who talked about their life since their CRC/ MRC days as well some other guiding advice for our students.

In the afternoon our students participated in a 'Diversity Dash' (colour run) - this was an activity organised by our Year 12 cohort which involved those who wanted to participate running around a set course getting covered in colour. This event is all about an inclusive celebration that acknowledges the diversity within our school.

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 2023 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.

During Term 2, we had a 'Winter Woolies' casual clothes day and winter clothes/blankets as well as non-perishable food items drive. We were able to donate 131kg of pantry items to our local Food Share. 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.

We also participated in the Mercy Education Limited regional 'Seeds of Justice' event held at Araluen in Anglesea. We took 5 students to this overnight event. The theme for the event in 2023 was "A Vision for Mercy: to welcome the stranger and the needy."

Christmas Appeal

As in past Christmas seasons, the staff and students of Mercy Regional College supplied gifts for disadvantaged families in the area. In 2023, 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 2023, 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.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

A Vision for Learning and developing a culture of high expectations

In 2023 our Mercy staff looked inwardly to discern who we are and what we say we are as a place of learning. As part of our reinvigoration of our Vision, Mission and Values, our staff and community worked collaboratively to identify our views and values around teaching and learning. That work has been expressed in our new Vision for Learning. We have also explored what it means to hold our community of learners (both adult and child) to high expectations.

In 2023 we committed to:

A focus on data informed practice and enhanced staff data literacy

A focus on teacher collaboration - Professional Learning Communities

A focus on attendance and participation - "Every day counts"

A focus on pedagogy - excellence in teaching practice (English Curriculum Project)

A focus on student voice - PIVOT evidence-based survey tools that empower educators with insight, inspire conversations, and generate shared ideas for change.

Achievements

Data informed practice and enhanced staff data literacy

In 2023 we engaged the services of two consultants to objectively examine student learning data over the last 5 years to establish the 'story' of learning at Mercy. Carmel Richardson who is affiliated with the University of Melbourne conducted a 5 year retrospective analysis of the College VCE data to determine trends in achievement with a particular focus on identifying the relationships with student achievement (as indicated by VCE study scores) and student capacity or predicted achievement (as indicated by the GAT scores). Individual subject teachers were given the opportunity to speak with Carmel individually to examine trends over time. It was clear through the data and the processes used to examine the data that Mercy students had not been achieving results commensurate with their capacity over at least the last five years and that as a school we needed to pay attention to our learning culture and our expectations of students. Kirstin Bourne also presented English subject specific data to the English Learning Area team that tracked the 2022 cohort of learners from Year 7 to 12 and took into consideration their NAPLAN, PAT AND VCE / GAT scores. Kirstin's data story also reinforced Carmel's findings, in that Mercy student achievement was

consistent with state averages up until VCE when results dipped considerably and did not align with GAT predictions.

These two significant findings provided the catalyst for some robust conversations with staff around the need to enhance the learning culture at Mercy and some actions put into immediate effect:

- VCE policies and processes - the establishment of the Sub-SAC guidelines.
- VCE Teacher Handbook publication
- Engagement of Kirstin Bourne to work with English team on the 'English Curriculum Project' and supporting our VCE teachers and students
- External marking and moderation of VCE English SACs
- Enhanced VCE Unit 1 and 3 transition program - longer length and common protocols for all teachers. Transition Handbooks for all classes
- Clarity around minimum standards for VCE assessment tasks, SACs and outcomes
- Use of learning and wellbeing data at each Community Group meeting to support intervention

Year 12 English - Strive for 25!

In 2021 and 2022 over 50% of Mercy students did not achieve a study score over 25 and the subject median study score was just over 25 - well below the state median of 30. In this second year we continued to work towards improving the results of our Year 12 English students, in particular the number of students achieving a study score over 25. Kirstin Bourne was engaged to work with both our students and to coach our staff. Higher expectations were put in place to hold students accountable for their homework and hurdle tasks. Teachers used the Sub-SAC process which also increased attendance and improved the study culture of the cohort.

Kirstin regularly presented to our students on the various texts and areas of study as well as exam preparation and supported our staff by preparing SACs and writing SAC essay prompts. Our external marker accurately ranked our students and provided detailed individual and cohort feedback. We also worked with the cohort on assisting them to understand the role and purpose of the GAT and how this may impact on their overall results. Few students opted for an unscored VCE and yet the 'long tail' was shortened and we saw a significant improvement in student outcomes. Less than 25% of students (8 students) in the cohort received a study score less than 25. Our median study score increased to 29. Overall, as a result of better than predicted examination results, all of the Mercy students received a statistical lift in their school based coursework scores.

English Curriculum Project

Also emerging from Kirstin's work on the English 'data story' was the formation of a consultancy partnership between Mercy and Kirstin to re-develop the 7-10 English Curriculum with the overarching goals of enhanced student engagement, more rigorous

content and instruction and the development of writing skills. After a series of classroom observations and meetings with teachers, a pilot project commenced in Year 8 where Kirstin built a unit of work based on the literary tradition of 'The Quest'. Drawing on a range of classic texts, Kirstin coached our teachers in how to deliver a unit of work based on the principles of explicit, direct instruction (EDI). EDI approaches to instruction are characterised by carefully planned and sequenced lessons, clear and detailed instructions and modelling, and frequent and systematic monitoring of student progress and feedback to students. The students worked in booklets and returned to handwriting and tackled texts and literary ideas that were sophisticated and beyond anything that they thought was possible. Our teachers noticed an improvement in student attention, effort and behaviour and students reported feeling proud of their work and as one student said, 'I can feel my writing getting better each day.'

Due to the success of this project, DOBCEL engaged Kirstin to do similar work with the other secondary schools across the diocese in the form of The English Curriculum Project (ECP). This work has now been scaled up and Kirstin worked with our 2024 junior school teachers to plan and adopt this approach in both Year 7 and 8 alongside a reading program. The DOBCEL work continues in 2024 with Mercy as the exemplar school working in this space.

Teacher collaboration - Professional Learning Communities

Our 2021 school review identified staff collaboration as a growth area. Mercy's strength lies in staff knowledge, understanding and action that support individual young people and student community cohorts in an holistic way - learning and wellbeing entwined. Data from ReLATE and staff voice revealed that adults in the school seek a forum where they can share their concerns and wonderings about students and have opportunity to collaborate and take action to address these identified concerns or curiosities. There was a need for greater clarity around processes and procedures to support teachers and learning by improving student attendance, increasing engagement and motivation, resetting behaviours and learning post remote learning. Accessing multiple sources of student data needs to be a continuous cycle of discussion, decision making and action.

In 2023 we designed a Professional Learning Community process to support staff and student learning. Teachers and Learning Support Staff worked with Natalie Stephenson and Dr Bern Nicholls over the course of the year to understand the theory and practice behind effective PLCs and then undertook two practice PLC cycles in order to learn and master the inquiry process. The first cycle was undertaken by all staff exploring an aspect of Artificial Intelligence (Chat GPT) and its implications for teaching and learning. This was not only a way to learn the PLC process but also enables our staff to learn about AI in schools. The second cycle was undertaken in an area of choice / curiosity driven by staff voice data. Following a review of the process it was agreed that PLC structures in 2024 are best formed by Community groups and co-led by Community and Learning Leaders.

The introduction of PLCs at Mercy has re-established a culture of staff being 'back in the room' and discussing learning. Teams are now using learning, attendance and behaviour data to guide discussions and actions and inquiry projects leading to improved student learning outcomes.

Attendance and participation - "Every day counts"

2022 presented significant challenges in ensuring that student attendance was maximised for learning. After two years of all of us being programmed to stay at home over the slightest cough or snuffle it was difficult to suddenly reverse these newly formed habits. As a result, regular attendance took a hit and this has certainly had an impact on student achievement.

In 2023 we asked our families to partner with us to raise expectations around regular attendance. We launched a communication campaign with our families to assist them in understanding the cumulative effects of time missed from school and closer attention was paid to our attendance data and following up on absences. Emerging from this work were 4 key drivers:

1. The Mercy branded attendance infographic that become a standard feature of 'The Week Ahead'
2. The attendance improvement plan - a guide to working with young people and their families to help identify barriers to attendance and setting attendance improvement goals
3. The Student Attendance Flowchart - designed to support teachers and leaders around processes for supporting students with attendance issues
4. The Community based PLC framework designed to monitor and action attendance concerns

Student voice - PIVOT evidence-based survey tools that empower educators with insight, inspire conversations, and generate shared ideas for change.

In our ongoing commitment to enhancing the learning experience for our students, we have implemented the PIVOT student survey on teaching as a valuable tool for feedback and improvement. This survey serves as a platform for students to provide candid insights into their educational journey, allowing us to better understand their needs, preferences, and areas of concern. Through the comprehensive analysis of survey data, we gain invaluable perspectives on the effectiveness of our teaching methods, course content, and overall classroom environment. Utilising the feedback garnered from the PIVOT survey, we continuously strive to adapt and innovate our pedagogical approaches, ensuring that every student receives the highest quality education tailored to their individual learning styles.

Our staff used their survey data to set two personal professional development goals and were required to develop a strategy to implement those goals and to reflect on their learning as part of our staff annual review process.

Student Learning Outcomes

NAPLAN 2023

NAPLAN testing in 2023 was conducted wholly online and Mercy Regional College was able to successfully test over 95% of students within the testing window. The new reporting scale was also introduced which does not enable growth data to be examined.

Areas for improvement:

- Writing for our senior cohort
- Reading re-engagement in the Middle School

Actions forward:

- Maintain rigour and challenge for our capable Year 7 cohort
- Continue to engage in the English Curriculum Project work to develop skills
- 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

Mercy Regional College continues to be the largest provider of Senior Pathways options in the region.

In 2023 students undertook 19 Unit 3/4 VCE studies and 5 VET studies. We also supported our students to undertake studies through Virtual School Victoria, external VET providers, traineeships and work placements. The College VCE Dux for 2023 was Ronan L.

ATAR Data

37 ATAR Rankings

Median ATAR - 68.2

Mean (average) ATAR - 63

ATARs over 70 - 46%

Study Score Data

- State mean for each study score is set at 30
- 40+ is considered the top 9% of the state
- Number of study scores - 238
- Median Study Score - 29
- Mean (average) Study Score - 29
- 2.1% of Study Scores 40 & above (VCE Honour Roll)
- 35.7% of Study Scores 30 & above 23 - 37 is considered the broad mid range

- 38+ is considered the top 15% of the state

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 7	543	68%
	Year 9	543	53%
Numeracy	Year 7	540	75%
	Year 9	555	59%
Reading	Year 7	547	83%
	Year 9	559	67%
Spelling	Year 7	537	78%
	Year 9	546	61%
Writing	Year 7	551	77%
	Year 9	568	52%

*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.

Senior Secondary Outcomes	
VCE Median Score	29
VCE Completion Rate (includes VCE VM completions)	100.00%
VCAL Completion Rate (VCAL Intermediate)	*

*Not reported due to insufficient data i.e. less than 4 student enrolments for VCE/VCAL.

Post-School Destinations as at 2023	
Tertiary Study	[ASR_PostSchoolDestinations.tertiary]
TAFE / VET	[ASR_PostSchoolDestinations.tafevet]
Apprenticeship / Traineeship	[ASR_PostSchoolDestinations.apprenticeship]
Deferred	[ASR_PostSchoolDestinations.deferred]
Employment	[ASR_PostSchoolDestinations.employment]
Other - The category of Other includes both students Looking for Work and those classed as Other	[ASR_PostSchoolDestinations.other]

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Through the Mercy tradition, we commit ourselves to caring for each other.

We will endeavour to:

- Build on the implementation of the Positive Behaviour management program
- Consolidate student voice and agency
- Continue to grow the M.E.R.C.Y class and wellbeing program building on a curriculum based around Positive Education, Resilience Project and Respectful Relationships. The implementation of these programs respond to current student community issues that may arise throughout the year

Achievements

Pat Cronin Foundation 2023 presentation:

The Be Wise education programs don't just introduce young people to Pat and his story but help them create solutions to Be Wise, Think Carefully and Act Kindly.

The experienced team of presenters and educators address the psychological, social and economic impacts of violent acts like the Coward Punch. They encourage students to reflect on attitudes and behaviours around anger and aggression and together they discuss strategies to deal with these issues personally, and as mates and bystanders.

The education presentations and programs are designed to leave participants feeling empowered to develop their own action plan to Be Wise and never use violence.

Do it for Dolly Day - Friday 12 May

"Do it for Dolly" Day is an annual event held across Australia in May, which aims to raise awareness about the issue of bullying and its impact on mental health. The event was inspired by the memory of Amy "Dolly" Everett, a 14 year-old girl who took her own life in 2018 after being bullied. The day encourages people to wear blue, the favourite colour of Dolly, and to share positives messages on social media using the hashtag #doitfordolly. The event is organised by the Dolly's Dream foundation, which was established by Dolly's family in her honour to support initiatives that address bullying and youth mental health.

On Friday 12th May, all Mercy Regional College students wore a touch of blue, whether that be socks, a hair tie or painted fingernails. They brought a gold coin for donation. Wristbands

sold for \$5.00 each. All monies raised will go straight to the foundation to help continue the great work they are doing.

The Good Enough Initiative

In an exceptional learning opportunity, our Year 10 students participated in a series of dynamic sessions led by the highly regarded Jayne Robinson. These workshops marked a significant step towards enhancing our students' personal and academic growth.

Drawing from her rich background as an educator and her expertise as a performance coach, Jayne Robinson delivered four captivating sessions that left an indelible impact on our Mercy students. These crafted workshops were tailor-made to resonate with adolescents, providing them with essential tools and strategies to foster a growth mindset.

Through Jayne's insightful guidance, students were not only engaged but also empowered to embrace their journey of self-discovery. The workshops were carefully designed to instil a sense of positivity and self-assurance, enabling our students to unlock their innate potential. By offering practical techniques and promoting self-reflection, the program facilitated the development of invaluable life skills that will serve our students well beyond their time at Mercy.

Feedback from students was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the significant transformation these workshops catalysed. The emphasis on personal empowerment and academic enrichment underscores our commitment to providing holistic education that nurtures the mind, heart, and spirit of every student.

As we reflect on the impact of these workshops, we look forward to witnessing the continued growth and success of our Year 10 students. We extend our gratitude to Jayne Robinson for sharing her expertise and inspiring our students to strive for excellence in all aspects of their lives. Together, we are fostering a brighter future for our Mercy community.

Empowering Students: Fostering Safety and Participation at Mercy Regional College

Let's Talk Presentation.

To enhance mental health awareness, students from all year levels gathered for an enlightening presentation by Let's Talk. This was organised by the Senior VCAL group, in the lead in to the 2nd Annual Mercy Dip for Mental Health. The aim of this initiative was to shed light on mental health, confront its challenges, and equip our students with strategies to nurture their own well-being. The impact of the session was profound, leaving attendees inspired and informed.

The presentation aimed to highlight mental health by naming it, discussing it openly, and destigmatising the topic. Through engaging dialogue and insightful anecdotes, students delved into the significance of embracing mental health as an integral part of our lives. Middle

and Senior school students were further privileged to hear from Cale, who candidly shared his lived experiences, offering a genuine glimpse into the journey of navigating mental health challenges.

One key takeaway from the presentation was the importance of fostering a culture of support and empathy. The Let's Talk team eloquently emphasised the value of checking in on friends – a simple yet profound gesture that can make a world of difference in someone's life.

Time and Space

In a heartwarming event that celebrated the bond between Year 7 and 8 students and the important women in their lives, Time & Space orchestrated an extraordinary evening at the O'Keeffe Campus. With over 60 families in attendance, the event was a resounding success, showcasing the remarkable resilience and community spirit in the post-COVID era.

Building Connections:

The evening went above and beyond to create an inclusive and engaging environment for the students and their mothers or significant females. The evening commenced with a warm welcome, setting the tone for the memorable experience that lay ahead. We recognise the importance of forging connections and strengthening relationships, providing a platform for families to come together and create lasting memories.

Engaging Presentations:

Time & Space captivated the audience with a series of presentations that blended entertainment and education. From inspiring guest speakers (our students and parents) to thought-provoking discussions, the presentations touched on various aspects of personal growth, empowerment, and nurturing relationships. The company's commitment to imparting valuable life skills was evident in each enlightening session.

Celebration of Achievements:

There was a dedicated portion of the evening celebrating the achievements and milestones of the Junior School students. The event served as a platform to recognise their growth, resilience, and commitment to learning. The atmosphere was filled with pride and encouragement as parents and significant females showered their children with applause and admiration. It was so lovely to see our young people and their families sharing these special moments and memories together.

The remarkable turnout of over 60 families at the event is a testament to the dedication of our families in ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience.

Time & Space has undoubtedly set a high bar for future events, ensuring that the bonds formed on this special evening will continue to flourish for years to come.

Respect Cup

In Term 2, Year 9 students participated in the 'respect effect' program in their MERCY classes. This program explored what relationships are and what a healthy relationship looks like. Students investigated their individual values and cultural norms and how these are evolving at this stage in their lives. They also examined how they are influenced by history, policies and the media when it comes to their relationships with others. In classes students looked at current issues in society such as gender equality and violence, including domestic violence.

At the end of each session students participated in a debrief and reflected on how they are feeling regarding the content covered during the session.

Bullying No Way!!

Last year the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence (otherwise known as Bullying – NO WAY!! Day), was moved to 3rd Friday in August. This year's theme of "Growing Connections".

Research has evidenced strong connections to our school (and wider) communities, coupled with good social skills are protective elements in the prevention of bullying and assist in building help-seeking behaviours.

As many of us are aware through our own experiences connections to community are invaluable in providing us with many positives, such as: a sense of belonging, further development of our social skills, building our self-confidence, meeting new people, growing friendships as well as support networks. Strong connections to school can provide all this as well as the ability to experience academic success, lower incidences of bullying and absenteeism.

Our support was shown by the students and staff by adding their pledges, names and/or ways of growing connections to an artistic display on each Campus. Along with having the option of wearing an item of orange, such as socks or ribbons.

Positive Behaviour Program

Lunchtime behaviour reflection sessions continued into the 2023 school year. This is based around Restorative Practice and was used throughout the program to ensure personal student growth in their social/emotional behaviour. This system supported both staff and students by developing student engagement and positive relationships between all students and staff. It allowed opportunities for students to reflect on their behaviour with the support of staff. The Positive Behaviour Program has supported young people in their transition back into school structure as they have moved away from remote learning in the home setting.

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

Throughout the year we developed and planned a MERCY pastoral care program that included programs such as Resilience Project, Respectful Relationships and Positive Education for 2023. This program has been designed with content in the current program and further developed with a focus on respectful relationships. Staff have access to a program from Year 7-12 that has varied themes to assist with the wellbeing of our students. This program will be completed with a school diary from Year 7-9 that will include lessons from the Resilience Program to complete the MERCY lessons.

Your Voice Matters

We invite all MRC families and community members to take an active role in shaping our school's journey. Parental insights, feedback, and suggestions are invaluable in our pursuit of excellence. Together, we can continue to ensure that MRC is a place where every student thrives, and their safety is prioritised.

Value Added

A selection of Staff Wellbeing programs offered during the year:

- Mercy Regional College staff induction programs
- Celebrating milestones within the staff as well as taking time to remember those who have passed away.
- MRC RUOK? day activities/Diversity Days
- Workplace Mental Health First Aid course
- Various staff activities such as staff challenges, staff appreciation activities and social gatherings
- Trauma workshop lead by College Social Worker

A selection of Parent Wellbeing programs offered during the year:

- Junior school - Welcome evening
- Access to Wellbeing information and e-safety information on the Mercy website, giving parents up-to-date information as well as after hour phone numbers they may need.
- Regular information on college newsletter
- Access to information via Google Meet and virtual presentations
- Acknowledgement Days
- Time and Space

A selection of Student Wellbeing programs offered during the year:

- Year 7 Camp
- Year 8 Camp
- Year 11 Road safety presentation

- Year 9 Camp - The Melbourne Experience
- Year 11 Job Camp (held at School) & single day Melbourne University/TAFE excursion
- Year 12 Retreat
- Resilience Project Lessons
- Positive Education Lessons
- Mental health presentations from Wellways
- Presentation from Legal Aid - Online laws
- Presentation for Year 11 students from Headspace and DARE
- RUOK? Day
- Bullying No Way Day
- One Punch Presentation
- The Flip side - Targeting online behaviour (Years 7 to 10)
- Junior Boys and Girls Health Talks
- Funding and appointment of NSCP Chaplain (Pastoral Worker)
- Social Worker Harold Gara onsite at both Campus
- Tanya Rowan VANGUARD COACHING

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 most of my classmates' was 3.8

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 2.4

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

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.

Years 9 - 12 Student Retention Rate	
Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	74.0%

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y07	88.1%
Y08	90.6%
Y09	89.2%
Y10	88.9%
Overall average attendance	89.2%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

At Mercy Regional College, leadership is integral to our Catholic mission, serving as a cornerstone ministry. We foster a culture of collaboration and positivity among our staff and community, nurturing a unified sense of purpose and direction. Key to our approach is the strategic allocation of resources to enhance student learning outcomes, support teacher growth, and maintain external accountability standards.

Our leadership ethos at MRC promotes collaboration, consultation, and transformative practices, empowering staff to fulfil their roles and aspirations while positively influencing student learning outcomes. We cultivate a collective commitment to student achievement, driving continuous professional development and enhancing teacher effectiveness. Grounded in research and measurable outcomes, our improvement strategies leverage internal data to ensure prudent resource stewardship, meeting the diverse needs of 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.

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

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

Achievements

The College collaboratively worked to review our Vision, Mission, Values and Mantra. These were finalised ready for introduction at the commencement of the 2024 school year.

Vision and Mission: Inspired by faith and our Catholic heritage, we nurture growth through purposeful and empowering learning.

Values:

Community - We nurture geographic, cultural, and social aspects of community, fostering a sense of belonging, care, collaboration and support. By nurturing these connections, we actively create and build positive community members.

Inclusiveness - We value inclusiveness by creating a welcoming and supportive environment that respects diversity and promotes equity in our community. We nurture a culture of acceptance and responsible and compassionate citizenship.

Respect - We value a culture which promotes respect for self, others, our wider community and the world, reflecting the gospel values of love, compassion, and service. We value and treat all members of the school community with dignity and understanding to promote a caring environment.

Excellence - We value excellence by creating a culture of high personal expectation and academic rigour whilst promoting spiritual and personal growth. We encourage everyone to pursue their interests and talents to become valuable, active members of the broader community.

Mantra - after careful and considered reflection our community determined our mantra - Learning to Care, Caring to Learn - to be consistent with our identity and in koine with our current context. Our community spent time articulating how our mantra is realised.

[Mercy Regional College - Vision, Mission & Values](#)

Enhancing and building leadership skill, behaviours and capacity to enhance leadership capabilities remained a priority. Building leadership confidence is also crucial to enhancing student learning outcomes and achieving school improvement goals. Middle leaders shifted into a cognitive coaching model of development support by Dr Bern Nicholls - Lead Learning. Cognitive Coaching entails guiding leaders to delve into the rationale behind their leadership approaches. Every leader possesses unique styles and philosophies, and this process aids in understanding their cognitive patterns, identifying areas for growth, and fostering autonomy and self-sufficiency among leaders. Seventeen MRC Middle Leaders working in a Position of Leadership were supported to continue their professional learning and personal development. The College invested significant resources to enable these staff to continue their participation in leadership capacity, confidence and capability building onsite.

Coaching and mentoring of teachers is also vital to achieving our school improvement goal of attracting and retaining high-quality staff whilst also remaining focussed on enhancing student learning outcomes. The coaching and mentoring of our graduate and early career teachers is vital to their career longevity. Two experienced teachers completed training through VIT Effective Mentoring Program to equip them with mentoring skills to support beginning and early career teachers and guide them through the provisional to full registration process. We now have 7 teachers skilled in this area.

Two experienced teachers also completed an Instructional Coaching (Step Lab) course providing them with the skills to work one on one with colleagues to support them in continuously improving their pedagogical practice, lesson design and assessment creation. This type of coaching is responsive to the needs of the teacher and is successful due to the compounding effect of the practice.

In 2023, we concluded the last year of our existing Position of Leadership cycle. Collaboratively developed with staff and in consultation with the Consultative Committee, a new structure and positions were introduced, aligning with our 2024 School Improvement Goals. Staff members were assigned to these new roles, effective from the start of 2024.

In Term 4 of 2023, our O'Keeffe junior campus underwent significant development. Collaborating closely with college architect Baldasso Cortese and builders Spence Construction, we executed a phased plan to enhance our facilities. Modus Australia handled the construction of external student bathroom facilities, while Spence Construction spearheaded the refurbishment of internal facilities, our reception area and our performing arts learning space. Sustainability took centre stage as we upgraded our traditional septic system to a cutting-edge solution from Worm Farm Waste Systems, incorporating advanced worm technology to manage sewage, greywater, and food waste. Additionally, we implemented a system to collect rainwater from the sports court cover roof, utilising it to irrigate our oval in summer and to flush toilets in winter. Furthermore, we replaced the roof of our heritage building ready to install solar panels as part of our commitment to renewable energy.

The College, in partnership with Catholic Education Ballarat, continues to provide comprehensive support for postgraduate study. An additional staff member was accepted into the ISMAPNG - Mercy Emerging Leaders in Integral Ecology Fellowship.

The College maintains its commitment to offering Traineeships to graduating students. These individuals, integral members of our community, have the opportunity to pursue a Certificate IV in School Based Education Support or Sport and Recreation, though other certifications are also available.

Staff members are consistently offered abundant opportunities for professional development, ensuring that their expertise and practices align with current school improvement and development trends. This is accomplished through enhancing the skills and knowledge of all staff, integrating professional learning into daily work environments, enabling staff to tailor their own professional learning programs, and fostering collaboration to facilitate the sharing of skills, knowledge, and expertise among staff.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023

- TFA People & Culture Induction, Zoom
- TFA MEAL Induction, Zoom
- Unit 1-2 teaching a personal response, MRC Camperdown Online zoom meeting
- English PD - Teaching personal response, Online
- STAV VCE Biology Conference, Melbourne University
- STAV VCE Conference Series - Chemistry, Virtual
- DOBCEL Leadership Gathering, Horsham
- STAV VCE Physic Conference, Melbourne University
- SWTAFE FINIALISING DAY,WARRNAMBOOL
- ILSY Program WIST Session, Online
- LDL Meeting, O'Keeffe
- CEB - Graduate Teacher Program, Ballarat
- CDES Annual Psychology conference, Webinar
- SLLN Meeting, Online
- Unit 3 and 4 workshop - and modules, Online zoom meeting
- Mercy Deputy Principals Seminar, Mt Lilydale Mercy College
- Parliament and the Courts, Online
- Mercy Deputy Principal's Seminar Day 2, Mt Lilydale Mercy College
- Literature Examiner's Report, Online
- DOBCEL Teaching and Learning Consultative Committee Meeting, Online
- Food Studies Unit 3 Teacher's Toolkit, Online Webinar
- HHD 2022 Exam Review Webinar, Online Webinar
- VCAA Art Making and Exhibiting - Delivering the School Assessed Task, Online Webinar
- Reviewing student performance in the 2022 VCE Business Management examination, Webinar
- Resilience Project meeting, Remote
- 2023 SAC Workshop - Virtual : General Mathematics
- Mercy Integral Ecology Emerging Leaders Fellowship 2023, Sydney - Blue Mountains
- Selena Fisk Data Workshop - Ballarat
- Literature Network Meeting, Online
- 2023 Meet the Assessors - Virtual
- Wellbeing Network Meeting, Damascus
- Eastern Maar Meeting, Walker St Memorial Garden
- SIMON PL onsite at MRC
- ABLES: User Level B training, CEB Ballarat Office
- HCSN Principals Meeting
- BDSP Term 2, Warrnambool

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

- Ballarat Diocese Business Managers Meeting, Ballarat
- Southern Zone LDL Meeting, Offsite
- BDSP Day 2
- Southern Zone Catholic Library Network PD and Meeting, Warrnambool Library
- DOBCEL Learning and Teaching Consultative Committee Meeting, Ballarat
- Matilda Publishing - Good science 7 & 8 - virtual meeting, MRC - O'keeffe campus
- DOBCEL Leadership Gathering, Horsham
- South West PD&T Collaboration Group, Hawkesdale
- PIVOT school data coaching session P5, Online
- Webex webinar: Art Making and Exhibiting School - assessed Task Mid Year Q & A
- How to address pseudocode and algorithms, Online
- Unit 3 and 4 Workshop English, Online zoom meeting
- ILSY WIST (whole school implementation team), Ballarat
- RE domain & curriculum time with Bernie Tolan, O'Keeffe
- CPA Australia - Chat GPT and the Future of AI in Finance, Online
- Jubilee Art Walk, MRC
- Food Safety Handling Course, Terang
- EBA Principal Briefing DOBCEL, Online
- VCE Legal Studies update - new Study Design 2024, Online
- PAVCSS Meeting, Marcellin College Bulleen
- Obtaining Medium Rigid Licence, Ballarat
- Mercy Integral Ecology Emerging Leaders Fellowship, Queenscliff
- SW Literature Network Meeting, SW TAFE Warrnambool
- Reconciliation, Cultural Responsiveness, and the Australian Curriculum, Online
Reconciliation Australia
- DOBCEL Family and Community Engagement Consultative Committee, CEB Ballarat
Literature network meeting, Online
- EMAC/Corangamite/MRC Meeting- WP Garden, Cafe in Manifold St
- Unit 1-2 English workshop, Online workshop
- Terang College Garden Visit, Terang College
- Cambridge Chemistry VCE Webinar for New Study Design in 2024, Online
HCSN Principals Meeting
- The Writing Revolution Course, Online
- Running a Successful Retreat Q&A, online - zoom
- DOBCEL SLLN Meeting P 3 and 4, Online
- MEL Leadership Meeting, Melbourne
- VIT Effective Mentoring Program - Day Two, Sage Hotel, Ringwood
- The Writing Revolution Training, Online
- New Study Design (2024) online Q& A, Webinar
- VCAA webinar: School Leaders' Briefing: An overview of the changes to the
Mathematics Curriculum, Webinar

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

- Southern Network LDL Meeting
- MACS VCE English Network Exam Prep PD Session, Online
- BDSP Leadership, Swan Hill
- VATE Middle Years English Conference, RACV City Club Melbourne
- SIMON analytics onboarding call with Intellischool
- Designated Teacher Training Online
- VCAA webinar - Introduction: Key changes to the Mathematics Curriculum, Webinar
- Effective Mentor Program Day 1 and 2, Warrnambool
- Effective Mentoring Program - VIT, Warrnambool
- Wellbeing Network Meeting, Mildura
- Young Mercy Links Advisory Committee Meeting, Zoom Online
- PAVCSS Jubilee Dinner, Melbourne
- Mercy Integral Ecology Emerging Leaders Fellowship 2023, Cairns
- CEB LDL Meeting, Koroit
- VCAA webinar - Understanding the Mathematics Learning Area and changes to the Victorian Curriculum, Webinar
- DOBCEL REL Conference, Halls Gap
- PAVCSS Meeting, Marcellin College Bulleen
- CCI Policy Holder Briefing Session, Online
- Online Unit 3 & 4 Exam Preparation Session - HHD, Online
- VCAA webinar - Understanding the Mathematics Learning Area and changes (secondary), Webinar
- Unit 3 and 4 Workshop, Online w/shop
- Staff Retreat, Queenscliff
- Business Management exam prep PL, webinar
- Nostra Aetate - Interfaith Conversation for Today - Jewish Rabbi, Online
- Mercy Education LTD DP Conference, Perth WA
- Legal Studies exam webinar
- SLAV master class series: The school library toolkit, William Angliss Conference Centre
- First Aid Qualification
- Nostra Aetate - Interfaith - Hindu, Online
- Nostra Aetate - Interfaith - Buddhism, Online
- Unit 1-2 English, Online workshop
- Introduction to CEB's new PAT Resources Site VC, Online
- Nostra Aetate - Interfaith - Muslim, online
- Emmanuel Journaling Club, Emmanuel College Warrnambool
- Step Lab Instructional Coaching PL, Melbourne
- HCSN Principals Meeting
- FIRE Carrier Briefing and Induction, Ballarat

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAPLAN Reporting Professional Development and updates to VCAA Data Service, Lady Bay Warrnambool • NAPLAN Reporting & Data Service Professional Development workshop, Lady Bay, Warrnambool • DOBCEL Leadership Gathering, Horsham • Consultative Committee Training, Ballarat Trades Hall • Unit 1-4 Workshop, Melbourne • Mathematic Collaboration Meeting - Trinity College, Trinity College Colac • SWTAFE VETDSS Finalising day, SWTAFE WARRNAMBOOL • Children & Young People Companion Training, Ballarat • BDSPP Meeting, Ballarat • DOBCEL Crucial Conversations, Ballarat • Responding to behaviours of concern online PD, Boardroom • DOBCEL Wellbeing network meeting • Literature Network Meeting, NGV Melbourne • Legal Studies New Study Design PL, Webinar • ILSY Taking Stock Webinar (DOBCEL), Online • CEVC Implementing VCE VM and VPC, East Melbourne • NAB Cyber Security Information Session, Online • Timetabling Training, Online • VM Literacy New Study Design reconciliation • Secondary REL Gathering, Emmanuel College • VM Planning 2024 Integrated projects, Mercure Hotel Ballarat • School Library Association of Victoria Branch meeting, Warrnambool • MAV Annual Conference, LaTrobe University Bundoora • Working Safely at Heights Course, South West TAFE 	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	31
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$137.00

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 depressed at School was 2.4

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 2.8
- 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 3.1
- Average response to 'The staff in this school collaborate effectively with parents to optimise the learning of students' was 2.9
- 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
- Average response to 'This school provides opportunities for me to show compassion to others' was 4.2

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	8.3%
Graduate	23.3%
Graduate Certificate	5.0%
Bachelor Degree	46.7%
Advanced Diploma	3.3%
No Qualifications Listed	13.3%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	44
Teaching Staff (FTE)	33.7
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	40
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	28.1
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

At Mercy Regional College, we deeply value and prioritise genuine parental and community engagement as fundamental to enriching and maximising the learning outcomes of our students while enhancing the efforts of the college. This reliance rests upon a steadfast partnership between the school and parents, caregivers, and families. This partnership thrives on a common vision, shared goals, and mutual understanding regarding student education and well-being, encouraging proactive participation from parents, caregivers, and community stakeholders, including alumni, local community and service organisations, and businesses.

Effective communication and collaboration among all stakeholders are paramount in cultivating a strong and authentic community connection, bolstering the sense of belonging and safety for young people and community members alike. This can be achieved by establishing transparent channels of communication, encouraging active participation in school activities and events, and providing opportunities for community members to contribute their expertise and resources to support comprehensive student learning.

Authentic community connection necessitates a commitment to inclusivity and diversity, embracing and respecting various cultures, backgrounds, religious perspectives, abilities, identities, and perspectives. This entails fostering a welcoming and inclusive school environment that values and celebrates the diversity within the community, while actively striving to promote equity and social justice.

Our objectives encompass:

- Continuing to foster stronger relationships with parents, caregivers, and families through regular and clear communication and collaboration, such as our fortnightly Newsletter and our weekly Week Ahead, PAM notifications, focused letters when and as required, social media posts, parent-teacher-student conferences, family engagement events, and volunteer opportunities.
- Further fostering mutually advantageous collaborations with local organisations, businesses, and community leaders to directly enhance student learning. This may include engaging in community action projects, organising visits to local businesses and organisations aligned with learning objectives, facilitating volunteer opportunities, establishing mentorship programs, coordinating work experiences and work placements, and integrating VCE VET and VM projects and learning activities.
- Enhancing student involvement and enthusiasm in school events and activities, including milestone celebrations, liturgical events, academic competitions, community

outreach, sports and arts activities through the active promotion of these occasions to the broader community.

- Expanding avenues for community service and civic involvement by collaborating with local non-profit organisations and community service projects, including volunteer days, events, and fundraising initiatives. This effort aims to enhance MRC's positive standing within the broader local communities.
- Establishing an inviting and inclusive school atmosphere that appreciates and embraces diversity, achieved through initiatives like MRC Diversity and Inclusion Week, providing diversity training for both staff and students, and encouraging student-led efforts that advocate for inclusion and equity.
- We will continue to strengthen our connections with HCSN Catholic Primary School and State feeder schools to facilitate a seamless transition for students entering MRC and to foster a cohesive educational journey from primary to secondary education. This initiative aims to establish a unified Foundation to Year 12 Catholic learning experience whilst also ensuring young people who have attended State primary schools feel welcomed to join MRC at Year 7 or other year levels.
- Improving the effectiveness of our school advisory council to offer insights and commentary on school policies, programs, and initiatives, and to act as a bridge between MRC, the HCSN, and the broader community.
- Enhancing our standing and involvement in our Ballarat Diocese Catholic school and Secondary School communities and our place as Mercy Education Limited Affiliate school.

Achievements

In 2023 we celebrated 50 years of MRC (originally CRC). Founded in 1973 our school is very much a product of our local parishes and community. Proudly regional and inclusive from establishment, we are very proud that the school and its community continues to provide a quality and diverse educational pathways and excellent student learning outcomes as was intended. Our celebration was inclusive of our current school community as well as those who were students, staff and families from our establishment.

Celebratory events included:

- Beginning of Year Mass with invitations to our current and former community members and former school Principals and Parish Priests.
- The writing and launch of a College History book authored by former staff member Lachie Lee and published by the College.
- MRC Feast Day celebration welcoming alumni.
- Establishment of alumni recognition Spirit of Mercy awards inclusive of an open age and young category. These were presented at a celebratory dinner.
- New honour boards to display at the McAuley Camperdown campus.

- Two commissioned art works celebrating MRC(CRC) by celebrated artist Christine Sage.

The College proudly staged "The Addams Family" as our biennial school production, delighting the local community with an unforgettable performance. Held at the esteemed Camperdown Theatre Royal, this event served as a platform for our talented students to showcase their prowess in the Performing Arts. It not only highlighted their skills but also offered an enriching experience for both the school and the local community, providing an opportunity for everyone to enjoy a live theatrical performance.

MRC offers a plethora of opportunities for parents/carers and significant individuals to actively engage with the educational journey of their young ones. Once again, we hosted various events including Parent Teacher Student learning interviews, our Year 7 Welcome Afternoon to warmly embrace our newest members to the community, and subject selection evenings. Additionally, we organised VCE information sessions, featuring the insightful Strive of 25 session, designed to underscore the importance of optimising VCE English study scores to students as well as parents/carers.

Throughout the year, parents/carers and family members joined us at significant events such as the Year 11 Presentation Ball and Year 12 Graduation Mass and Dinner. We also celebrated achievements at our annual senior years achievement assembly and concluded the year with a Mass of Thanksgiving and academic and community involvement awards assembly. Furthermore, we extended a warm welcome to grandparents, elderly relatives, and mentors at our Junior campus Special Persons Day, fostering a sense of community and inclusion across generations.

We hosted our inaugural Time and Space evening for our Year 7 and 8 students, inviting them to connect with their female parent or mentor. This program provided a unique opportunity to deepen familial ties and cultivate stronger bonds within our school community. Participants, including parents/mentors and their adolescent children, participated in meaningful conversations with each other and with diverse members of our school community. As the program unfolded, participants eased into these discussions, which held the potential for profound impacts on their lives. Feedback from parents, students, and school leaders has been overwhelmingly positive, underscoring the program's effectiveness in nurturing connections and fostering a supportive environment within our school.

Our Hampden Catholic Schools Network (HCSN) holds a significant place within our community. We've recently bolstered our HCSN transition program by introducing a Taster Day each school term. Moreover, we extended a warm welcome to all Year 5 and 6 students from our HCSN Feeder schools and local State schools to our revamped Open Day and Evening. This year, we innovatively offered a "School in Action" opportunity, inviting prospective students and families to experience a typical school day firsthand, guided by our current students. Additionally, Open Afternoons were hosted at our O'Keefe junior campus, providing insights for those considering enrollment at Year 7 or 8. Our updated prospectus

also highlights the engaging and innovative learning experiences available at MRC, showcasing our commitment to excellence in education.

Mercy Regional College remains committed to strengthening our partnership with parents, carers, and families in navigating the language and practices of schooling. This commitment is evident through the continuous improvement of our SIMON and Parent Access Module (PAM), serving as primary channels of information for parents. Additionally, we have introduced "The Week Ahead" communication for all year levels. Leveraging SMS messaging has proven effective in ensuring parent and carer attention to important emails, letters, and employment opportunities. Moreover, we have sustained a mixed-mode format for parent-teacher-student learning conferences, offering both face-to-face and virtual options to accommodate the diverse needs and preferences of parents and carers.

Our presence on various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, remains instrumental in disseminating information and promoting our school's educational offerings. These platforms have experienced consistent growth in followers, actively engaging and connecting the community with the diverse learning activities at our school.

We continue to deeply appreciate our connections within local sports and learning networks, such as the Hampden Secondary Schools Sports District of School Sports Victoria, South West TAFE, and the Corangamite Trade Training Cluster. These partnerships continue to enrich our educational offerings, ensuring our students enjoy a comprehensive and engaging learning journey. Through these networks, our students actively participate in community events, benefit from vocational education and training (VET) classes both onsite and at partner institutions, and interact with peers from neighbouring schools.

As an integral part of the Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited and Catholic Education Ballarat, and affiliated with Mercy Education Limited, MRC holds these community networks in high regard, recognising their invaluable contribution to our Catholic educational mission.

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 5.7
- 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
- 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

Financial Performance

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

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at www.mercy.vic.edu.au