



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

2025

Annual Report to the School Community



**ST CATHERINE
OF SIENA**
Catholic Primary School
Armstrong Creek

St Catherine of Siena Catholic Primary School

125 Warrally Boulevard, ARMSTRONG CREEK 3217

Principal: Nathan Owen

Web: stcatherine.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 2229, E Number: E1410

Principal's Attestation

I, Nathan Owen, attest that St Catherine of Siena Catholic Primary 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 2025 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 15 May 2026

About this report

St Catherine of Siena Catholic Primary 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](#).

Governing Authority Report

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) continues to take bold and ambitious steps, guided by our MACS2030 strategy, to empower our students to flourish and step into the world as the leaders of tomorrow.

In advancing our 2030 vision and our ambition to deliver world-leading Catholic education, we celebrate the significant progress made across our four areas of strategic focus. The safety and wellbeing of our staff and students underpins everything we do, enabling an environment where learning grows with purpose, leadership develops in capability and confidence, and our communities continue to thrive through our shared Catholic outlook.

Inspired by faith in the Jubilee Year of the Catholic Church in 2025, we successfully implemented our Faith Formation Framework, to further strengthen faith education, offering deeper opportunities for spiritual development and meaningful engagement for students, staff and leaders alike. Faith is at the heart of all our schools, grounding our mission and inspiring students, teachers and staff to grow and lead with integrity.

The official launch and implementation of the Vision for Engagement (VFE) strategy demonstrated impressive results in our community of Flourishing Learners.

Anchored in evidence-based practise, the VFE strengthens our system-wide teaching and learning approach and enhances the daily engagement of students through the explicit teaching of positive behaviour, reinforcement and consistency. It sets clear expectations about attendance and includes a sustained focus on student mental health and wellbeing.

For learners to flourish, students must be safe, which is why we are continuing to strengthen our safety processes and risk management culture. Our focus is on providing training and professional development for all staff to ensure student safety remains top of mind in every decision we make, every environment we shape and every interaction we have.

To strengthen the pillar of enabled leaders, MACS has established consistent standards across schools for cultivating inspiring, capable leaders for students to observe.

In the past year, our Pathways to Principalship Programme and Women in Leadership Programme have both strengthened our principal appointment process and introduced more flexible models of principalship.

It is inspiring to see our principals and teachers continue to raise the bar, reflected in the extraordinary number of nominations received in our Best Teachers campaign.

Finally, we continue to create new and enriched communities, with the opening of a new primary school and children's hub in Melbourne's growing north, ensuring families have access to high quality education no matter where they live.

MACS Early Years Education (MACSEYE) continues to expand early years and outside school hours care services across our schools and communities, with continued growth planned for 2026.

These investments are not simply about building infrastructure. They are about building a dynamic, Catholic education system where every child has an opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.

Thank you to all our students, staff, families and community members for being part of our journey so far, and we look forward to continuing to serve as a supportive and guiding presence in your children's lives.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Edward Simons

Executive Director

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

Vision and Mission

Our Vision

St. Catherine of Siena is a learning community which engages children, enlightens all in Gospel values, energises high expectations and empowers each child to set the world on fire. Together we enrich each other's journey in an ecological manner and strive for excellence.

Children engaged in their learning and empowered to be who God created them to be, will excel as global community citizens and set the world on fire.

ENGAGE - EMPOWER - EXCEL

Our Mission

As a Catholic Primary School, in partnership with our families and parish, we at St Catherine of Siena:

- Energise all students with quality and innovative teaching and learning through high expectations to pursue excellence
- Welcome and promote a compassionate community of learners who recognise and respect the dignity of all, celebrating differences
- Rejoice in diversity, knowing all children can learn
- Engage and enlighten each child in Gospel values, modelling Catholic Social Teaching and embracing Catholic tradition
- Cultivate a positive, safe school of learners with a particular focus on enhancing each child's wellbeing
- Emphasise the building of positive relationships with self and others
- Develop a strong sustainability education through our words and actions

School Overview

St Catherine of Siena School is a Catholic co-educational primary school in Armstrong Creek. Our school doors opened for the first time in January 2020 with **129** students enrolled from Grade Prep to Grade 5. In subsequent years, our school has welcomed between 80–90 students each year and in 2025 we welcomed **507** students enrolled in Years Prep through to Year 6.

St Catherine of Siena is a welcoming and inclusive learning environment open to all Catholic and non-Catholic families who are supportive of the Catholic mission and traditions of Catholic education. Our school is enlightened by Gospel values, modelling Catholic Social Teaching and embracing Catholic tradition. We rejoice in diversity, knowing all children can learn.

Wellbeing is at the heart of our school practices. We strive to be a thriving, safe school of learners and emphasise the building of positive relationships with self and others. We work hard to implement explicit programs and strategies to support the wellbeing of all in our community.

We aim for excellence in learning and teaching, setting high expectations for our learners, especially in the core learning areas of Reading, Writing and Mathematics. Students experience daily explicit teaching at their next stage of learning, and we ensure that appropriate support and extension opportunities are provided to enable all students to progress.

We provide a welcoming and inclusive learning environment, open to all Catholic and non-Catholic families who support the mission and traditions of Catholic education. Our school is enlightened by Gospel values, modelling Catholic Social Teaching and embracing rich traditions. We rejoice in the diversity of our community, firmly believing that every child has the capacity to learn and flourish. Wellbeing remains at the heart of our school's identity. In 2025, we continue to foster a thriving, safe environment where positive relationships—both with oneself and others—are prioritised. Through the implementation of explicit wellbeing programs, we ensure every member of our community feels supported, known, and valued.

We strive for excellence in learning and teaching, maintaining high expectations for all students. Our curriculum focuses heavily on core proficiencies in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics.

Explicit Teaching: Students engage in daily, targeted instruction tailored to their specific stage of learning.

Support & Extension: We provide robust frameworks to ensure every child is either supported or extended to reach their full potential.

At St Catherine of Siena, we encourage students to discover their passions through a stimulating and diverse curriculum. Our highly-regarded specialist programs offer students the chance to excel across:

- Visual Arts
- Performing Arts
- Physical Education
- Languages (Spanish)
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)
- Outdoor Learning & Environmental Stewardship

As a dynamic and modern school, we are committed to a sustainable learning style that respects our country's Indigenous heritage. We view ourselves as stewards of creation, journeying in harmony with the environment to ensure our learning experiences are both ecological and respectful.

In partnership with the Nazareth Parish community, soon to be re-named 'Damascus Parish' in early 2026 we live out Gospel values in both word and action. We provide a nourishing education that informs, forms, and transforms each child. Our ultimate goal is to empower every student to journey with Jesus and, in the spirit of St Catherine of Siena, our patron saint, ***"be who they were created to be and set the world on fire."***

Principal's Report

Building on the momentum of 2024 - a year defined by positivity, reflection, and growth as our enrolment reached 446 - The St. Catherine of Siena community continues to thrive, now welcoming 507 students for 2025.

The St. Catherine of Siena learning community experienced 2025 as a year of significant transition, reflecting on our foundations while moving forward with strong commitment, enthusiasm and energy for the continuing the journey of St Catherine of Siena Catholic School, Armstrong Creek. The school continues to be a school of first choice for many Armstrong Creek families as we continue to experience a huge demand for both prep enrolment as well as across all year levels. Due to this enrolment demand for our school, we have embarked on a reimagination of our original masterplan to ensure that we respond to both the current and future needs of the community.

Moving into 2025, the St Catherine of Siena community has furthered its commitment to transforming learning, teaching, wellbeing, and school operations. This year represents the next phase our school improvement plan initiated in 2024, with the MACS' Vision of Instruction continuing to serve as our primary framework for deepening evidence-based classroom practices.

Under the guidance of our Learning and Teaching leadership team, the implementation of consistent engagement norms, instructional routines, and rigorous review practices has become a clearly evident of all of our classrooms particularly within Mathematics and English. This has supported the continuing provision a calm, consistent and high-impact learning environments for every student. As a result, we can evidence increased academic progress across the school and a noticeable boost in our students' confidence and agency as learners. Throughout the year, the dedication of our students, teachers, and support staff to the core value of 'We Are Learners' was clearly visible in every classroom. This collective commitment is extremely pleasing for us all.

Term 3 was a captivating time for all involved at St Catherine of Siena. The 2025 bi-annual Performing Arts Show was a spectacular celebration of creativity, reinforcing the Arts as a vibrant pillar of the St Catherine of Siena community. This year's theme, 'Journeying through the Movieverse,' provided an exhilarating stage for our students to bring the magic of cinema to life through music, dance, and dramatic performance. This event was our biggest yet and required much organisation and teamwork from across the school and is a real testament to the diverse opportunities St Catherine of Siena provides for students and families to pursue their passions. By stepping into the spotlight and sharing their talents, our students continue to build the strong self-efficacy and confidence that help define our learning community.

Our First nations Family group has also continued to be very active in our school community this year. In 2025 St Catherine of Siena was delighted to complete our possum skin stole project. This project was worked upon by our First Nations families, where three generations, side by side shared stories of connection fostering strong ties between the Aboriginal families in our school community. These stoles will be worn by our First Nations students at whole school events and at their sacraments, tying Aboriginal spirituality with our Catholic Faith.

Possum skin cloaks have been part of Aboriginal culture since time immemorial and the school stoles are made to honour those who have revived this cultural practice here in Victoria. The markings on these skins tell stories of where our First Nations families come from, and reflect their deep connection to the Country where we live, learn, and grow. This project was coordinated by Jess McDonald, a St Catherine of Siena parent whose child was completing his primary school journey in 2025. We acknowledge Jess's beautiful gesture to revive this practice and leave a legacy for her family in our school community. These stoles will be forever part of the safe cultural space for our First Nations students, wrapping them in warmth and care, just like the coats their ancestors wore.

Our 2025 community collaborative artwork Darra-Kalk (tree branch) stands pride of space in our school reception area.

This artwork was made as part of our NAIDOC week celebration and is a community creation involving the school, our local men's shed and our local member for Cograngmite. The title of the piece is Darra-Kalk. This means tree branch in Wadawurrang language and helps strengthen the use of our local First Nations language in our school. The art is made from the branches we find on Wadawurrang Country and the sticks are decorated with leaves pressed by students, staff and community members. Darra-Kalk represents our diverse Armstrong Creek community and serves as a symbol of reconciliation and understanding of First Nations perspectives in our school community and beyond. This piece of precious artwork was also entered into the MACS Art Exhibition in early 2026, receiving high praise for whole school and community involvement.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

- To strategically grow a hope-filled, dynamic and sustainable school community

2025 Intended Outcomes:

- That student and staff engagement in the school's faith life increases through participation in service, social justice and real world connected action.
- That staff engagement in and contribution to RE team planning increases.

Achievements

Across 2025, St Catherine of Siena provided multiple rich opportunities for our students, staff and wider parent community to participate in the prayer and liturgical life of our school. Every 2-3 weeks, classes took turns to host a prayer service for our community under the COLA. These liturgies marked important church seasons, holy days and community events. These whole school prayer opportunities included key liturgical structures such as sharing of the Gospel and Prayers of the Faithful. Father Joel was with us onsite three times throughout the year to celebrate mass for our whole school community.

Staff were provided with opportunities to continue to develop their professional knowledge and personal faith. In a series of professional learning sessions led by our Religious Education leader (REL), teachers re-explored the principles of Catholic Social Teaching and created a bank of social justice actions that they could utilize when planning real world connected actions with their classes. To extend their learning further, staff participated in a school closure day entitled "Country and Community Pilgrimage." Staff learnt more about homelessness and issues affecting the marginalised in the Geelong community with a visit from the St Vincent De Paul Society and a visit to the Outpost Geelong.

Our Mini Vinnies team continued to be active across the school year supporting major projects such as; Project Compassion in Term 1, St Vincent De Paul Winter Appeal in Term 2 and Catholic Mission "Socktober" in Term 4.

The design of religious education lessons has continued to be supported by facilitated planning across each term with our school's REL. Staff were also provided with opportunities

to moderate RE assessment each semester, to determine shared understandings of progression in RE learning and knowledge.

Our Sacramental numbers continued to grow with over 130 students receiving sacraments across the year. Students prepared for the sacraments as part of their RE lessons and were provided with an opportunity for a Sacrament workshop to complement their classroom based learning and parish family night experiences.

Value Added

- Rich school prayer life ensured liturgy was consistent, predictable and a shared community experience.
- Increased Liturgical Literacy as students gained a deeper, practical understanding of Catholic ritual and tradition.
- Parish-School Synergy: The presence of Father Joel and the growth in sacramental numbers (130+ students) continued to strengthen the link between the school and parish.
- Formation of the Heart: The "Country and Community Pilgrimage" provided staff with first-hand "encounter" experiences, moving social justice from a textbook concept to a lived commitment to the Geelong community.
- Facilitated planning and assessment moderation with the REL ensured that Religious Education was taught with consistency and rigor.
- Opportunities for student leadership and engagement through Mini Vinnies.
- Opportunities for students, staff and parents to engage with social justice actions across the year.
- In recognition of the year of Jubilee, our School Art Club designed and created a spectacular piece of artwork titled *LUCE*. This will be proudly displayed in our school foyer for years to come.
- Increase in student perceptions of Catholic Identity (MACSSIS 2025 student survey data)

Principal participation in MACS Western Zone Principal Pilgrimage: March 26 - April 11

'In the Footsteps of St Paul' - This journey comprised of 28 Principals and lead guide, Denise Arnel and was the culmination of over twelve months of rich professional learning and preparation, including close examination of the Acts of the Apostles as well as reading and unpacking of our Pilgrimage text written by renowned author Peter Walker. This book combined historical analysis, biblical scholarship, and personal reflections that greatly helped us all with a comprehensive view of St Paul's missionary work and his impact on the early Christian church.

The pilgrimage commenced in Athens, the historic heart of Western civilization and a city where St. Paul encountered both profound challenges and unique opportunities for his mission. Our staff traced the footsteps of the early Church through many other sacred and historically significant sites, including Ephesus, Patmos, Corinth, Thessaloniki, and Philippi.

Upon returning, the experience was shared with the broader school community to foster adult faith formation and engagement:

Professional Learning: Staff participated in a formal reflection and visual presentation designed to deepen our collective spiritual understanding, which we continue to draw upon.

Community Engagement: A curated photographic display was featured in the school reception, allowing students, families, and visitors to connect with the journey and its historical significance.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

GOAL:

- To ensure learning growth for all through embedding an evidence- based, whole school instructional model

2025 Intended Outcome:

- To ensure learning growth in Writing for all students P-6
- To improve student achievement in Mathematics (Number: Fluency & Computation)

Achievements

Our literacy practice was further strengthened through targeted professional learning and the ongoing refinement of evidence-based instructional approaches. A key priority was building teacher expertise in explicit writing instruction, with a particular emphasis on sentence-level skills. Ochre resources, including The Syntax Project, supported a consistent approach to sentence-level instruction across the school. In addition, professional learning and planning support helped teachers consistently embed sentence-level tasks across reading lessons and other curriculum areas. In the junior years, teachers were supported to use Ochre F–2 novel study resources to enhance vocabulary development and reading comprehension. Daily reading fluency practice was embedded in all classrooms, providing regular opportunities for students to build accuracy, automaticity, and expression. Additional Tier 2 reading intervention was implemented in Years 3–6 through MacqLit, supporting students with targeted needs in spelling and reading. Assessment practices were also strengthened through an audit of existing writing assessment tools, leading to greater consistency in teacher judgement and more responsive instruction.

In Mathematics, a whole-school approach to mathematics was deepened through professional development and consistent instructional practices. Professional learning targeted the development of a consistent approach to the explicit instruction of Mathematics, particularly unpacking and refining the modelled and guided practice phases. A dedicated 5-10-minute fluency time was implemented and strengthened through the whole school with a focus on developing students' computational fluency in all 4 operations.

Student Learning Outcomes

The school triangulates various evidence of learning, for both summative and formative assessment. In 2025, triangulated data indicates positive learning outcomes and progress for the learners at St Catherine of Siena Primary School. Two different norm-referenced standardised tests, NAPLAN and ACER Progression Achievement Tests (PAT), supported and validated our own school-based evaluations of student learning. Results indicate that our students' learning is exceeding national norm results for Mathematics and Reading, indicating high levels of reading competency and consistently improving results with numeracy.

Of particular note was the high growth recorded in PAT assessments for Reading and Mathematics between 2024 and 2025. Significant numbers of students across the school (just under 47% for Reading and approximately 40% for Maths) recorded more than year's growth on this particular assessment. This was particularly noteworthy for students achieving across the middle and high achievement bands.

NAPLAN results indicated positive results overall for our Year 3 and Year 5 cohorts, with a significant proportion of students achieving in the strong or exceeding categories across all learning areas.

Year 3 Reading: Students achieving in STRONG or EXCEEDING categories 70.3%

Year 3 Spelling: Students achieving in STRONG or EXCEEDING categories 80.9%

Year 3 Numeracy: Students achieving in STRONG or EXCEEDING categories 65.7%

Year 3 Grammar & Punctuation: Students achieving in STRONG or EXCEEDING categories 57.1%

Year 5 Reading: Students achieving in STRONG or EXCEEDING categories 79%

Year 5 Spelling: Students achieving in STRONG or EXCEEDING categories 78%

Year 5 Numeracy: Students achieving in STRONG or EXCEEDING categories 73.8%

Year 5 Grammar & Punctuation: Students achieving in STRONG or EXCEEDING categories 71.4%

For the first time ever, we were able to collect growth data for our Year 5 cohort on NAPLAN. Pleasingly, large numbers of students achieved medium and high growth from Year 3-5 across the learning areas with high growth percentages as follows:

Reading: 30.3%

Writing: 31.3%

Spelling: 30.3%

Numeracy: 50%

Grammar and Punctuation: 39.3%

Our overall school PAT-Maths data (collected in November) indicated positive results for our cohorts of students. Overall, our school exceeded the national norm for PAT-Maths, with 66% of students achieving at or above the standard in Years 2-6, and 40% of students achieving high growth from 2024-25.

PAT-Maths - Percentage of students achieving at or above the expected standard

Year 2 - 61%

Year 3 - 71%

Year 4 - 66%

Year 5 - 55%

Year 6 - 81%

Whole school - 66%

Our overall school PAT-Reading data (collected in November) indicated positive results for most year levels with the school performing more highly than the national normed result (of 60% of students achieving at or above the standard). 47% of students achieved high growth on this assessment, indicating a significant value-add across the year for many students across the school.

PAT-Reading - Percentage of students achieving at or above the expected standard

Year 2 - 73%

Year 3 - 76%

Year 4 - 57%

Year 5 - 66%

Year 6 - 82%

Whole school - 70%

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards					
	2025 (current year)			2-Year Average	
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	420	57%	403	51%
	Year 5	511	75%	513	75%
Numeracy	Year 3	417	71%	407	65%
	Year 5	501	72%	501	76%
Reading	Year 3	416	70%	402	66%
	Year 5	498	83%	504	84%
Spelling	Year 3	410	66%	396	58%
	Year 5	493	78%	493	76%
Writing	Year 3	419	81%	419	83%
	Year 5	494	82%	503	88%

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2025 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.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

- To build self and collective efficacy by strengthening and nurturing a culture of excellence and empowerment.

2025 Intended Outcome:

- To increase students' engagement, efficacy and sense of safety

Achievements

In 2025, our school continued to strengthen and refine our Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) processes, guided by our whole-school expectations: We are Respectful, We are Learners, and We are Safe. As part of this ongoing work, our PBL expectations were reviewed and updated to explicitly include We are Safe. This revised expectation was carefully introduced and explicitly taught across all year levels to further strengthen students' understanding of safe and responsible behaviour. Staff continued to regularly recognise students for demonstrating these behaviours through raffle tickets and awards presented at school assemblies, helping to foster a culture of kindness, responsibility, and mutual respect.

To strengthen students' friendship and social problem-solving skills, staff implemented the Tier 1 SEL program URSTRONG – Friendology, supporting its consistent implementation across classrooms. In addition, Project Rockit's Anti-Bullying Program was delivered to students in Years 5 and 6, promoting positive online behaviour, resilience and respectful relationships.

A key wellbeing action in 2025 was the introduction of a dedicated weekly Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) hour across all year levels, integrating the Respectful Relationships curriculum. To deepen this impact, staff underwent professional development in circle pedagogy, equipping them with practices to strengthen student engagement, foster a sense of student voice, and cultivate authentic classroom connections.

A range of targeted Tier 2 interventions were expanded and carefully planned by our Allied Health team and Wellbeing and Learning Diversity Leaders, with a strong focus on supporting students' behaviour, emotional regulation and social skills. These included LEGO® Therapy, Interoception, We Thinkers/Everyday Speech, Seasons for Growth, and Peaceful Kids. The successful Lift Up Year 6 Girls' Wellbeing Program was also established

and expanded across the year. Part A, led by Fiona Luca, focused on emotional regulation and connection, while Part B, led by Jess Johns, supported self-expression and mindfulness through art.

Additional wellbeing initiatives included transition and leadership sessions for Year 5/6 students and their parents, planned and delivered in partnership with BATForce and Aspire Higher to support a positive transition to Year 6 and secondary school. Students and families also participated in cybersafety education sessions delivered by Victoria Police. Staff wellbeing was also prioritised, with weekly afternoon regulation sessions led by Maureen Flanagan..

Students continued to have access to a variety of lunchtime clubs throughout the week, including chess, art, STEM, and choir. In addition, the library remained open during every break, providing engaging activities, a calm environment and access to teacher support.

Our Student Voice team, made up of representatives from Years 3 to 6, continued to play an important role in school life. Meeting fortnightly, students shared ideas, discussed opportunities for improvement and investigated student voice practices to inform future implementation. The team also led several positive whole-school initiatives, including the establishment of the Kindness Tree to celebrate acts of kindness across the school and the introduction of the Fair Play Award, presented during the final five weeks of each term to recognise students demonstrating respectful and inclusive behaviour.

These achievements reflect our ongoing commitment to creating a safe, connected and inclusive school environment where every student is supported to thrive socially, emotionally and academically.

Value Added

The continued focus on Positive Behaviours for Learning and routines resulted in calm learning environments across the school and consistent processes and language for managing student behaviour.

Additional staff were trained to facilitate Tier 2 small-group programs, including Seasons for Growth, social skills groups, interoception sessions, Lego Therapy, and Peaceful Kids. As a result, an increased number of students were able to access targeted support across the school, addressing a wide range of social-emotional needs.

The expanded Allied Health team—including a speech therapist, occupational therapist, and counsellor—provided Tier 1 and Tier 2 wellbeing supports to a growing number of students and worked alongside teachers to implement adjustments for students requiring additional support with social-emotional development and self-regulation. The team also delivered wellbeing workshops for parents. In addition, Nathan Owen (Principal), Allison Wedding, and

Mark Lanigan (Co-Deputy Principals) completed Mental Health First Aid training, further strengthening the school's capacity to support staff wellbeing.

Targeted interventions, such as the Lift Up Year 6 Girls' Wellbeing Program, Project Rockit Anti-Bullying program, and Aspire Student Leadership program, alongside cybersafety education sessions for students and families delivered by Victoria Police, built connection, confidence, and awareness across the Year 5/6 cohort.

Student Satisfaction

MACSIS 2025 student survey results indicated that:

Students gave their highest ratings to rigorous expectations, teacher-student relationships, school belonging, and learning disposition. Meanwhile, ratings for safety, enabling safety, and student voice held steady with 2024 levels, confirming these as key priorities for our 2026 focus.

We also acknowledge that there are multiple areas that require increased focus for improvement, most notably the domains of student engagement, student safety and student voice. There is a significant opportunity to move from 'listening' to 'empowering' by involving students more directly in decision-making, particularly regarding how they learn and how the school climate is shaped to enable safety, belonging and increased connectedness.

Student Attendance

Administration staff and classroom teachers use SIMON (school management platform) for maintaining records about attendance, including records about students who have been absent from school without reason for long periods of time.

Attendance at the school is checked twice daily (AM and PM) by teachers, in electronic format.

The attendance reports are accessed by administration staff to follow up students who are absent without explanation. If a student is absent without explanation, the school administration staff will contact the parent/guardian for an explanation as soon as possible on the day of absence. This is done via sending out an automated text advising the parent/carer/guardian of the unexplained absence. The Attendance rate remains consistent and high levels of attendance at 90% which is consistent with previous years.

Where the rate of absenteeism is of concern, the school will follow up with the parents/guardians/ carer or emergency contact to discuss absence.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	89.82
Y02	90.56
Y03	90.42
Y04	90.25
Y05	91.67
Y06	89.8
Overall average attendance	90.42

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals:

- To build self and collective efficacy by strengthening and nurturing a culture of excellence and empowerment
- To build self and collective efficacy by strengthening and nurturing a culture of excellence and empowerment

2025 Intended Outcomes:

- That structures are developed to ensure regular and consistent use of the Learning Walks Model, Peer Modelling and collaborative video reflection
- That leaders continue to build their coaching capacity
- That data, systems and communication processes improve efficiency and clarity
- That school structures and resources are strategically planned to meet the growing school community

Achievements

2025 marked a significant year of transition in the leadership and management of St Catherine of Siena. Following the retirement of our foundation principal, a newly appointed principal and leadership structure was established to function school operations, school effectiveness and strategic growth.

This transition was led by a refined executive team, supported by a collaborative network comprising the School Improvement Team, the Learning and Teaching Leadership Team, and the Wellbeing Leadership Team. This integrated structure empowered our leaders to pool their expertise, ensuring a unified approach to supporting our staff, students, and families. By fostering deep collaboration, this team successfully facilitated high-level professional learning and drove the continued realisation of our school improvement goals throughout the year.

In 2025, our school improvement initiatives remained centered on cultivating a culture of excellence and empowerment, with a strategic emphasis on student engagement and the continued refinement of evidence-based instruction. Our professional learning program was designed to deepen staff expertise, while refining a unified approach to classroom practice through a focus on engagement norms, instructional routines, and consistent and calm learning environments. These efforts were applied directly to our core evidence-based programs in English and Mathematics, supported by a multi-layered development model that included weekly PLTs, school closure days, and immersive strategies such as learning walks,

modelling, and peer feedback. This rigorous internal work was further strengthened by our ongoing commitment and participation in the Flourishing Learners West Network, ensuring that our teaching staff remains committed to research-driven educational practice.

We continued to refine our structures that support consistent whole-school practice and the leveraging of internal expertise remained important for our improvement journey. Our professional growth framework was further enhanced through a peer feedback and review process. This included formal coaching conversations and goal-setting sessions for all staff throughout the year, including regular professional learning for our learning support staff complemented by informal check-ins with school leaders. Our annual review meetings also served as a valuable platform for reflective dialogue, ensuring that individual professional goals remained closely aligned with our collective vision.

To strengthen our leadership capacity, we continued our strategic partnership with our external leadership consultant Lucy Carroll, focusing on both the collective and individual development of our leaders, which was highly effective with several engaging and purpose driven sessions throughout the year.

Strategic emphasis continues to be placed on professional learning as reflected in the MACSSIS survey data. Specifically, staff reported a strong sense of psychological safety, enhanced collaboration in teams collective efficacy, confidence in school instructional leadership, and a deep appreciation for the quality professional growth opportunities provided.

Ultimately, this rigorous focus on teacher practice translated into exceptional outcomes for our students. Data from the ACER Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) showed substantial learning growth in both Mathematics and English for students in Years 3–6. Furthermore, our Early Years literacy data remained consistently strong, affirming that our evidence-based instructional approach is delivering measurable success across all stages of the school.

The St Catherine of Siena community continues to experience an incredible surge in popularity, with our enrolment reaching a vibrant 507 students in 2025. This growth is a testament to our reputation as a premier educational choice in Armstrong Creek. While our school leaders remain dedicated to managing this demand thoughtfully and sustainably, our market share currently at 38% of enrolments in Armstrong Creek and 43% of Prep enrolments remains significantly higher than both MACS averages and other Catholic schools in the Geelong region. These figures proudly confirm that St Catherine of Siena is the definitive first-choice school for local Catholic families seeking an exceptional learning environment.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2025	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2025 Sounds-Write (systemic, structured phonics instruction) - training for new teachers Talk For Writing (SPELD training) (Years 2-6) - training for new teachers Talk For Reading (SPELD training) (Years 2-6) Flourishing Learners West - MACS facilitated, with ongoing coaching support with Knowledge Society/Classroom Mastery coaches Fortnightly English PLT meetings Fortnightly Maths PLT meetings Leadership in Action ongoing work with Lucy Carroll Twice termly RE PLTs - Catholic tradition and the role of RE educator Contemplative Prayer (RE Closure Day - MACS facilitated) MacqLit - Literacy Intervention Training Cognitive Science and Principles of Instruction - Whole School PD Dogs Connect - Wellbeing Dog Training (Dogs Connect Team) First Aid Level 2, CPR, Anaphylaxis Training (all staff) Positive Behaviours for Learning - work with consultant and ongoing across 2024 Crucial Conversations (MACS facilitated training for leadership staff) MACS Mathematics Leadership - TIMMS program MACS Literacy Leadership - Teach Well program EMU Maths Intervention - ongoing training for Maths intervention Accidental Counselling - Administration Team MACS Managing Aggressive Adults - Administration Team	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2025	42

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$970.00

Teacher Satisfaction

MACSSIS 2025 staff survey results indicate that a flourishing, positive and professional culture at St Catherine of Siena. Staff perceptions of our instructional leadership continues to be an area that is highly valued, reinforcing a culture of trust and continuous growth. Furthermore, our team's sense of collective efficacy, collaboration and support within teams and confidence in school leadership remain areas of strength showcasing our collaborative unity and team effectiveness. Even while navigating a period of rapid enrolment and staff expansion our foundations of staff safety, psychological safety and wellbeing also remain important areas ensuring our school a secure, supportive, and safe environment to work.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0
Masters	6
Graduate	2
Graduate Certificate	3
Bachelor Degree	25
Advanced Diploma	1
No Qualifications Listed	21

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	4
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	47
Teaching Staff (FTE)	44
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	26
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	17.73
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	1

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goal:

- To strategically grow a hope-filled, dynamic and sustainable school community

2025 Intended Outcomes

- That families are consulted on the provision of inclusive opportunities to celebrate diversity and difference
- That increased opportunities are provided to promote community engagement, connectedness and strong sense of belonging

Achievements

Connecting our students with our local community and connecting families with learning and school life were the focus of the school's community engagement efforts in 2025.

The school played a central role in the faith life of our families with our community gathering in prayer and liturgical celebration several times across each term. Hosted by different classes each time, our liturgies and whole school prayers have become valued opportunities to regularly celebrate and deepen our Catholic faith together. Our NAIDOC week, Mothers' and Fathers' day, St Catherine of Siena Feast Day and ANZAC day liturgies were among the many enriching community faith experiences offered to our community.

Strong attendance at school arts, sports and community events reflected the value that our families place on the rich extra-curricular opportunities on offer St Catherine of Siena. In 2025, our students' performing arts talents were showcased in our whole school production 'A Journey through the Movieverse'. A 1400-person strong audience enjoyed the fabulous dancing and acting performances at Costa Hall, with every student able to experience the excitement of performing in a world-class theatre.

Our unique 'Night Walk' in Winter each year brings our families together around the camp fire to share hot chocolate and then explore our local woodlands by torch light. 2025's event attracted a large proportion of our junior school families, with students keen to share their special connection to the woodlands, developed through their bush school experiences, with their parents.

Similarly, our new knowledge-rich curriculum supported opportunities for learners to learn about and develop strong knowledge about our local community. Our outdoor learning approach continued to strengthen students' understandings of local places and Wadawurrung perspectives. Additionally, a new 'ecology' focused unit in Year 4 provided an extended opportunity for placed-based learning and learning about the local wetland ecosystems across Term 3.

Our structure for assemblies was necessarily reviewed in 2025 to support our growing student numbers. Assemblies play an important role in highlighting our school values and recognising student achievements and a new year level approach has provided not only increased opportunities for our student leaders to lead these community events each fortnight, but a tailored experience for students and families across different year levels. They were very well attended by families in 2025.

Our School Advisory Council (SAC) members offered valuable consultation and feedback to our school leaders and were important parent representatives in the decision making processes of the school. Consultation during the master plan revision and around important school processes, such as communication, provided further opportunities for all parents to have a say and contribute to the scope of school life. School and social events, including the popular 'Paint by Numbers' evening, fundraisers and working bees further encouraged participation by all.

Parent Satisfaction

MACSSIS 2025 family survey results indicated that:

The overall positive endorsement of our families was consistent and aligned with the MACS schools' average. Families' perceptions of Engagement were consistent and aligned with the MACS schools' average. Families' perceptions of the social and learning climate of the school (School Fit) remained consistently high and are aligned with other MACS' schools. Families' perceptions of Communication were the most improved indicator from the previous year. Families' perceptions of Student Safety improved in 2025. Families' perceptions of the school's Catholic Identity remained consistent and in line with the MACS schools' average.

It is also noted that a relatively small proportion of families participated in the MACSSIS survey in 2025. Continued focus on consultation modes and increasing participation in the survey will provide reliable data and feedback for decision making into the future.

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 stcatherine.catholic.edu.au