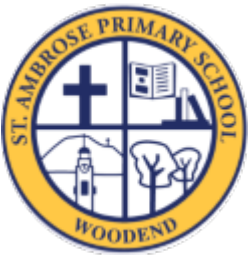




Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

2025

Annual Report to the School Community



St Ambrose's School

18 Templeton Street, WOODEND 3442

Principal: Bronwyn Phillips

Web: www.sawoodend.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 289, E Number: E1033

Principal's Attestation

I, Bronwyn Phillips, attest that St Ambrose's School is compliant with:

- The minimum standards and other requirements for school registration and school boarding premises (if applicable) as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic).
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 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 16 Apr 2026



About this report

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



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.

Vision and Mission

Our vision statement and framework for the school convey a deep commitment to nurturing a holistic educational environment centered on faith, community, and personal growth.

Vision:

- Centred by Faith: Establishes a foundation rooted in spiritual values and Catholic teachings, emphasizing moral development and a sense of purpose in students' lives.
- In Partnership with Community: Highlights the importance of collaboration with families, local parishes, and the broader community, recognizing that education is a shared endeavor.
- Excellence in Learning: Affirms a dedication to high standards in educational practices, aiming for continuous improvement in teaching and learning outcomes.

Aims:

The aims succinctly articulate clear goals that our school strives to achieve, covering academic excellence while emphasizing personal, social, emotional, and spiritual development:

1. Comprehensive Education: The focus on developing talents in a way that addresses societal needs which ensures students are prepared for their futures in a relevant manner.
2. Personal Growth: Fostering self-confidence, respect, and a mindset of hope and optimism promotes a supportive and empowering learning environment.
3. Foundation for Future Learning: Preparing students for continued education reflects a commitment to lifelong learning and adaptability.
4. Active Participation: Equipping students with skills to contribute positively to an ever-changing world instills a sense of responsibility and engagement.
5. Spiritual Connection: Nurturing relationships with God supports moral and spiritual development consistent with Catholic values.

Beliefs:

These beliefs encapsulate the essence of our school and promote a learner-centered approach, underscoring:

- Individual Uniqueness: Celebrating diversity allows each student to flourish according to their strengths and interests.
- Safe Learning Environment: Prioritizing safety creates a supportive atmosphere where students can explore and engage without fear.
- Understanding Humanity: Viewing education as a journey toward understanding what it means to be human connects to the teachings of Jesus, providing a model for personal growth.
- Empowerment through Education: Committing to nurturing autonomy equips students with skills for responsible living and societal contribution.

- Integration of Faith and Life: Emphasizing the relationship between faith, culture, and life fosters well-rounded individuals who are mindful of their roles in various contexts.

This framework guides educational practices and builds a nurturing community where the intersections of learning, faith, and personal development thrive. Implementing these principles into daily operations will undoubtedly contribute to a vibrant educational experience for all, creating a legacy of empowered learners who are prepared to engage with and positively impact the world.

By honing in on these ideals, our school is positioned to cultivate a generation of individuals equipped with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to navigate the complexities of life with confidence and purpose.



School Overview

St. Ambrose School, founded in 1859 and formally registered in 1906, is a Catholic educational institution dedicated to fostering academic and personal excellence. The school values strong partnerships with parents and the wider community, recognizing them as essential collaborators in the education process. Our school is located on a site surrounded by trees and homes approximately 76 kilometers from the Melbourne CBD and provides education for students from a wide catchment area.

In 2025 St Ambrose Parish School had an enrolment of 228 students. Of the current enrolment, 9% of students are from a language background other than English. Students are arranged in 10 class groups. (Three composite Years F/1; one straight Year two class, three composite Years 3 /4 and three composite Years 5 /6). We offer a comprehensive curriculum, which is based on the Victorian Curriculum Framework Foundation – Year 6. Specialist programs are provided in physical education, visual arts, music & performing arts, and Auslan. We also offer targeted programs in literacy to support the classroom programs through intervention and extension as well as Science, Technology Engineering, and Maths (STEM) within the curriculum.

The school leadership team includes the Principal, Deputy Principal and Learning Diversity Leader. We also have three team leaders and our Mental health & Wellbeing Leader on the leadership Team. The leadership team performs multiple roles including leading teams as well as direct teaching commitments.

The school employs passionate and collaborative teachers who use data-driven, constructivist teaching methods based on cognitive science and evidence based best practices to provide explicit, meaningful and personalized learning experiences. Emphasis is placed on student goal-setting, individual learning styles, and self-reflection for both students and staff. Religious education with a focus on scripture, prayer, and living out the teachings of Jesus through social justice guides our way of being together.

St. Ambrose also prioritizes child safety, fostering a culture of openness and responsibility. The school aims to provide a foundation in faith, truth, beauty, and love, shaping students' lives in partnership with families and the broader community.



Principal's Report

As a St. Ambrose staff we are dedicated to creating an inclusive and caring environment which inspires, engages and nourishes our student's growth in all areas. We want to support our children to be motivated about coming to school and feel confident to immerse themselves in the diverse learning opportunities offered. Together we enable our vision, "Centred By Faith – In Partnership with Community – We Provide Excellence in Learning".

During this school improvement cycle, St Ambrose Primary School, Woodend has focused on building a strong performance and development culture which gives voice and agency to students, staff and families, enabling them to make connections between the Catholic faith and traditions and everyday life. The 2025 Annual Action Plan goals were established via participation in the MACS Flourishing Learners Network days for leadership teams.

Overarching Goals from our 2024-2027 School Improvement Plan

Goal: Priority 1: To build an authentic and empowered Catholic Learning Community.

Goal: Priority 2: To build a rigorous Performance and Development culture underpinned by reflective practice.

Goal: Priority 3: To develop a whole-school approach to student voice, agency and participation for optimal wellbeing and learning.

At the heart of our school's commitment to academic excellence is the MACS Vision for Instruction, a system-wide initiative designed to ensure that every student flourishes. This evidence-based approach marks a deliberate shift toward explicit instruction, where complex skills in literacy and numeracy are broken down into manageable steps. By providing clear teacher-led demonstrations and guided practice, we ensure that students build a solid foundation of knowledge before moving toward independent mastery. This structured environment not only boosts academic confidence but also creates a calm, focused classroom atmosphere where low-level disruptions are minimized, allowing all children to thrive.

Our dedication to this vision is rooted in the belief that high-quality education should be a guarantee, not a matter of chance. By adopting a knowledge-rich curriculum and high-impact teaching strategies, we are responding directly to national trends to ensure our students remain at the forefront of achievement. In line with our Catholic mission, this approach focuses on the whole person, nurturing our students intellectually, practically, and morally. As we work toward the 2030 goals, our school remains committed to setting high expectations and providing the continuous feedback necessary for every child to reach their full potential.

The Explicit Instruction model unlike "discovery learning," where students explore to uncover concepts on their own, explicit instruction follows a highly structured path:

I Do: The teacher models the skill or concept clearly.

We Do: The teacher and students practice together (Guided Practice).

You Do: Students practice independently once they have reached a level of competence.

We use this model when we are teaching reading, writing and numeracy. At St. Ambrose we allow time for students to practice and refine what they are learning and we also create opportunities for our students to explore their creativity.

This past year, our school has made significant strides in standardizing and elevating the quality of mathematics instruction and assessment. Our primary focus has been on establishing consistency across all year levels to ensure every student receives a high-quality, data-driven mathematical education. See the following outline of how we went about this:

1. Curriculum Architecture & Planning

To ensure a cohesive learning journey from Prep to Year 6, we have overhauled our foundational planning documents:

Mathematics Lesson Structure: We introduced a consistent, school-wide lesson framework to ensure high-impact teaching strategies are present in every classroom.

Unit Planner Template: We standardized unit planning to streamline teacher collaboration and ensure alignment with curriculum standards.

Addition Scope & Sequence: Following deep consultation with curriculum documents, we drafted a comprehensive Scope and Sequence for Addition. This document explicitly outlines expectations for both mental and written strategies, ensuring a logical progression of skills as students move through the school.

2. Pedagogical Consistency in Operations

We have transitioned toward a unified "Whole School Approach" to ensure students aren't relearning different methods every year:

Addition Strategies: Established a shared language and methodology for teaching mental and written addition strategies, providing students with a reliable toolkit for problem-solving.

Place Value Expertise: Conducted school-wide Professional Learning (PL) focused on Place Value content knowledge, strengthening the instructional capacity of our teaching staff.

3. Assessment & Data-Driven Instruction

Our assessment schedule has been refined to move beyond simple testing and toward meaningful data interpretation:

Annual Assessment Schedule: Updated the comprehensive schedule to include specific assessment types, precise timing of administration, and rigorous guidelines for implementation.

Data Interpretation Benchmarks: Established clear benchmarks to help teachers translate raw data into actionable classroom strategies.

Diagnostic Tools: Successfully introduced the PVAT (Place Value Assessment Tool) and a new whole-school approach to Number Fluency.

Forward-Facing Intervention: The fluency assessments conducted at the conclusion of 2025 have provided the baseline data required to target individual student learning needs effectively throughout 2026.

Impact Summary: By aligning our planning, teaching strategies, and assessment tools, we have created a robust mathematical ecosystem that supports teacher clarity and accelerates student growth.

This year, our Performing Arts program was a testament to student agency and creative growth, with lessons paving the way for our spectacular bi-annual production, "Vaudeville," held at Sacred Heart College. Students from Foundation to year Six 6 took full ownership of the creative process, collaborating across year levels to choreograph, script, and stage a diverse variety show. From circus skills like juggling and plate spinning to drama, ukulele performances, and comedy, the production showcased the immense persistence and imagination of our students, supported by beautiful backdrops created in collaboration with our visual arts teacher. A great show was enjoyed by all!

I have truly valued the time I spent in the classrooms observing our dedicated teachers and students at work. I commend our staff for taking on all the learning that the Vision for Instruction encompasses and our amazing students for their positivity and willingness to do their best. They are the reason we do what we do. I am incredibly grateful for the commitment of our school leadership team who also work hard to provide the best conditions for our staff and students to thrive. Indeed we are part of a dynamic, energetic and capable team. Thanks also to our wonderful families, to Fr. John and our parishioners for your ongoing support of our great school.

Indeed 2025 was a productive year!



Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

It was our good fortune to be in a position to welcome Rev. Fr. John Healy as our new parish priest. Fr. John who has taken over from Fr. Martin Fleming has quickly become part of our school community and our students and staff welcome his visits.

During this school improvement cycle, St Ambrose Primary School, Woodend has focused on building a strong performance and development culture which gives voice and agency to students, staff and families, enabling them to make connections between the Catholic faith and traditions and everyday life.

Goal: Priority 1 Catholic Learning Community

Goal: To build an authentic and empowered Catholic Learning Community.

Intended Outcomes:

- That students are co-designing prayer, class masses and inquiries and acting for common good.
- That staff capability to design and implement authentic and rigorous RE curriculum is strengthened.
- That the school community participates in enriching the Catholic identity of the school.

Our overall aims in Religious Education are:

- To create conditions to make connections between Faith and Tradition and family life.
- To build an authentic and empowered Catholic learning community.

One of the ways we hoped to begin building our Catholic learning community was to introduce and develop the new Religious Education curriculum. As it was still being developed MACS requested schools to continue planning and implementing the Religious Education Inquiry approach to units, along with the continued use of the textbooks called "To Know, Worship and Love".

In our annual action plan for Religious Education, 2025, our goals were broken into three main goals:

- That students and teachers organise and co-design prayer and liturgy in the school.
- That there be parent participation in Faith Formation sessions.
- That there be a strengthened connection between school and parish.

Achievements

Our general aims for Religious Education in 2025 continued to be broken into two goals:

- For students and teachers to organise and co-design prayer and liturgy in the school
- For parent participation (P-6) in Faith Formation sessions.

Prayer and Liturgy

Each term, the classroom teachers, along with their students, took turns in preparing and presenting Mass for their level. Together they chose the readings, songs, etc. We have been encouraging the students to participate in the liturgy by sharing the words of the Mass and the songs on the screen for them to follow along. We are also encouraging them to learn some of the basic prayers and songs we have by using them in our classroom prayer sessions. As it was a year of Jubilee, a number of teachers attended personal faith formation sessions on line which were delivered by MACS staff such as Pauline Cicutto.

For the children making a Sacrament, we asked that they attend a Mass prior to the Sacrament to show their commitment to learning all about that Sacrament. We asked that they attend with their parents who also made a commitment to help their child at this time. The parishioners committed to praying for all the children making a Sacrament. As you can see, these Commitment masses are very important as it does demonstrate a commitment, without which the Sacrament makes no sense.

Parent Participation in Faith Formation Session

We focused on presenting sessions in the Sacramental years: Grade 3 for Reconciliation, Grade 4 for First Communion and Grade 6 for Confirmation.

Attendance is strongly encouraged as the delivery of these Sacraments change from one year to the next and from one child in the family to another. We are continuing to aim for 100% attendance as we find this is a wonderful opportunity for parents to be involved in their child's development of the Sacrament. They have the opportunity to speak to their children about the changes from their own experiences to their child's; they practice parts of the Sacrament with their child (eg. giving unblest hosts to the child to practice receiving Communion) or make something with them that symbolises the Sacrament.

Father John worked very closely with us. He also has three other schools he is working with and four parishes he celebrates Mass and goes to meetings for. Assistant priests, Fr. Bryan and Fr. Wahid, helped him over the 2025 year and we worked towards organising all the schools to work together. To this end, the principals and RELs from each school had a couple of meetings to organise and discuss how we could do this, and to try to keep Sacraments celebrated at each school around the same time.

As yet the new RE curriculum has not been introduced but a number of schools are trialling some of the units planned before they are ratified by the board. It is hoped that this new curriculum will be introduced in 2027. The staff had a productive meeting in term four where the development of the new curriculum was discussed and a sample of one of the proposed units was shown to the staff for their perusal.

Value Added

During 2025, the St. Ambrose Parish school community gathered to learn, worship and celebrate through:

- Whole school beginning and end of term masses.
- Year level masses each term.
- Faith displays.
- Sacrament preparation evening for students with their parents.
- Sacrament commitment masses.
- Practice for the Sacraments.
- Project Compassion event.
- Staff liturgies.
- Staff R.E. meetings and on-line in-services.
- Mother's & Father's Day (or Special Person's Day) prayer services.
- Ash Wednesday Mass.
- Level led prayer services for Holy Week.
- Level led Advent prayer services on the meanings behind the candles of the Advent Wreath.
- Prep led prayer service on the Nativity.
- St. Ambrose feast day Mass.
- Graduation Prayer Service and ceremony.



Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

2025 Annual Action Plan Goals:

Goal 1: To improve student achievement in mathematics with a particular focus in Place Value

Goal 2: To improve student achievement in reading comprehension

Goal 3: To improve student achievement in writing

Key emphasis was placed on:

-Further developing a common language of the MACS Vision for Instruction and the newly launched Vision for Engagement through the active participation in the Flourishing Learners Improvement Network.

-Developing consistent whole-school vocabulary and content knowledge, including the stages of development in place value.

-Implementing whole-school reading assessment and data analysis over the school year to inform teaching and planning.

-Continuing to provide opportunities for reflective teaching practice by scheduling formal Peer Observations each term with a clear protocol for staff to follow, including completing a Peer Observation Form and follow-up collegial conversations and individual goal-setting.

To meet these goals, we, as a school community targeted the following:

-Regularly schedule PLTs and Staff Meetings (twice per week) dedicated and aligned to our 2025 Annual Action Plan Goals.

-Developing a whole school approach to Peer Observations, including formal documentation, collegial conversations and goal-setting.

-Pupil Free days dedicated to professional learning for all staff in the areas of Mathematics, Neuroscience and Religious Education.

-Sourcing professional development for the teaching staff that builds teacher confidence and supports teachers in working towards achieving the AAP Goals.

Achievements

The driving force for professional learning for 2025 continues to be the MACS Vision for Instruction: Flourishing Learners document. This vision was accompanied by the 2023 to 2030 Strategic Plan that continues to guide our school through the stages of experimentation towards embedding key initiatives.

All members of leadership have continued in 2025 to attend the MACS Flourishing Learners Improvement Network days each term to build knowledge and, together, strategically plan forward the professional learning of all staff members.

Over 2025, we continued a strong focus on the teaching and learning of both Literacy and Mathematics. Curriculum Leaders in collaboration with the Principal ensured that protected time was allocated at staff meetings and professional learning team meetings that were purposefully planned to align with the 2025 AAP goals. In Mathematics there was a lot of time dedicated to developing a shared language and knowledge of the learning progression of place value. The professional learning then followed a natural progression into mental computation in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. A school closure day was also utilised to support this and ensure there was time for rich collegial discussions and opportunities for staff to explore the planning and practical activities that can support student learning of this important underpinning concepts in mathematics.

We:

- updated to the annual mathematics assessment schedule to include assessment type, timing of administration, administration guidelines and data interpretation benchmarks.
- introduced a consistent whole school Mathematics Lesson Structure and Unit Planner template.
- established a whole school approach to Addition including mental and written strategies.
- drafted a whole school scope and sequence for Addition specifying expectations of mental and written strategies (with consultation of curriculum documents) from years Prep to Six.
- delivered whole school delivery of Place value content knowledge professional learning and introduction to the PVAT assessment tool.
- introduced a whole school assessment approach to number fluency at the end of 2025 used to target individual learning needs in 2026.

In Literacy over the year professional development in a number of important teaching practices were shared and discussed as a staff to support our AAP goals. These included, sentence level writing including the development from simple to complex sentence structures, high-impact teaching strategies of teacher modelling and scaffolding to support student learning, the importance of reading fluency and its relationship with reading comprehension.

This year we were also treated to three in-house professional learning sessions in Neuroscience and How the Brain Works which strongly linked to the work we have been doing on the principles of effective learning and instruction.

Last year daily reviews had been implemented and embedded in mathematics at the beginning of each lesson as a way of retrieving and practicing previously taught key knowledge and skills. In 2025 this effective teaching practice was transferred across to our literacy lessons too.

Research-based data collection and analysis as a whole staff was a strong focus over 2025. The year began with the introduction of DIBELS a new reading assessment that was administered again at mid-year and end of the year. This was the same for mathematics with the introduction of a Place Value Assessment Tool (PVAT) to measure whole-number place value knowledge. Both of these new research-based assessments supported our teachers to identify student learning needs, plan their teaching, and monitor the effect of their teaching to in turn support student growth. As part of analysing the DIBELS data, teachers are also conducting progress monitoring to ensure student growth and to adapt teaching strategies to support the reading comprehension goal.

During 2025 our Inquiry units provided all our students an opportunity to learn about their world and transfer their knowledge into an action. The over-arching concepts were global citizenship, innovation, change and in term four a variety of concepts including economics and science were explored. For example, at the beginning of the year the grade three and four students learnt about government and gained a deeper awareness of what it means to be a member of a democratic society. This inquiry lead to the classes learning about voting and electing class representatives for the newly formed St. Ambrose Student Representative Council. In term two the grade five and sixes, under the overarching concept of innovation, designed and created arcade games from boxes to be presented during a whole-school expo. The senior students gained a real-life understanding of the design, production and marketing process when creating a new product. Such rich inquiries help students make the connection between what they are learning and their lives, not only providing authentic purpose but also active engagement.

A highlight of 2025 was our biannual whole-school production and formal performances held in the Sacred Heart College theatre at the end of Term 3. The 2025 production, 'Vaudeville' became the perfect opportunity for our students to showcase their learning and skills developed over two terms in both Performing Arts, Visual Arts and Auslan. The very successful evening performances and matinee was the culmination of much practice and students collaborating with each other to choreograph circus-based routines and create the visual backdrop, so that all students had authentic ownership of what they were presenting to their families and the community. Throughout the process the students were involved in researching, being imaginative and creative, collaborating, composing and rehearsing using

a feedback process. Students were able to challenge themselves by trying new things, set goals and building persistence and perseverance throughout the creative process.

In 2025 we transported the whole school in stages to the Kyneton Aquatics Centre to enable us to meet curriculum swimming requirements for our students. Following reflection and feedback from 2024 it was decided that each class would have their five swimming lessons consecutively over one week, rather than one session each week over five weeks. This was a very successful adaption to ensure less disruption to student learning. Running this program during the winter months also gave our students the opportunity to get out of the classroom and be active during a time in the year where we can find ourselves confined indoors.

The Resilience Project was implemented across the whole school again in 2025, however as a school we took the opportunity in 2025 school year as a time of transition with a goal of implementing the Respectful Relationships program fully in 2026. Therefore, during 2025 staff received professional development in relation to the content and implementation of this program at each year level. Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader together with one of our team leaders also undertook further training in order to further support the teaching staff and communicate with our parent community about this very important government curriculum resource.

Our School Captains and senior leaders continued to meet regularly with the principal to ensure student voice remains a key priority. The new student leadership roles of Sustainability, Social Justice, Culture, The Arts and other student leaders have been mentored by a staff member in 2025 to ensure that the student leaders in these roles were actively involved and had purpose and direction to make a difference over the school year. These roles support the everyday workings of school life and highlight the broad range of skills that are needed to support our school community to thrive.

Our student initiatives have been strengthened by the implementation of a Student Representative Council (SRC) in 2025. Student representatives from each and every classroom across the school came together on a fortnightly basis to discuss opportunities to improve our school.

Student Learning Outcomes

In 2025 we refined our structured approach to the teaching of literacy to improve our reading comprehension, reading fluency as well as writing results and to reduce the amount of students requiring literacy intervention. Our 2025 Year 3 NAPLAN data indicates a rise in the number of children reading proficiently (84%) and writing (94%).

In 2026 our focus will be on Place Value in Mathematics and Writing.

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	404	48%	407	50%
	Year 5	506	73%	505	69%
Numeracy	Year 3	402	65%	410	70%
	Year 5	504	77%	494	70%
Reading	Year 3	429	76%	434	80%
	Year 5	478	74%	487	75%
Spelling	Year 3	400	58%	406	60%
	Year 5	486	70%	484	69%
Writing	Year 3	434	94%	437	94%
	Year 5	499	97%	493	85%

*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

Intended Outcomes:

- That PBL practices are embedded across the whole-school community.
- That teachers know their students as learners.
- That students have greater self-efficacy in their learning.
- Embed a whole school wellbeing program in partnership with our community.



Key emphasis was placed on:

- Focus on student voice and agency across the curriculum.
- Embedding PBL (Positive Behaviour for Learning) across the school.
- Further developing awareness of the 11 Child Safe Standards.
- Continuing to gather and analysis data on student wellbeing.
- Preparing for the roll out the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Program in 2026.

To meet these goals, we, as a school community targeted the following:

- Providing formal professional learning opportunities to look at discuss the Child Safe Standards.
- Continuing the role of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader within the school
Implement the Student Voice Audit Tool.
- Administering PAT Wellbeing Assessment.
- Scheduling Staff Meetings and/or PLTs to introduce and discuss as a staff the Child Safe Standards.
- Providing an induction process for new staff to ensure that PBL is consistent across the school.
- Increasing student leadership opportunities
- Supporting student initiatives.

- Professional development and training provided to staff in preparation for Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) program roll out.
- Parent Information evenings to sharing RRRR program and answer community questions.

Achievements

In 2025 our school continued with the social and emotion learning program, The Resilience Project. The program provided ample opportunities for our students and staff to explore the 4

learning areas: gratitude, empathy, mindfulness and emotional literacy. The program was a favourite amongst both staff and students.

Small focus group sessions continued in 2025, with both our Wellbeing Leader and Mental Health & Wellbeing Leader running a variety of programs. The Seasons for Growth program, a program offered to students who experienced grief or loss due to significant change continued into its 5th year. Some of our grade 3/4 students engaged with the 'Social Stencil' program, designed to support navigating friendships and the successes and challenges that can come with them. This work focused heavily on identifying friendship styles whilst also teaching empathy and perspective.

For another year, The grade 5 & 6 cohorts participated in the REACH program workshops. Focusing on leadership for our year 5's and transitioning to high school for our grade 6's. Both cohorts came together to explore the sort of leaders and learners they want to be in 2026.

The 4th Annual Transition to High school day that St Ambrose runs, expanded in 2025 to include many more schools in the local community. Our local council generously offered the Kynenton Mechanics Hall for the day to occur. The year 6 students came together to explore what the transition into high school would look like and what common fears and expectations they all had. The day was spent building new relationships with the students that would be attending their new high school.

Our Student Representative Council, ran for its 3rd year. Led by our School Captains, supported by our Mental Health & Wellbeing Leader, our class representatives met fortnightly to discuss student initiatives, fundraising ideas and to discuss school related issues whilst developing the students' confidence and leadership skills.

The Positive Behaviour for Learning model (PBL) continued into its 5th year. The model has been well embedded into all classrooms, with our students demonstrating a clear understanding of the 4 areas of focus: Be Kind, Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Resilient. The year was spent embedding the newly revamped documentation/processes that the school had been using for the entirety of the model, with success.

Value Added

Both the Wellbeing Leader and the Mental Health & Wellbeing Leader are members of local and regional networks which strengthen their knowledge and expertise in the area of wellbeing. This is an invaluable network of professionals that informs and supports the school in staying up to date with the latest research, and builds awareness of services that are available to our school community.

The Transition to Secondary School day we run with St Mary's Lancefield was another great success. Providing the students with opportunities to make new friends and meet staff and

students from their future schools. This year we extended the invitation to numerous surrounding schools and held the event at the Kyneton Town Hall.

Year 5 students participated in a 'Leadership' session with the Kids Helpline. Equipping the students with language, conversation and knowledge around what it means to be a leader, as they prepared for their transition into grade 6. This session also gave the students the opportunity to become familiar with what the Kids Help line can do for them.

The Wonders of Living Program, offered to our year 5 & 6 families, a sexual education program designed to bring parents and their children together to begin the conversations about puberty and beyond.

NED program was delivered to the whole school, promoting the messages 'never give up, encourage others, do your best' through a fun and interactive performance.

We introduced The Resilience Project (TRP) program, funded generously provided by Jellis Craig. With TRP's close cross curricular links to the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships curriculum, we were able to enhance our work in supporting our students mental health and wellbeing.

Student Satisfaction

Our 2025 MACSISS student survey data (Year 5-students surveyed) indicated that:

88% of the students at St Ambrose believe that teachers hold them to high expectations of their effort, persistence, effort and performance and encourage them to do their best. 84% of the children believe they have a good relationship with their teachers. 89% feel supported by the adults at our school and 86% feel accepted for who they are. These scores have improved since 2024 and are above the MACS averages.

Student Attendance

The Student Attendance The roll is taken twice daily.

At 8.55am and 2.40 pm by classroom teachers.

If a child is late or leaves early, administration staff adjust the roll.

All students arriving late or leaving early must come through the office area.

Parents are asked to ring the office or email if their child is to be absent and explain the absenteeism. This can now be recorded at any time a parent calls not just during office hours.

If parents do not call the office, an administration officer will call to find out where the child is and why they are absent.

If a child is late to school they need to come to the office to get an 'I'm here' pass.

If a child is required to leave school early, the parent must pick their child up from the office and sign them out.

An extended leave form must be signed by the parent or a guardian if it is known that the child will be absent from school for more than a week.

Teachers must report extended absences to leadership.

Where attendance becomes an issue, a meeting is convened with parents and school leadership.

Students' attendance is recorded online in Nforma at 9.00 am and again at 2.45 pm.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	92.53
Y02	89.81
Y03	87.53
Y04	89.75
Y05	89.47
Y06	90
Overall average attendance	89.85



Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

In 2025, our school leadership team remained steadfast in its mission to enable, inspire, and support our staff, students, and community. This year was defined by a palpable sense of vitality, evidenced by the successful rollout of several new initiatives and the continued strengthening of our pedagogical programs. Our staff operates as a cohesive, professional team, deeply committed to the holistic growth of every student.

Building a High-Performance Culture

Our central strategic goal this year was to embed a performance and development culture underpinned by three core values: collaboration, reflection, and feedback. To achieve this, we focused on:

Universal Participation: Ensuring that 100% of staff, including the Senior Leadership Team, were active participants in the performance and development cycle.

Collaborative Inquiry: Moving beyond individual goal-setting to collective reflection on teaching practice and its impact on student outcomes.

A "Whole-Person" Approach: Recognizing that professional excellence is inextricably linked to personal wellbeing. We prioritized "inner wellness" to ensure our educators remained resilient, motivated, and capable of performing at their peak.

Leadership Governance

The School Leadership Team met weekly to ensure operational consistency and strategic alignment across the school. This multidisciplinary team provided diverse perspectives on school improvement. It consisted of:

Executive: Principal and Deputy Principal.

Level Leaders: Foundation-Two, 3-4, and 5-6 Leaders.

Specialist Support: Learning Diversity Leader & Wellbeing Leader

Impact and Outcomes

The success of this leadership model is reflected in the high levels of staff engagement and the "willing to ask for help and have a go attitude" observed across our learning spaces. By fostering a culture where feedback is welcomed and collaboration is the norm, we have created an environment where we reassure staff that they are supported to take risks and innovate, directly benefiting the learning journey of our students.

Achievements

This year, St Ambrose continued to deeply engage with the MACS Vision for Instruction, which integrates cognitive science, philosophy, and pedagogy. This framework ensures our teaching methods align with how the human brain actually learns, particularly in the core pillars of Literacy and Numeracy.

Evidence-Based Pedagogy: The Explicit Instruction Sequence

To ensure consistency and growth for every student, we have refined our instructional model. Our teachers now utilize a researched-backed, explicit sequence:

Explicit Instruction: Setting clear learning intentions and success criteria.

Modelling: Using "I Do" strategies to demonstrate new concepts.

Guided Practice: Supporting students through the "We Do" phase to build confidence.

Independent Practice: Empowering students to apply knowledge in the "You Do" phase. This cycle is continuously refined through rigorous formative and summative assessments, ensuring that no child is left behind and that high-achievers are sufficiently challenged.

Leadership Development & Professional Learning

The leadership team has been committed to making time to lead from the front of the classroom, not just the office. Key milestones included:

Agile Leadership: Participating in the Breakspear Agile Leadership program to improve our responsiveness to school needs.

The Science of Reading: Intensive professional development in Explicit and Direct Instruction, including webinars and conferences focused on the latest phonetic and linguistic research.

Instructional Coaching: Leaders directly supported staff in planning and embedding High-Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) across all year levels.

With a vision of wellbeing for learning our teaching staff undertook in-house professional learning on the MACS Vision for Engagement which was officially launched across all MACS schools in June. This is the companion document to the Vision for Instruction and has the goals of excellence and equity so all students thrive. To deepen our understanding of the Vision for Engagement we looked into the six engagement practices of; teaching respectful behaviour, fostering belonging, focusing on attendance, promoting mental health and wellbeing, enabling motivation and targeting individual learning needs. We are also looking forward to the Vision for Leadership document which is currently being created and is expected to launch in 2026.

Community Engagement & Governance

A school thrives when it is deeply connected to its community. Our leadership team maintained a rigorous schedule of consultation and collaboration by:

- monitoring the Annual Action Plan and operational goals.
- School Advisory Council (SAC) 6 Sessions.
- strategic oversight and governance with the Principal/Deputy.
- Parents & Friends Assoc. (PFA) 8 Sessions.
- strengthening the partnership between home and school.
- Parish Lay Team-Deepening the connection between Parish-School life and our shared faith vision.

Performance and Development Culture

We continued to facilitate the St Ambrose Performance and Development Cycle. This process ensures that every teacher receives reflection time and feedback to be the best version of themselves, ultimately leading to flourishing, fulfilled lives for our students.

As a new initiative in 2025 each of the teaching teams developed their own Team Charter. The purpose of these documents was to develop common goals around what each member role and contributions to the team would be. The Team Charters also documented the common values that would be core to the team and the needs and expectations of the team that would allow each team to be successful and functioning at their best.



Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

List Professional Learning undertaken in 2025

Staff Professional Development in 2025 Included:

- Pathological Demand Avoidance PD - 2 staff members
- Team Teach - MACS PD 2 staff members
- Northern Region Learning Diversity Networks - 7 staff members
- Mini Lit Training: 1 staff
- Assessment Administration- Two Staff
- Explicit and Direct Instruction – Twice weekly PLT'S in Numeracy, Mathematics - Teaching Staff
- TIMS(Teaching for Impact in Maths) Leader & Teacher Days: Leaders & Teaching staff.
- Teach Well Masterclass Series for Literacy Leaders
- Mathematics: Whole School Staff PD 1:
- Ochre Maths resources- Teaching Staff
- Internal PD - Spaced and interleaved practice/daily reviews - 2 PDs facilitated via webinar - teaching staff
- DIBELS - teaching staff
- Religious Education- 5 PLT meetings and one closure day teaching staff
- Respectful Relationships - teaching Staff
- Compliance: Whole Staff
- Anaphylaxis: Whole Staff
- Mandatory Reporting: Whole Staff
- CPR Update
- Explicit & Authentic Teaching of Writing Ballarat - 3 teachers
- Cognitive Science - Science of Learning -Whole staff.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
-Leadership, Governance & Compliance - Principal & DP -Teach Well Masterclass - Deputy principal - Annual Action Planning - Craigieburn - Leadership Team. -Department of Education and Training (DET) High Impact Wellbeing Strategies - teaching staff & leadership.	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2025	30
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$550.00

Teacher Satisfaction

- 95% of staff took part in the MACSSIS Survey. Teachers perceptions of the overall social and learning climate of the school is positive (92%) indicating that they feel leadership set the tone for a positive staff culture. (100%) Staff believe that leadership communicate clearly with staff and (92%) feel School Improvement Goals are communicated clearly. (92%) Teachers feel that they have are able to motivate their students to learn. These results sit above the MACS average.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0
Masters	6
Graduate	0
Graduate Certificate	0
Bachelor Degree	11
Advanced Diploma	5
No Qualifications Listed	5

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	21
Teaching Staff (FTE)	16.47
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	13
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	7.55
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0



Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

GOAL

To improve student learning outcomes through partnerships with family, parish and community that creates a positive sense of belonging.

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

- For families to be aware of the MACS Vision for Instruction.
- That the broader community will become an active partner in the learning at St Ambrose.
- That families and the community feel welcomed and valued at St Ambrose School.

Achievements

At St Ambrose we aim to offer authentic and purposeful learning opportunities which enable student voice and agency and where we can engage with experts in the wider community.

Our students researched international traditions and interpreted them through dramatic role-play where they sharpened their expressive performance skills and empathy. The year culminated in a heartfelt celebration of community at our Christmas Carols Picnic, featuring the debut of our newly formed school choir. We are incredibly proud of the collaborative spirit and resilience our students demonstrated throughout 2025; they have developed not only as performers but as confident communicators ready for the next stage of their learning journey.

In addition to their classroom learning our students proudly represented our school across a wide range of sporting and community events throughout the year.

Each term, students participated in school-based and inter school competitions, including Summer and Winter Sports, Cross Country, Soccer, Basketball, and Athletics. Many of our teams and individual athletes achieved outstanding success, advancing through district, division, and regional levels—a testament to their hard work, team spirit and perseverance.

Our students also showcased their creativity and community pride through the Kyneton Agricultural Show, where they submitted writing pieces and artwork. We were thrilled to see several students come away with awards and prizes, and even more importantly, a sense of pride in sharing their work with the broader community.

These experiences helped strengthen our students' sense of belonging, collaboration, and contribution, highlighting the many ways they connect with and enrich the life of our school and town.

We promoted the newsletter as a central means of communication. We included photographs with the intention of keeping our community connected and aware of what was being achieved across the school.

St Ambrose continued to support local events such as the ANZAC and Remembrance Day service as well as visit BUPA aged care facility to perform and to share cards and messages with the residents.

Further opportunities to connect with community included:

-We had a Mother's & Father's Day afternoon tea followed by family prayer services from the classrooms.

-We celebrated through Footy Colours Day Activities, and raised funds for Down Syndrome Australia, The Cancer Institute and Caritas.

-Engagement in garden-based learning and cooking programs.

-Parents did the training and assisted as helpers both within the classrooms as well as assisting with sporting events.

-Weekly articles and feedback in the newsletter were included about School Improvement Progress.

-Articles in the school newsletter about different aspects of child development and education. 1-1 meetings with parents.

-Parent information sessions about different aspects of education.

-Participation in local community events including the transition from kindergarten into school programs..

-Our students attended events & programs at the local library, Buffalo Stadium and The Woodend Community House.

-The principal and staff were available to meet with parents as requested or needed.

-MACS Vision for Instruction was presented over the year at our School Advisory Council meetings. It was also shared via parent information meetings, newsletter articles and our website.

-We attended parish lay team meetings and a parish member is part of our SAC.

School Advisory Council 2025 Report (By Chairperson Mike Boudrie)

On behalf of the SAC I would like to thank our Principal, Bronwyn Phillips, Deputy Principal Debbie Geisler, the teaching and support staff, parish representatives, families, volunteers and the wider St Ambrose community for their ongoing contribution to the life of the school throughout 2025.

In 2025, Mike Boudrie continued as Chair of the School Advisory Council for a fourth year. The SAC provided an important forum for discussion, feedback and advice on matters affecting the school community. Members during the year included Bronwyn Phillips and Debbie Geisler from the school leadership team, and parent and community members Rilla Healey, Jodie Warner, Danielle Perrin, Ellen Vernon, Michelle Lancefield and Gerald Sullivan. The SAC was also grateful for the ongoing involvement of Fr John Healy and Maurice Fanning, who strengthened the connection between the school and the St Ambrose parish community.

Throughout the year, the SAC discussed a broad range of issues relating to school life, learning, wellbeing, community engagement and future planning. A key area of work was the review and ratification of important school policies, including the Homework Policy and the Class Placement Policy. These policies provided greater clarity for families about homework expectations across year levels and the process for forming balanced, supportive classes for the following year.

The SAC also received regular updates on teaching and learning priorities, including the continued rollout of MACS initiatives such as Vision for Instruction and Vision for Engagement, ongoing work in literacy and numeracy, the embedding of daily reviews, peer observation among teachers, Positive Behaviour for Learning training, Auslan, and the 2025 Annual Action Plan focus areas of maths, comprehension, fluency and sentence structure.

Student wellbeing and community safety were also discussed, including the school's participation in a local bushfire awareness pilot developed with community partners such as the CFA, SES and Council. This program was positively received and aimed to empower students with practical knowledge to support family fire planning in a high-risk bushfire area.

The SAC considered a number of operational and community matters during the year, including enrolments, staffing, school finances, device upgrades, parent-teacher interview arrangements, uniform matters, the use of school grounds, and the continued development of parent engagement through the Parents and Friends Association. The PFA's renewed activity, including social events, a student disco, barefoot bowling and early planning for the 2026 School Fête, was a very positive feature of the year.

In the second half of the year, the SAC discussed 2026 planning, including Prep enrolments, staffing arrangements, school fees and the introduction of a tiered family fee model. The Council also noted the success of the school production at Sacred Heart in Kyneton, which was very well received by families, staff and the SAC, and began early discussions about the school's 30-year celebration and the 2026 fête.

The school's newsletters throughout the 2025 calendar year continued to communicate school events and community updates. The newsletters are an important communication tool and require a significant amount of work from staff to produce each week. We would like to thank all those that are involved in the newsletter production.

At the end of 2025, Mike Boudrie stood down as SAC Chair after four years in the role. A new chairperson will be elected in 2026. I thank all SAC members for their thoughtful contribution, and we thank Bronwyn and the staff for their leadership, professionalism and commitment to making St Ambrose a welcoming, connected and high-quality learning community.

On behalf of the staff and community of St Ambrose I extend my sincere thanks to Mike Boudrie for his work as our SAC chair for the past four years and to our SAC members for their keen interest and dedication to our school. Your perspectives and feedback was greatly valued.



Parent Satisfaction

Feedback from parents was offered via email, telephone conversation, and through meetings.

We invited and listened to feedback and responded to any issues raised. From the conversations and emails received the majority of parents said that they felt heard and supported.

Only 16 % of our families completed the MACSSIS survey. From this small percentage, our school scored above average in family engagement , barriers to engagement and catholic identity. Areas of student safety, communication and school fit were also within the average range.



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.sawoodend.catholic.edu.au

