



Sacred Heart School Preston

2020

Annual Report to the School Community



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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Mark Tierney, attest that Sacred Heart School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in *the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2020 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

Mark Tierney

NOTE: The School's financial performance information has been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at www.acnc.gov.au

Our School Vision

Sacred Heart Preston is a Catholic Parish Primary School, inspired by the gospel values of Jesus, that welcomes a multi-faith community.

We value the traditions and principles of the Good Samaritan Sisters founded on compassion and service.

Our contemporary learning environment is purposeful, engaging and connected to real life.

It challenges all to be confident, resilient and active learners striving for excellence.

In partnership with families and the wider community, we embrace and celebrate diversity and build positive relationships.

At Sacred Heart, the students are at the heart of everything we do.

School Overview

The Sacred Heart Primary School community, is reflective of the vibrant and colourful diversity of the Darebin municipality, and suburb of Preston, from which the school draws its students.

Sacred Heart Primary School was established in 1905 and has occupied its present site on Bell Street, since 1914. Until 1991, when the first lay Principal was appointed, a Catholic primary education at Sacred Heart was under the stewardship of the Good Samaritan order of sisters.

Today, the school services the primary education needs of the parish of Sacred Heart led by Parish Priest, Fr. Eloysius Nato. The school is in a distinctly Catholic "pocket" of Preston and has as its neighbours, the church and presbytery, and Parade Secondary College. The school is an integral part of Sacred Heart Parish, and both school and parish share a close relationship.

Sacred Heart School is very proud of its multi-cultural profile. Our students bring a wealth of diverse heritages to our school family. A diversity of heritages and mix of faith backgrounds, creates a culture of understanding, acceptance and celebration of our multiplicity. Whilst the school privileges its Catholic identity, we recognize that our students of faith backgrounds other than Catholic can enlighten us in our combined faith journeys.

Being one of the smaller schools within the Darebin Municipality, we are able to present learning experiences that are not only contemporary, but are personable and relevant to the students we know well. Our staff take pride in the fact, "That all our students are known by more than just their name." Each staff member is cognizant of every student, and the sense of every staff member being responsible for every student, is something we are proud of and parents can take trust in.

In 2020, the school was made up of six classrooms, Year Prep, two Year One/Two composite classes, two Year Three/Four composite classes and two Year Five/Six composite classes. The school also employed a Physical Education, Music (performing arts) and Italian specialist teachers.

During 2020, the positions of staff leadership were: Deputy Principal, Religious Education Leader, Learning and Teaching Leader, Maths and Literacy Leaders.

At Sacred Heart, a sense of community is evidenced as staff and parents work together, with a focus on ensuring that the needs of the students are our priority at all times. Our commitment to a quality education that inspires, challenges and prepares our students, is achieved within a supportive school environment. Our ongoing commitment to improving student learning, is realised within a culture that values and respects the uniqueness of each child, ensuring they can reach their full potential.

Principal's Report

A review of the 2020 school year needs to be framed within the challenges presented by the COVID19 pandemic. No other school year, it could be argued, has had to be compromised by the need to modify, and in many cases discontinue for large periods, the practices that up until 2020 had been taken for granted in our school settings.

The 2020 school year saw, along with all schools and many institutions that are an inherent part of our communities, our Sacred Heart Primary School have to close its doors for all but students of deemed essential workers and students who we judged needed to be in the school setting to alleviate welfare and critical wellbeing issues.

With an average of 90% of our students engaged in offsite learning during the periods of school closure, a priority for our staff became the need to plan and implement a curriculum that all students could access, that would be stimulating, relevant and contemporary, and, at the same time bearing in mind the need to not put more stress on parents and guardians who were not trained educators, and who, in many cases, had the added financial stress of having their work hours reduced or even lost employment.

The unofficial school mantra we proudly espouse, "Our Students Are At The Heart Of Everything We Do" became the "guiding star" which gave us direction as we navigated the ever changing landscape presented with offsite learning.

As the periods of offsite learning grew, staff became more cognisant of the needs of our students and how to best continue their learning in the home setting. The protocols and procedures changed so that student's needs could be met.

Whilst Term Four appeared on paper to be a return to normality, with our school open for all and our students back in their classrooms, we were aware that the term for our students would be one of reconnection with the school and their peers. Yes, there was a curriculum to be taught, but student success would only be achieved if they felt connected and welcomed in the school setting and they had the personal and interpersonal skills to engage in the learning experiences presented by their teachers. Our teachers placed an emphasis on creating the conditions for connection and confidence and on the skills to enable us to interact and work with peers.

I would again like to thank the Sacred Heart staff for their dedication and enthusiasm in providing a quality education for our students that fit the needs of a very demanding year. I would like to thank them for their care and concern for our students, and support of families. In 2020 my awareness was heightened of a staff who recognised their role as a vocation.

Thank you to the members of our school leadership team. Your guidance and empathy with our teachers, mostly through the interactive medium of online technologies such as Zoom and Google meet, allowed our culture of continued diligence to permeate our school despite the demands of 2020.

The role of parents and our willingness and ability to work together so that their children and our students can achieve our vision for them is paramount. A commitment to informed trust was

no more important than in 2020. Whilst many of our families were challenged with financial stress and the anxiety caused by a pandemic, they never wavered in their enthusiasm to work with the school and for this we are truly grateful. To our parents and guardians, thank you for your support, cooperation and informed trust as we worked together to achieve continued student development.

I would like to acknowledge the role of our School Board. During 2020 we still met regularly online via Zoom. The School Board again was an important conduit between parents and the school, especially during the periods of offsite learning, and were able to give a parent's perspective on how the school was performing in its role of educating its students. Ideas and suggestions from the School Board led to changes in classroom teacher's methodology and practices. For your passion, ideas, diligence and support, I thank you on behalf of the Sacred Heart School community.

To our most important stakeholders, our students, your ability to cope with the challenges of 2020 has been a lesson to we adults. The learning disposition of resiliency, introduced in 2019, was put to the test and you passed remarkably well. Your ability to make the most of the experiences of offsite learning showed great patience and another of our learning dispositions, self management.

Finally, I would like to thank our Parish Priest, Father Jan Szweda, for his continued support and gentle guidance during 2020. Whilst our goal of continuing to strengthen the school and parish relationship was tested during COVID, a spirit of commitment allowed our school and parish to support each other with understanding and compassion.

Yours Sincerely

Mark Tierney

Education in Faith

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To build an authentic Catholic Community that is in dialogue with our Contemporary World
- That students, staff and families are able to make meaningful connections between their lives, society and the teaching and tradition of the Catholic Faith within a multi faith community

Achievements

The 2020 liturgical school year commenced as it had in the previous three years, with our Opening of the School Year Mass celebrated with our wider Sacred Heart Parish. Our school came together with the students from the Preston campus of Parade to celebrate Ash Wednesday. During the season of Lent, our students learnt about the role of Caritas working for those in need; they responded by raising an impressive amount of money for this organisation. The term finished with our students presenting the Way of the Cross for our parents and wider parish community. Little were we to know that these liturgies would be the last we would be able to celebrate until the end of 2020.

The challenge of planning for and implementing experiences that continued our student's learning within a Catholic framework, was consistently at the forefront of our teachers' thinking as our students commenced and then continued their education at home. Some of the practices that are inherent to a Catholic school were compromised, and, in cases such as participating in liturgy, were not permissible because of COVID protocols. During the "second lockdown" when our students from Years Three to Six had a daily morning meeting, prayer was incorporated into the routine as would be characteristic of a class routine during more normal times.

During both periods of lockdown, our students in the sacramental grades commenced and completed their preparation as sacramental candidates. Reward for all involved, students, parents and teachers, was the receiving of these sacraments by the candidates late in the year. Our students were able to receive both First Reconciliation and First Communion at short notice due to the preparation they had completed at home, with the assistance of their parents and under the guidance of their teachers. The sacrament of Confirmation was not able to be presented, but was celebrated early in 2021 with our 2020 Year Six students re-joining our community for this very important event.

Liturgically, our year was able to finish with our Graduation Mass for our Year Six students and an outdoor Christmas Family Mass on the school grounds. The Mass on Christmas Eve was a spirit filled celebration after a challenging year, with our school community joining our wider parish community in joint celebration. It was an appropriate opportunity to give thanks for our health, the support of our school and parish community and for being part of a country that was able to come to grips with the challenges of the year.

VALUE ADDED

Opening of the 2020 School Year Mass

Graduation 2020 Mass

Christmas Eve Family Mass

Way of the Cross

Sacraments: First Reconciliation and First Eucharist

October: Year Five and Six dedication to the Rosary

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To sustain and improve student learning
- That all students experience greater success in their learning across the curriculum with a strong emphasis on growth in Literacy and Numeracy
- That teachers will work collegially to provide sustained authentic learning opportunities for all students

Achievements

The focus of 2020, pre Covid, was about further exploring and embedding our understandings of the Learning Pit and our dispositions for learning that had been introduced the previous year.

2020, during Covid, saw opportunities for growth for both students and teachers alike in the Learning and Teaching space, especially in the area of digital technologies.

The challenges of Covid saw teachers respond by transferring the learning to an online space, which was a completely foreign concept to all involved. Teachers found themselves in the Learning Pit and having to think differently about the curriculum and how best to deliver it. An example of this was the creation of a website for the Prep to Two student cohort. Teachers used a range of tools to connect the students in whole class and small groups, to set work and for students to share their assignments. The makerspace and choir website were created to support student learning and provide connectivity between school and home. The creation and evolution of both the makerspace and junior website were fine examples of teacher collaboration and collective efficacy.

During lockdown we catered for up to 20% of our student cohort as onsite learners. During this period teachers were flexible with their working arrangements and juggled both onsite and offsite learning.

With students resuming after the second lockdown, there was awareness of placing an emphasis on student wellbeing. The Arts and Physical Education became vehicles to ensure student engagement.

Work began in earnest with Deb Vietri, exploring the notion of how our student's could become more independent learners. A number of teachers engaged with webinars conducted by James Nottingham, which centred on learning intentions, success criteria and feedback.

Reports in 2020 reflected the changes in focus for Learning and Teaching

Due to COVID19 NAPLAN was not administered in 2020.

Catering for up to 20% of our student cohort as onsite learners across the two lockdowns meant thinking about what was working for those at home and what adjustments were needed for onsite learners

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

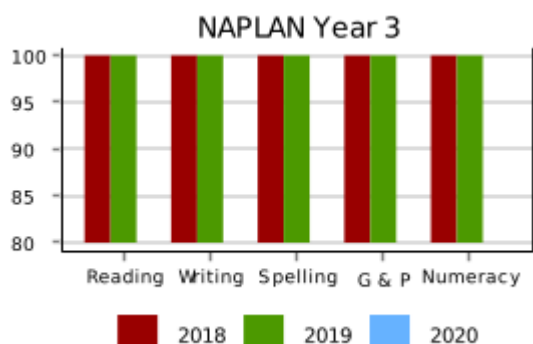
During 2020, teachers used components of the regular classroom assessment tools that are part of a range of tools they would normally use. These included Essential Assessment for tracking our student's maths progress and Benchmark Assessment (BAS) for tracking our student's reading progress. Teachers also used both pre and post testing in all subject areas. Our junior students were assessed with Alpha Assess to track their reading progress.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019	2020	2019 – 2020
	%	%	Changes	%	Changes
			%	*	*
YR 03 Grammar & Punctuation	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 03 Writing	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	93.3	90.9	-2.4		
YR 05 Numeracy	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Spelling	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 05 Writing	93.3	90.9	-2.4		

* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

** Data cannot be reported for this year as the number of students that sat the test was below 5 and the data has been suppressed for privacy reasons in accordance with the ACARA NAPLAN data reporting provisions.

*** No students sat the NAPLAN tests in this year level and in one or both of the relevant years.



Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To maximise student's sense of personal wellbeing and their connectedness to school, community and their learning
- That students, families and the school work together to promote physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing

Achievements

[SWAchievements]

VALUE ADDED

- Peaceful Kids 10 week wellbeing program was purchased and used by different classes as part of their daily or weekly routines. This included Mindfulness and Meditation
- The Makerspace Website was developed to promote flexible and creative challenges based on the Arts, Science and Wellbeing. The responses were shared on the website through photos of their work.
- Afternoon sessions were primarily focused on providing ideas for being creative or engaging in physical activity. This was in response to concerns that the students were online for much of the day and were missing the incidental movement and freedoms of being at school
- Coffee carts, morning teas and other treats were shared with staff onsite.
- Trivia nights and craft chat nights with staff aimed at reconnecting on a level other than curriculum based
- Check in times were provided with individuals, with class groups and with small interest based groups. These were provided by class teachers, specialist teachers, school leaders and Learning Support Staff.
- Social group meets were organized with different groups of students to allow them to maintain social connections
- Musical welcome back videos created by staff and shared with the community
- Parent Facegroup community created to provide support to parents by parents
- Attendance by Wellbeing Leader at online Wellbeing Network meetings
- Access to a range of Remote Learning Wellbeing Resources through Catholic Education Melbourne

STUDENT SATISFACTION

Like many aspects of 2020, the student satisfaction with Wellbeing was mixed. Many students faced issues of finding space and time to complete work, particularly if they were one of several siblings and both parents were trying to juggle their own work and access to devices. The immediacy of the classroom was missed by some students who may have been working at different times and had to wait for teacher responses. There was an acknowledgement that the teachers were working very hard to provide work for the students but sometimes the demands were greater than at first realised. This was addressed during the second lockdown as teachers became more aware of the difficulties faced by some students during the first lockdown. Some students felt very well supported and appreciated the opportunity to use the afternoon for more relaxed sessions such as meditation or playing chess if they needed or just taking that time to catch up on work missed. The social meets were enjoyed and the opportunity to have smaller meets were much appreciated by those who found the large groups more difficult to engage with. The small check ins with different staff members was also mentioned as something that contributed to their feelings of connection and which they enjoyed. While some of the students appreciated the time at home, generally the students missed being onsite. The times between and after the lockdowns was one of celebration to be back together and the general consensus was that playing with your friends was really one of the best parts of being at school!

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student attendance is formally marked on our online data system in the morning and after lunch. Parents are able to inform the school in the event that their child will be absent. Phone, email and through the Skoolbag App are the main forums for contacting the school.

During 2019, State Government legislation that required all schools to make contact with the parents and/or guardians of students with an unexplained absence was in effect. On these occasions, parents/guardians of students with an unexplained absence are contacted through our online data collection system.

In the event of student non-attendance becoming an issue, contact is made with the family by the Principal to discuss the reason for this absence, and plans to resolve this lack of attendance are discussed and implemented.

Schools must contact parents /guardians about any unexplained absences, on the same day, as soon as practicable, including for post-compulsory aged students.

Note: The School Attendance Guidelines apply to all registered schools in Victoria and outline procedures for schools to record, monitor and follow up student attendance in order to meet the requirements of the relevant act and regulations.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y01	95.0%
Y02	97.4%
Y03	93.5%
Y04	96.5%
Y05	96.8%
Y06	96.5%
Overall average attendance	95.9%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

The goals for the 2020 Year were to:

- Uphold the primacy of the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in the Sacred Heart School community
- Empower and give protocols for families, children, young people and staff at Sacred Heart School to have a voice and raise concerns
- Ensure rigorous risk-management and employment practices

Achievements

At Sacred Heart Primary School, we recognise our obligation to ensure that our student's safety is embedded into our culture, and that our practices, policies and protocols are consistently reviewed, to provide surety that our ethical imperative of keeping children safe is recognised, understood, valued and upheld by all staff, volunteers and community members within the school.

Sacred Heart's leadership has incorporated all requirements of Ministerial Order 870 (Child Safe Standards - Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools - 2015) into the appropriate school's policies, procedures and all school environments (all school environments include (a) the school campus; (b) online school environments and; (c) other locations provided by the school for a child's use including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, Sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events).

Strategies we have used to implement a culture of child safety at Sacred Heart Primary School include:

- Establish a Child Safety Committee
- Develop appropriate practices, policies and protocols that establish strong and clear governance arrangements
- Utilise staff meetings for all school staff to develop a high degree of awareness of the child safety reforms, other related legislation and the school's practices, policies and protocols
- Being especially vigilant in supporting the wellbeing of our most vulnerable children
- Foster a culture of transparency and open communication which empowers all members of the community to discuss child safety and raise any concerns about child abuse
- Enable professional learning and training of staff to build deeper understandings of child safety and prevention of abuse.
- Establish a system for regular review and improvement of child safety related policies and practices.

In 2020 staff continued to work to achieve a school culture, where child safety was given precedence in all decisions made both at a class and whole school level, creating an environment for our students to feel safe and to be safe. Staff were expected to continue to uphold high principles and standards, when it came to child safety. As a school, we promoted models of behaviour between adults and children, based on mutual respect and consideration.

Child safety protocols and procedures were revisited as the year progressed, during start up at the beginning of the year, as part of staff meetings, and on occasions when the need arose. On each of these occasions, we ensured that school personnel had appropriate learning to develop their knowledge of, openness to, and ability to address child safety matters.

Staff meetings continued to provide opportunities to clarify and confirm legislative obligations, policy and procedures in relation to our student's protection and wellbeing.

During 2020 the staff continued work on a behavioural management policy that was more reflective of our current community and contemporary behavioural management philosophies and practices. This policy will be completed during 2021.

I would like to acknowledge the crucial role of our school board in the formation of our child safe policies and their ongoing dialogue on child safety issues. Each of our child safety policies were developed in conjunction with the School Board both at the formation and ratification stages.

Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

That teachers will work collegially to provide sustained authentic learning opportunities for all students

That all members of the community are supported to become more confident, responsible and accountable learners

Achievements

As is the case in all spheres to be discussed in this report, the decisions made and actions implemented in the Leadership and Management Sphere, were predicated by the implications of the COVID 19 pandemic and the associated extended closure of onsite learning at our school, Sacred Heart.

A priority for our leadership team revolved around the need to support our teachers with their planning of learning experiences for our students working offsite, to provide reassurance about their continued diligence and passion and to provide clear and timely direction as we became more cognisant of the challenges our students working offsite were experiencing. The ongoing evaluation of our expectations of our students and the provision of learning experiences that fit their needs and situations were our constant priority. The wellbeing of students, families and staff was a key driver of decisions.

Our curriculum leaders (as will be explained in greater detail in the Learning and Teaching part of this report) were committed to not let the tyranny of distance interrupt our school's facilitated planning between teachers. Each week teams would have an online meeting with our Learning and Teaching, Literacy and Maths Leaders to evaluate and plan the following week's learning activities for their students.

A commitment in 2019 to utilize the expertise of curriculum consultant, Deborah Vietri, was adhered to in 2020, despite teachers planning offsite. Deborah worked with the staff each term with the goal of ensuring our teachers were providing engaging, high quality learning opportunities for all our students, when they were learning offsite and when back in their classrooms. Again Deborah Vietri's work with our staff will be explored in more detail in the Learning and Teaching section of this report.

Even though only a small cohort of staff were required to be at school on any given day to teach the students who were onsite, a commitment was made to continue to have a staff meeting each week as usual, but online. This enabled the staff to share their concerns and wins and new ideas during a period of significant learning for themselves as they transitioned to the new online space, as well as just enjoy the pleasure of seeing each other.

As the period of school closure developed into months of staff separation and online-only connection with their students, staff wellbeing became a heightened priority. A socialisation initiative was implemented by members of leadership, ably assisted by other staff, when they organised a number of opportunities to get together in a social way such as evening online trivia nights and quiet craft chat nights. These nights were well frequented and with much laughter shared and were a great antidote to the loneliness caused by isolation from colleagues and the stresses caused by off site learning. Teaching is a social activity and leadership recognised the importance of the staff coming together even if it was only online.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

At the end of the 2019 school year, when planning our professional development directions for 2020, the question was posed to staff; do we want to re-engage the services of educational consultant Deborah Vietri to continue the work she had commenced in 2019? The staff were asked to consider their options with the contingency in mind, that employing Deborah would exhaust most of our professional development for the upcoming year. Our staff were enthusiastic about the prospect of again working with Deborah so she was engaged for 2020.

Deborah continued to work with our staff, helping them to plan learning experiences that were authentic, relevant and engaging. An emphasis was on enabling our students to generate an inquiry focus and having teachers scaffold activities that would allow our students to develop, practice and use inquiry skills. From classroom experiences, our students developed learnings that would allow them to achieve answers to their inquiry questions. An emphasis for teachers was to consider all curriculum areas as a vehicle for developing and practising inquiry skills and for doing research related to their inquiry. Again, teachers were asked to consider the areas of reading and writing as opportunities for enhancing the work our students were completing in inquiry.

As an adjunct to the work with Deborah Vietri, a number of staff participated in a series of webinars conducted by educational consultant James Nottingham. Titled, Challenging Learning Series, the professional development looked at how teachers can structure learning opportunities to engage their students so that they become more active participants in their learning. These were voluntary and self driven as they took place in the evenings. The staff found them engaging and thought provoking and that they connected to the work they were doing with Deborah Vietri. They also allowed staff to share their understanding and thinking about Learning Dispositions and the struggle of learning new things.

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	7
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1300

TEACHER SATISFACTION

Whilst last year presented unprecedented times for all involved in education, there was anecdotal evidence to suggest that some teachers felt a great sense of satisfaction of what was achieved in 2020 and the new way of learning and teaching that was explored during remote learning. There were, however, particular difficulties at times with managing the balance of our changing understanding of where work began and ended and the recognition that each individual may have been facing conflicting demands at different moments as we journeyed

together through 2020 lockdowns. Even on return to onsite school, COVID 19 restrictions prohibited singing and using shared equipment, significantly impacted the way in which Physical Education and Music could be taught and enjoyed. There were the highs of finding solutions for new problems and building new and stronger relationships, but there were also the lows of technology hiccoughs and times of isolation. A complex year in which there were challenges and successes that did have an impact on overall teacher satisfaction due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Amongst the challenges were many positives. Some stronger working relationships were developed between staff, such as with the Junior team, who created a website for the Junior classes, a complex and challenging process requiring patience and diligence as well as talent. The cooperation continued with many staff contributing to the Makerspace website, creating opportunities for cross age challenges. Some teachers felt they had more time to view and analyse pieces of work individually and give feedback to the students, such as with one-on-one online lessons with a child, without the usual interruptions you would experience in the classroom. Students and parents/carers understood technical glitches would occur and were understanding (for the most part). Teachers were particularly impressed with students' ability and capacity to problem solve on the spot. Challenges to both teachers and students became opportunities for growth in resilience, collaboration and problem solving, all of which was incredibly satisfying.

Planning in class level teams continued via Google Meets, which also allowed the whole staff to stay connected through staff meetings and Professional Development opportunities with Deb Vietri could still occur. Teachers found a variety of webinars to attend, providing satisfying PD on a personal choice as well as an opportunity to share the new learning. James Nottingham Webinars on Challenging Learning, Zart Art webinars and conferences, Katie Wardrobe Music Technology Webinars and Denise Gagne Music for Remote Learning were some of these.

Teachers became adept at converting corners of their own houses into learning spaces to help engage the students - ie posters about shortlisted books for storytime, using new technologies to work with small groups in Writing, Maths etc. There were numerous Google Meets and phone calls to colleagues to support each other and to find new ways of engaging our students. This was very satisfying. Some staff were also onsite to supervise the children of essential workers and vulnerable students. It provided a great chance to interact with kids and a few staff - it provided the only sense of slight normality during this tough period. It also enabled some strong relationships to develop across age groups which was lovely to see.

As a result of COVID 19 and the times when remote learning became necessary, there appeared to be an increased parent respect for what teachers do, which was also satisfying. With the regular parent and teacher communication came some understanding of the challenges faced at school and at home. Getting the recognition from the parent cohort for what can be a challenging job, and building stronger home and school connections was definitely a positive outcome of 2020.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	98.9%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	75.0%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	20.0%
Graduate	10.0%
Graduate Certificate	0.0%
Bachelor Degree	60.0%
Advanced Diploma	50.0%
No Qualifications Listed	40.0%

STAFF COMPOSITION

Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	15.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	8.4
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	4.6
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

School Community

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To engage in authentic and purposeful partnerships
- Student learning and wellbeing is enhanced by strengthening connections between home, school, Parish and our broader, diverse community

Achievements

Again the priority in 2020 was the continued strengthening of relationships that had been developed in the previous couple of years, and to continue to seek opportunities to develop new relationships both within our school community, and between our school and the wider community.

Little did we know as we approached the end of Term One, that the Covid pandemic would conspire against our ability, or at least challenge our capacity, to interact with the community both within and outside our school.

As a school, we recognise the importance of the joint relationship and shared role between families and school in educating our students. Because parental involvement is highly valued, we had to put into place other avenues that would allow parents to maintain contact with our school and be aware of the learning their children were participating in. Our school newsletter continued to be an important source of information for parents, and a heightened emphasis was detailing students' work each week. As the period of school closure increased, our teachers of our students in Years Three to Six began to "check in" with groups of students on a rostered basis. Parents and guardians were encouraged to be part of these meetings. In the Years Prep to Two, phone calls were made to students and their parents. Our Year Prep to Year Two Teachers also organised online activities with groups of students that parents and guardians were encouraged to be part of.

In 2020, the School Board continued to play an integral role in the life of our school. We continued to meet twice a term via ZOOM. Our School Board was a very important platform for parent representatives to contribute ideas, question directions, and ask for clarification of the offsite learning activities our students were involved in. The School Board's reporting on what was happening at home saw modifications to classroom programs and the implementation of some of their suggestions.

During 2020 the relationship between the school and parish was one of strength through distance. Our students and elderly parishioners' rapport was evidenced in the correspondence that went back and forth between the two groups. Our students wrote letters to a group of parishioners identified by our Parish Priest as being isolated and in need of contact. If these parishioners were identified as Italian speakers, then the students' letters were written accordingly. What transpired was a lovely interaction between the two groups with letters being exchanged.

Our Principal maintained his position on the Gower Street Kindergarten Board of Management and continued to participate in its monthly ZOOM meetings.

At Sacred Heart School, we welcome student teachers from tertiary institutions for their placement rounds. We believe that we have a responsibility to be involved in the ongoing support and training of tomorrow's teachers. During the period of offsite learning, we had a student teacher who was part of the Year Five/Six class. He, like the classroom teacher, was involved in student "check ins" and responsible for other online learning.

PARENT SATISFACTION

During 2020, our school staff had a heightened awareness of the need to be in dialogue with our parents, so that we remained cognisant of the challenges they were facing educating their children at home and concerns about wellbeing both during offsite and onsite learning. We were determined to not let the tyranny of distance be a barrier to the normality of our parent teacher relationships. During the dialogue with parents, we became aware of issues with technology, senior students experiencing discomfort with the amount of "online work" expected and our students missing their peers. We became aware from parent feedback about the need for flexibility with home learning and that, as in the classroom, work needed to be tailored for our students' individual needs. This feedback from parents saw our teachers constantly evaluating their practices and making changes to their programs.

In general, I am confident to report that our parent/guardian population was most positive about the way in which our school was able to maintain the development and learning of our students during 2020. To say that our parents and staff continued to work together to achieve a common set of goals despite the challenges is an accurate picture of the Sacred Heart School community in 2020.

Gratitude from parents was reflected with a litany of gestures both overt and less visible. During lockdown we had families supply a morning coffee for all staff, another supply pizzas for lunch, a family supply a fruit basket and yet another morning tea. As Principal, I also received a number of emails from parents and guardians expressing their thanks for the teacher's passion and thoroughness in preparing learning experiences for their students. Staff members also passed onto me emails of a similar sentiment they had received directly from parents.

The most significant behaviour of all when evaluating our relationships with parents and guardians, is evidenced in their willingness to adhere without complaint and with a spirit of cooperation with the protocols and procedures we had to put in place during the challenges of 2020. During lockdown parents only sent their children to school if they were permitted workers and at no stage (as I was aware of happening in other schools) was I required to ask parents to furnish to me the "permitted worker" documentation. Students that we evaluated as being vulnerable were willingly brought to school during lockdown by their parents and guardians.

When our school reopened, the protocols we introduced to keep our school community safe were consistently followed by parents and guardians. Parents followed the protocol of not entering the school grounds in the morning and afternoon and only entering the school building for one of the specified necessary reasons whilst ensuring they wore a mask. Our parents were

diligent in not sending their children to school if they showed the slightest symptoms of illness, and in the event a COVID test was warranted, again only sent their children to school when a negative result was registered.