



Sacred Heart  
College  
GEELONG

SACRED HEART COLLEGE GEELONG

# 2023 Annual Report to the School Community

## Sacred Heart College

Retreat Road, NEWTOWN 3220

Principal: Anna Negro

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

Registration: 219, E Number: E1027



*Educating Girls to Make a Difference*

A Ministry of Mercy Education Limited ABN 69 154 531 870

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## Principal's Attestation

I, Anna Negro, attest that Sacred Heart College is compliant with:

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

Attested on 02 Apr 2024

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## About this report

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

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## Governing Authority Report

Mercy Education Limited (Mercy Education) is an incorporated ministry of Mercy Ministry Companions (MMC). MMC is responsible for ensuring, as faithfully as Catherine McAuley and her sisters, that the Catholic identity, charism and spirituality of schools previously under the stewardship of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea (ISMAPNG), thrive into the future.

MMC delegates the governance responsibility of these thirteen schools to Mercy Education. There are nine schools in Victoria, three in Western Australia and one in South Australia.

Commencing on 3 December 2021, the MMC Trustee Directors were installed by the Institute Leadership Team of ISMAPNG as the canonical authority for Mercy Education Ltd. The Trustee Directors also comprise the Board Directors of Mercy Ministry Companions Limited (MMCL), the civil body of Mercy Ministry Companions. Mercy Ministry Companions Limited is the Member of Mercy Education Limited.

In transferring the incorporated Education, Health and Community Service ministries to Mercy Ministry Companions, the Institute Leadership Council and the Institute has entrusted the Trustee Directors with this Mercy heritage and empowered them to develop new expressions of the 'gift of mercy'. In the new era of Mercy Ministry Companions, canonical stewards, board directors, executives and management continue to embody the compassion, hospitality, integrity, care, justice, practicality and service which characterise contemporary channels of Mercy.

The governance role of the Board of Mercy Education is confined to the thirteen schools and sets policies, approves schools' strategic plans, appoints Principals, approves senior leadership positions and fulfils due diligence in finance and audit management, capital development, risk management and litigation.

The current Board Directors are listed at <https://www.mercy.edu.au/governance/board-members>.

The Mercy Education Limited schools are:

- Academy of Mary Immaculate, Fitzroy, VIC
- Catherine McAuley College, Bendigo, VIC
- Emmanuel College, Warrnambool, VIC
- Mercedes College, Perth, WA
- Mount Lilydale Mercy College, Lilydale, VIC
- Our Lady of Mercy College, Heidelberg, VIC
- Sacred Heart College, Geelong, VIC
- Sacred Heart College, Kyneton, VIC

- Santa Maria College, Attadale, WA
- St Aloysius College, Adelaide, SA
- St Aloysius College, North Melbourne, VIC
- St Brigid's College, Lesmurdie, WA
- St Joseph's College, Mildura, VIC

Mercy Education is the employer of the Principal and staff of the Mercy Colleges. The existence of Mercy Education Limited gives strength, support and solidarity to each of the member Mercy schools and its community.

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## Vision and Mission

Strategic Plan 2021 and Beyond

### **Our Vision**

*The Sacred Heart Way*

Educating girls in the Mercy tradition to make a difference in our changing world.

### **Mercy Education Values**

- Compassion
- Courage
- Hospitality
- Justice
- Respect
- Service

### **Hallmarks of the Sacred Heart College Experience**

- Adaptable
- Balanced
- Collaborative
- Committed to Excellence
- Empowered
- Innovative and Creative
- Inquisitive
- Knowledgeable
- Merciful
- Open-minded Global Thinkers

### **Vision Cornerstones**

#### ***Spirituality***

In the Mercy tradition, spirituality continues a meaningful, contemporary connection with faith in Jesus and our community and strengthens the understanding of God's presence and love in daily life.

#### ***Social Justice***

Deepen the values of compassion, empathy and the intrinsic worth of every individual so that all are empowered to be co-creators and to make a difference in Australian and global social contexts.

***Learning***

Enable members of our school community to be creative, self-directed, critical thinkers who are inspired to learn, whose natural inquisitiveness is nurtured and who strive for excellence.

***Community***

Nurture the relationship between school, family and faith and foster in each student the values essential to address the challenges and responsibilities of adult citizenship in a global neighbourhood.

**Our Strategic Priorities*****Living the Sacred Heart Way***

Spirituality is nurtured, and the Catholic faith is shared and strengthened.

***Clever and Creative Learning***

An education innovation hub.

***Culture of Wellness***

An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community that enhances and nurtures a child-safe environment.

***Care for our Common Home***

An integrated approach to sustainable living.

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## College Overview

Established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1860, Sacred Heart College Geelong (SHC) is a Catholic secondary college for girls in the Mercy tradition. With all the Mercy-sponsored colleges, SHC pursues the Mercy values of compassion, courage, hospitality, justice, respect and service.

Students are drawn from all socio-economic groups. As a relatively low fee-paying school, SHC is committed to equity and social justice. Scholarships and fee relief are provided to eligible students whose families are experiencing financial hardship.

The College employs 226 staff across teaching and non-teaching roles and is serviced by dozens of contractors, including regular cleaning and canteen staff, as well as various trade and other service providers. The College is supported by our generous subcommittees and College Advisory Council, all experts in our community who advise the College on communications and marketing, finance, planning and facilities, strategy, and wellbeing.

**As students progress through SHC, our aim is that they will graduate from the College as global citizens ready to challenge, engage, lead, and make a positive contribution to society that reflects their Catholic identity and the Mercy Ethos.**

SHC is committed to creating change, informed by the collective knowledge and wisdom of Mercy Education Limited and Catholic education and considers the changing educational landscape. Whilst at SHC students study the International Baccalaureate Middle Year Program (IBMYP) and can choose VCE, VCE Vocational Major and VET. Students may also choose to engage in university courses by accessing Deakin Accelerate or the John Monash School of Science. During the senior years students can access co-instruction with St Joseph's College.

In line with SHC Strategy 2021 and Beyond – Clever and Creative Learning, the College provides students with choice and agency by offering a vertical timetable that provides students with a choice of subjects across the years - McAuley (Years 7 to 9) and Maguire (Years 10 to 12), including the opportunity for self-directed learning. A full vertical House Mentor structure was introduced in 2022. Students from Years 7 to 11 engage in transdisciplinary learning through the Design Futures Lab, CSI Forensics, Café Culture, iTinker and iArt and by utilising the Makerspaces in the Innovation Precinct. These transdisciplinary units require the integration of skills and knowledge from various disciplines and challenge the more traditional siloed approach to learning.

SHC is a member of the Future Schools Association, the Positive Education Schools Association, the International Coalition of Girls' Schools and is a Visible Wellbeing Partner School.



SHC offers a strong co-curricular program that includes public speaking, a wide range of sports, and performing arts. Throughout their secondary education, students engage in liturgical celebrations, regular prayer, retreat and reflection days and, together with staff, are encouraged to complete Mercy outreach.

Understanding that our students will be leaders of the future, SHC offers a structured leadership development program open to students at all year levels.

The College has a large, diverse, and active Alumni, with many families having educated generations of students.

The College participates in a broad social justice Mercy outreach program with various local agencies (particularly those affiliated with the Sisters of Mercy) and many of the region's Catholic primary schools.

Proud of its excellent grounds and facilities, the community can hire tennis courts, gymnasiums, playing fields, commercial kitchens, meeting rooms, the Performing Arts Centre and the Chapel for Alumni weddings.

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## Principal's Report

In April 2023 SHC launched Timetable 2024. This new structure better reflects our current and future world, and it acknowledges that learning must be student centred and flexible whilst building in students habits that support wellness and establish lifelong positive behaviours. Timetable 2024 works on the belief that every day can look different while providing some routine and predictability. The weekdays are broken into units of time that vary in length (30, 60 and 90 minutes) to better cater for diverse delivery methods and to facilitate links to real-world learning programs - local, national, and global.

The new timetable enables students to access course materials that support self-directed learning on and off-site while empowering them to work at a pace appropriate to them.

Faithful to our Mercy tradition and the values of compassion, hospitality and justice students continued House fundraising efforts and they responded on multiple occasions to the local need for non-perishable food items to support St Thomas Aquinas pantry as well as hosting, in Term 3 the Refugee Holiday Program which aligns to the work the College is doing to attract enrolments from refugee families. Work on the SHC Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and the Laudato Sí Goals has continued with both projects in their second year.

Learning partnerships with industry have continued. With the support of staff, our students built and donated a magnificent shed to Cottage by the Sea. This project gained SHC recognition by the Australian Institute of Builders (AIB) as an organisation that has displayed exceptional corporate social responsibility.

In 2023 the Design Futures Lab students (who work out of our Makerspace) created a series of pavilions that acted as sensorial walkways to approach and contemplate the wonder and potential future of creating with reclaimed waste materials. The first pavilion featured in Melbourne Design Week and this exhibition showcased three experimental transition spaces that challenge our perceptions of how waste can be utilised as an alternate resource when we rethink and reimagine the circular lifecycle of materials in the built environment. This Pavilion was created with 13,010 used and donated disposable coffee cups. The second installation was made for Geelong Design Week. This construction was made from 'coffee concrete', a biomaterial invented by students using coffee grounds. Several material tests and process prototypes were displayed and students were on hand to answer questions. The installation was appropriately named – 'Grounded'.

Consistent with SHC Strategy 2021 and Beyond, SHC drew upon Priority 3 Culture of Wellness, with 79 staff trained in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) to better assist and support our students as they navigate their teenage years.

**Stage 5 of the Master Plan – Sports and Wellness Precinct** has progressed to Design and Development. The Sports and Wellness Precinct will see the existing O’Dwyer Centre (ODC) double in size to provide an appropriate gathering/function space for students and staff. The Wellness Space, a two-storey addition to the ODC, will incorporate health and wellbeing. The Sports and Wellness Centre will take a multi-dimensional approach to wellness comprising cognitive, emotional, physical, psychological and social wellbeing. This means that our young people will have agency and be empowered to improve their wellbeing literacy. In time, they will know how to improve their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

The work of 2023 has further supported SHC's commitment to evolving from an industrial-age school to a vibrant learning village that embraces lifelong adaptability, creative problem-solving, and learning.

Anna Negro

Principal

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## Catholic Identity and Mission

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Develop a whole school sustainability plan for water, waste, energy and food.
- Ensure that the student population reflects diversity in the Geelong region.
- Harness our history and traditions to ensure we walk and talk our values.
- Lead and act for social justice and community outreach.
- Respect, engage and learn from our First Nations People culture, history and knowledge.

### Achievements

The College theme for 2023 was succinctly titled Act With Love. These words define the mission entrusted to all of us and have their foundation in scripture - 'Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth'. 1 John 3:18. At the core of our community is this demand for outward action, urging a committed response to the ongoing mission of service.

#### **Develop a whole school sustainability plan - water, waste, energy and food**

Laudato Si' calls us toward sustainability in the spirit of integral ecology. With profound care for each other, our Creator, and all creation, we are building a better future together. Development of the school Action Plan based on the seven goals for the next seven years is in progress. In 2023, the development of the Action Plan alongside the ResourceSmart Schools Program and Catholic Earthcare Program empowered the College to address our ecological challenges so that, as a faith community, we can lead by example and follow our well-formed hearts with practical steps that engage the whole community in caring for our mother earth.

#### **Ensure that the student population reflects diversity in the Geelong region**

The College continues to uphold the Catherine McAuley vision of ensuring education is available to all regardless of culture, beliefs, and wealth by identifying families in need and assisting them in alleviating financial hardship. In addition, SHC continues to develop the Inclusion Diversity Education Program (IDEP). This program identifies refugee families in need and enables the College to broaden the student population to reflect the diversity of cultures in the Geelong region, supporting the marginalised and financially stressed.

#### **Harness our history and traditions to ensure we walk and talk our values**

A committed response to outreach ensures students and staff become the faces and the hands of Mercy, with a passion to be the agents of change in their community and throughout the world. The Religious Education curriculum is designed to inform, encounter, challenge perspectives, enlighten, foster discernment, entrust responsibility and generate a deep moral

concern. In collaboration with Religious Education, the broader curriculum at each year level enables additional opportunities to explore Social Justice issues through various meaningful avenues such as Community Projects, Immersions, Hampers, and Interdisciplinary Units.

### **Lead and act for social justice and community outreach**

Students and staff are encouraged to participate in several programs to develop their faith, spirituality and understanding of Social Justice. Living out the College theme Act With Love, students undertake various fundraising tasks, all with the ultimate goal of providing practical and financial support to charities within the local community and beyond the boundaries of national and international organisations. In taking these authentic fundraising steps, students learn to function as influential democratic citizens, transmitting the hope and advocacy that we might create a better world for everyone.

### **Respect, engage and learn from our First Nations People culture, history and knowledge**

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) seeks to revitalise whole school change and promote reconciliation as a living, evolving understanding and relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We work towards a genuine reconciliation to connect hearts, minds and spirits and achieve equal and equitable outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. As a community, we are committed to pursuing our goals of inclusive and respectful teaching and learning about First Nations peoples, cultures and histories in a spirit of reconciliation. Creating a place of belonging where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are empowered and their cultural identity is valued.

## **Value Added**

### **Develop a whole school sustainability plan - water, waste, energy and food**

- Environmental Awareness Campaign - Focus on Litter at SHC
- Laudato Si' - Ecological Spirituality Staff Formation
  - Adopting Sustainable Lifestyles
  - Catholic Earthcare Program
  - Community Resilience and Empowerment
  - Ecological Economics
  - Ecological Education
  - Ecological Spirituality
  - Laudato Si' Goals
  - ResourceSmart Schools Commitment
  - The Cry of Earth
  - The Cry of the Poor
- Parachute Project
- Season of Creation
- SHC Sustainability Challenge

- Wipe for Wildlife

### **Ensure that the student population reflects diversity in the Geelong region**

- Financial Assistance (all students) and Health Card holders
- Identifying and Supporting Families in Need
- Inclusion and Diversity Education Program
- Mercy Outreach Team
- Refugee Week
- School Fee Assist
- Staff Payroll Deductions

### **Harness our history and traditions to ensure we walk and talk our values**

- AMSSA Conference 2023
- Circle of Mercy Professional Learning
- Circle of Mercy Professional Learning Staff Opportunities
- Faith Days, Masses, Feast Days and Liturgies
- Foundation Day Mass
- Mercy Day
- Opportunities for the Development of Faith, Spirituality and Social Justice
- Staff, Parent and Wider School Community Opportunities in Social Justice
- Student and Staff Retreats
- Student Conferences, Camps and Initiatives
- Student Empowerment Mercy and Mission Leaders
- The Australian Young Mercy Leaders Pilgrimage

### **Lead and act for social justice and community outreach**

Fundraising initiatives and outcomes that support the Mercy Justice Advocacy Policy:

- Annual Christmas Appeal
- Food Drives
- Mercy Empowerment Dinner
- Mercy In Action Project
- Project Compassion
- SHC House Mercy Works
- SHC Outreach Opportunities and Self-Initiated Community Service
- Social Justice integrated into curriculum-based programs
- Student Leadership Initiatives (E.g. Make March Matter, International Women's Day)

### **Respect, engage with and learn about First Nations People culture, history and knowledge**

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 'Yarnda Woka (Yorta Yorta) Walk on Country' Cultural Experience

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mentor Group and initiatives
- College FIRE Carriers
- Commissioned Artwork, Waikarra Ba-gurrk (Courageous Woman)
- First Nations Cultural Conversations - Staff Professional Learning
- NAIDOC Week
- Possum Skin Stole Workshop
- Reconciliation Garden and Gathering Space
- Significant Days (E.g. Close the Gap, National Reconciliation Week)

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## Learning and Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Attract, select, retain, develop exceptional and specialised staff.
- Empower and connect students to local, national, global career and skills development opportunities.
- Provide creative and innovative learning spaces, programs and technology - physical, virtual and online.

### Achievements

A clear focus of the College Strategy 2021 and Beyond is to develop independent, skilled life-long learners who can thrive in a rapidly changing future world. Our teaching and learning programs continue to be designed and delivered with this end in mind. Students are encouraged to take measured learning risks, set goals that stretch them, and focus on learning growth that develops their unique strengths and talents.

Some highlights of the year include:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) continues to be our key learning design framework that ensures all young people can access learning by removing the structural, situational and dispositional barriers to learning. A fundamental element of removing barriers to learning was addressed through the work of our Pedagogical Coaches, who joined with the College disciplinary teams to identify the functional impact of disability in the classroom and develop ways to mitigate this. As a key element of our College Professional Learning program, our commitment to UDL design principles deepened through a formal strategic partnership with Novak Education and drawing on the expertise of its founder and international UDL expert, Dr Katie Novak.
- Students in Years 7 and Year 8 engaged in two different learning programs. The first program was Project-Based Learning with a focus on social justice. This program aimed to raise awareness about the challenges faced by people living in poverty during Christmas time. The second program was an Interdisciplinary Learning Unit that encouraged students to become advocates for sustainable living and design solutions to address environmental issues. Both programs aimed to develop students' interest and agency in meaningful ways.
- Our Design Futures Lab students and their mentor, industrial designer Dani Storm, created a pavilion for Melbourne Design Week that reflected our deep need as humans to tap into the forces of nature to find design solutions to Climate Change. The installation was created from 13,010 upcycled paper coffee cups and laid out in a



Fibonacci Sequence. Following this installation, the students launched an invention of an entirely new bioplastic made from coffee grounds, developed a specific product that supported regenerative farming, addressed biodiversity loss through the Eastern Barred Bandicoot, and partnered with Bayleaf to craft wooden toys for Christmas. Our development of the Design Futures Lab will continue to grow and democratise in future years with a developing partnership with Deakin University to provide internships, mentorships and inspirational educational opportunities for our young people, blurring the lines between secondary and tertiary education.

- Three VCE Studio Arts students - Alice McAloon, Viktoriah Patterson-McCosh and Layla Salerno were chosen to participate in 2023 Geelong Future Creatives. Their creative works were displayed at the Geelong Arts Centre in February and March 2023.
- The Australian Institute of Building recognised SHC and our corporate social responsibility through the 'Women in Construction' program in partnership with Deakin University and Matthew Flinders Secondary School. One of the program's key outcomes was designing and constructing a shed for the community charity 'Cottage By the Sea' to increase the representation of women in the construction industry.

## Student Learning Outcomes

The effective use of data in the classroom continues to be a key focus for the College. Some key data regarding student learning outcomes include:

### **NAPLAN results**

NAPLAN testing underwent some changes to timing, format, and reporting in 2023. The tests were held in March, not May. For the first time, the testing was entirely online throughout Australia and in an adaptive format universally. The results were reported through four levels of achievement instead of the previously used ten bands of proficiency. Student proficiency was achieved by being deemed either 'strong' or 'exceeding' on the new scale.

### **Year 7**

In Reading and Writing, Sacred Heart students continue to perform favourably against the national and state averages overall, and students with a language background other than English and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (groups of students that tend to experience higher levels of disadvantage) achieving well above their state and national counterparts.

In Numeracy, Year 7 students perform favourably overall against their state and national peers, particularly at the lower end of the cohort. However, the top 25% of students continue to underperform in comparison, indicating that the higher-performing students need to be exposed to a greater level of challenge across all Mathematics strands.

## **Year 9**

In Reading and Writing, students continue to achieve at levels that exceed their state and national peers. The extremities of the box-and-whisker plot indicate that the College provides excellent support for all students - the lowest percentiles at SHC far exceed state and national averages, the top end of the cohort has been stretched to achieve at a higher level comparatively, and the entire cohort lifts with proportionately more students accessing the upper end of the 'strong' and a more significant number of students achieving at 'exceeding'. This indicates student exposure to challenges at all proficiency levels and speaks to the value-added through teaching and learning at the College. Students with a language background other than English will require further targeted support in the coming years to achieve their potential.

Numeracy achievement at the Year 9 level indicates a very similar pattern to achievement levels in Year 7, with the overall performance favourable against the state and national average, considerable value-add at the lower end of the cohort, but no notable growth for the top 25% and a comparatively worse performance than the state or national average.

Overall, NAPLAN scores (acknowledging that we have an imperfect data set) remained relatively consistent between 2017 and 2023, with only minor movements in improvement or decline, which fluctuated year-on-year.

## **Senior Secondary Outcomes**

### ***Completion Rates***

- 234 students completed Year 12
- 202 students received an ATAR
- Seven students completed VCE unscored
- 24 students completed the Vocational Major program

### ***Post-School Destinations***

Of the 234 students who completed Year 12, 192 received University offers (82.05%). These offers traverse a broad cross-section of potential courses and career pathways at various universities, predominantly within Victoria. The greatest proportion of students was offered a place at Deakin University (39%), with the Australian Catholic University being the next highest recipient of SHC students (14.6%) and Melbourne University after this (13%). The remaining graduates were spread amongst the other universities.

Most students chose to pursue pathways in the Sciences and Health Sciences, including Nursing, Midwifery, Paramedicine, Physiotherapy, Psychology, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Medicine. The remainder of university entrants chose courses across the Arts, Design, Law and Commerce, representing diverse interests and talents that typify SHC Graduates.

<b>NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards</b>			
<b>Domain</b>	<b>Year level</b>	<b>Mean Scale score</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 7	556	77%
	Year 9	577	67%
Numeracy	Year 7	539	76%
	Year 9	573	76%
Reading	Year 7	561	86%
	Year 9	596	80%
Spelling	Year 7	537	79%
	Year 9	576	81%
Writing	Year 7	567	81%
	Year 9	604	79%

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

<b>Senior Secondary Outcomes</b>	
VCE Median Score	32
VCE Completion Rate (includes VCE VM completions)	99.60%
VCAL Completion Rate (VCAL Intermediate)	85.70%

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

Post-School Destinations 2023 unavailable.

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## Student Wellbeing

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Prioritise and embed wellness for learning across all opportunities that students experience.
- Nurture a child safe culture across all aspects of school life.

### Achievements

- A critical audit of the College's implementation of Visible Wellbeing was conducted during Term 1 of 2023 ahead of a VRQA audit and School Improvement Framework review completed during Term 2. This audit helped consolidate existing work and guide further implementation of the SEARCH Framework in 2024.
- The principle of inclusion guided the planning for an all-staff professional learning day in Term 3. The day aimed to increase staff knowledge of Child Safety Standard 1, creating a culturally safe learning environment for First Nations students.
- The College continued its relationship with SKODEL to monitor and respond to students' weekly wellbeing needs and develop broader curricula. The questions used to construct the weekly survey reflect the SEARCH Framework at the heart of Visible Wellbeing.
- The Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships curriculum continued to be developed and embedded across the College. Teaching staff were provided with ongoing professional learning throughout 2023 to build staff capacity in this space.
- Throughout the 2023 school year, all year levels engaged with the LifeChanger personal development program. This developing partnership with the College continues to help students grow in leadership, mentoring, and healthy habits.
- **The ongoing development of staff in mental health promotion continued in 2023, with an additional 79 staff receiving Mental Health First Aid training, facilitated as part of the College's partnership with the City of Greater Geelong.**
- School-wide wellbeing lessons were delivered in Mentor Groups throughout the year to make wellbeing visible and identifiable for all students and staff.
- A newly designed wellbeing curriculum was developed in 2023 and will be delivered in 2024 as part of the College's new timetable structure.

### Value Added

- Students in Years 7 and 9 participated in year-level camps throughout 2023. These camps allowed students to make connections within their house and year level.

- Year 11 students participated in three renewal days in Term 2. These personal development days were designed to broaden each student's perspective of the world and the positive impact they can make in society.
- Year 12 students participated in three retreat days in house groups – their final secondary school camp. This retreat provided students with the opportunity to take stock and consider the important connections in their lives as they approached the end of their secondary school journey.
- The College hosted and facilitated a joint production of 'School of Rock' with Iona College, Clonard College, and St Joseph's College.
- The College continued to engage with the local Rainbow Alliance for secondary schools in our area throughout 2023, including hosting the network throughout 2023.
- The College's Free to Be Me group continued promoting the importance of inclusion and celebrating diversity.
- As part of funding obtained in 2022, the College continued facilitating the student-led 'Call it Out' podcast, with additional contributions published throughout 2023.
- Planning commenced throughout 2023 in preparation for the resumption of international tours, immersions, and exchanges throughout 2024. These will include trips to Japan, France, and Timor Leste.

## **Student Satisfaction**

Student responses to the 2023 MACS School Improvement Survey suggested that students continue to feel safe and as though they belong at the College. Whilst declines observed in previous MACSSIS data relating to student engagement continue to be evident across the broader student body, further analysis shows that this experience is particularly and disproportionately prevalent in the 2023 Year 8 cohort, reflecting the need for more targeted programs.

Students in Years 10 to 12 report learning engagement, safety, and belonging at levels that exceed the MACS average and continue to grow as they progress through the year levels. The 2023 data strongly suggests that the College's senior school cohort is overall satisfied with their school experience.

Informed by the data, student engagement for students in Years 7 and 8 will become a critical focus for the College in 2024 and beyond to ensure that students feel connected with one another and their learning.

## **Student Attendance**

Student attendance is a shared responsibility of all staff across the College. To ensure proactive student attendance, an automated SMS message was sent to families when a student's whereabouts could not be explained by 9.30am. The Student Wellbeing Assistant

called the families at 10.30am. each day if the College had still not heard from a student's caregivers.

The standard practice throughout 2023 was that the Student Wellbeing Assistant would normally continue calling family emergency contacts throughout the afternoon until all unexplained absences were explained.

House Leaders and the College's Inclusion and Diversity network analysed wider attendance trends. They offered support as required and made referrals to the College Student Support Services team when students required adjustments to their learning programs.

<b>Years 9 - 12 Student Retention Rate</b>	
Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	90.4%

<b>Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level</b>	
Y07	81.7%
Y08	82.2%
Y09	78.1%
Y10	76.1%
Overall average attendance	79.5%

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## Leadership

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

In accordance with Strategy 2021 and Beyond the goals and intended outcomes for leadership and management were driven by the following four strategic priorities:

1. Living the Sacred Heart Way
2. Culture of Wellness
3. Clever and Creative Learning
4. Care for Our Common Home

### Achievements

- A professional growth program for Position of Leadership (POL) and Education Support Staff (ESS), with individuals setting goals linked to our Mercy values and Strategy 2021 and beyond. The learning from 2022 established further improvements to modules in 2023 that enhanced professional learning for staff.
- Leadership focused on consultation and communication with key stakeholders as continued negotiations for the new CEMEA saw varied conditions for staff throughout 2023.
- In preparation for implementation of Timetable 2024, leadership created opportunities to collaborate with staff across the year to prepare staff for the new structure.
- Formation of professional development opportunities across various platforms to support the achievement of mandated hours for staff to maintain and achieve Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School.
- The College continued to build on the implementation of the vertical House system. 2023 highlighted positive feedback from staff regarding the House connection and the policies and procedures for supporting students' pastoral needs.
- In 2023, leadership positions in Learning and Teaching and Inclusion and Diversity delivered strong program outcomes aligned with the College's Learning Philosophy.
- The Inclusion and Diversity scholarship program continues to align closely with the College's Mercy values of compassion and service to provide support and educational opportunities for Geelong's refugee and First Nation students experiencing financial hardship and/or educational disadvantage.
- Improved processes and communication, technology automation, and openness to daily operations created efficiencies and supported leaders and teams.

## Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

### List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023

In 2023, the College supported staff to reflect on practice, utilise data, research and evidence to enhance their professional growth. The College's professional learning encourages staff to develop innovative and next practice in teaching and learning, with staff accessing internal and external professional development opportunities.

Staff at the College engaged in a variety of professional learning opportunities focused on:

- Building their capacity and capability
- Empowering staff to personalise their professional learning
- Prioritising staff collaboration in sharing skills, knowledge and expertise

#### **2023 Professional Learning Opportunities included:**

- Communities of Practice – professional learning teams engaged in a continuous improvement model targeting key priorities of the College – Catholic Identity, Hybrid Learning, Literacy, Numeracy, Universal Design for Learning and Visible Wellbeing.
- Compliance training including first aid, child safety and emergency training.
- Conferences and webinars delivered by curriculum associations, educational providers and consultants focusing on VCE study designs, IBMYP curriculum and assessment and discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogy.
- Melbourne Archdioceses Catholic Schools – middle leaders' program.
- Mercy Education Limited Leadership Conference 2023.
- Australasian Mercy Secondary Schools Association (AMSSA) Staff Conference 2023 – *Mercy in liminal times*.
- Pedagogical coaching and classroom observation.
- Postgraduate study – Masters, Graduate Diplomas and Graduate Certificates.
- Youth Mental Health First Aid training.
- Whole Staff Professional Learning Presentations and Programs covering the following areas:
  - Bio Hacking
  - Creating Inclusive Learning Environments
  - Cultural Conversations – Belonging and Identity
  - Faith Formation
  - Laudato Si' – Ecospirituality
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Neurodiversity

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	120
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$770.00



## Teacher Satisfaction

The College is committed to continuous improvement and engaging with staff for feedback. The 2023 MACSIS survey identified the following:

- Staff are seeking greater professional feedback from leadership.
- Staff felt the quality and coherence of professional learning opportunities improved in 2023.
- Staff see a strong faith in leadership within the College.
- Staff perception of the overall school climate has declined in the last 12 months.
- Teacher collective efficacy slightly decreased across 2023.
- Teachers in 2023 were consistent with previous years' perceptions of how well they collaborate to improve teaching and learning.
- The quality of relationships between staff and leadership has remained consistent.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	12.9%
Graduate	25.4%
Graduate Certificate	5.7%
Bachelor Degree	45.9%
Advanced Diploma	5.7%
No Qualifications Listed	4.3%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	5
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	148
Teaching Staff (FTE)	112.5
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	93
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	83.6
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

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## Community Engagement

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Foster and maintain a strong relationship with families and Alumni.
- Ensure that the student population reflects the diversity in the Geelong Region.
- Share facilities and resources with the wider community.

At SHC, we believe in fostering a vibrant school community where families, Alumni, and the wider community come together to nurture the growth of our students. We understand that genuine partnerships, supported by open communication and shared goals, are crucial to maximising positive outcomes for students.

Led by our Strategic Plan, our goal of community engagement is to build solid and effective relationships that will help our young people thrive. Following the welcomed return of in-person events and collaboration post-pandemic, we have continued to build on the positive outcomes of 2022 into 2023 to strengthen our school community further.

### Achievements

#### Communications

At SHC we know communication is key to building strong community engagement. In 2023 we continued to focus heavily on streamlining and improving communications to our community. Key areas included:

#### ***Principal's Update***

The Principal's Update is our core information exchange with families, and has continuous improvement as an ongoing priority. In 2023 consistency was maintained with timing and content to strengthen the integrity of the publication.

#### ***Principal's Forums***

In 2023 we introduced the Principal's Forums. The forums were held in the Atrium Cafe and open to any families who would like to join our Principal and members of our College Leadership Team (CLT) for a coffee. This time was open for questions and to provide feedback. These informal meetings were held at various times to give all members of our community the opportunity to attend.

#### ***SMS***

Outside this regular cycle of communications, we continued to use SMS alerts to message our families with any urgent updates, advising them that an email would follow with full details, e.g event cancellations due to wet weather.

### ***Social Media***

A variety of social media platforms were also utilised to communicate with families, including Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

### **Community Engagement**

In 2023 SHC held the following key events to foster community engagement:

#### ***Maguire Celebration***

Our annual Maguire Celebration occurred at GMHBA Stadium on Thursday 16 February 2023. The event invited our College community to celebrate the achievements of our 2022 Year 12 Students and officially open the 2023 school year.

#### ***Discovery Day***

SHC opened its doors on Friday 24 March 2023, to allow prospective families to see the College in action. Throughout the day, 700 people attended, starting with a presentation from the Principal followed by a self-guided tour.

#### ***Foundation Day***

On Sunday 26 March 2023, we celebrated our Foundation Day. It began with Mass and was followed by a carnival-themed afternoon. Our school community enjoyed rides, market stalls, music and delicious food.

#### ***Circle of Mercy***

The popular events continued in 2023 held in person and online. Each Term, the events invited guest speakers, highlighting our Mercy story and Mercy Values.

#### ***Carols by Candlelight***

This event was held on St Stephen's Green on Wednesday 6 December 2023. Hosted by Geelong entertainer Jamie McGuane, performances included the Piano Bar, Natalie O'Donnell, Sacred Heart College choir, staff and students, with a special appearance from Santa Claus. Our school community was invited to bring a picnic or purchase food from various food trucks.

### **Community Giving**

The College thanks all donors who contributed in 2023. It is through such generosity and goodwill that we continue to support those in need in our school community.

In 2023 the College received donations totalling \$146,021 as follows:

- 89 Scholarship Fund (General) \$47,306
- 24 Scholarship Fund (Inclusion and Diversity) \$88,505
- Two Building Fund (Capital campaign pledges) \$10,000
- Two Other (General) \$210

## **Annual Giving**

Annual Giving gifts for 2023 totalled \$118,005 from 103 donors with an average donation of \$1,135. We again offered an easier way of giving via an online portal that provided automated tax-deductible.

## **2023 IDEP Enrolments**

The College promotes an inclusive curriculum that reflects the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of Greater Geelong. Established in 2021, our Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) Network supports, empowers and enables students to learn in a nurturing environment with support such as:

- New arrivals programs that provide intensive EAL support
- Ongoing pastoral support groups for students and families
- Personalised transition programs
- Professional translation services
- Social-emotional learning programs, counselling, group programs, mentoring and buddy programs

This program will continue thanks to generous donations from 22 donors, who raised \$80,305 towards our I&D Scholarship. Deakin University continues to support five full I&D scholarships this year - two from Afghanistan, one from Syria and two from Iraq.

## **Alumni Engagement**

The SHC Alumni Association continued to focus their energies on Alumni engagement and further executing its strategic plan. 2023 saw the return of in-person events, enabling the Alumni Association to host seven reunions annually. These included decade reunions from 10 to 50 years and a five-year reunion to build a connection with more recent graduates. The final event took place on Sunday 29 October 2023, and was our Golden Girls event. On the day, there was such a happy atmosphere present, and it was a joy to see 120 Sacred Heart ladies share their memories together and take them back down memory lane for the College tour. The peer years returning for the Golden Girl reunion ranged from 1948 to 1972. Sister Madeleine Fox, who has been a Sister of Mercy for 70 years and celebrated her platinum Jubilee, also attended with Sister Nancy Freddi (1956). For those Golden Girls who were unable to attend, we extended our digital perspective to share some images from the day together with a slideshow from the archive.

The Maguire Magazine, a quarterly online publication, was emailed to the Alumni community at the end of each Term. In line with sustainability practices, the paper-free publication continued to showcase our Alumni's achievements, milestones and news to build engagement across our Alumni community and promote connectivity with the College and each other.

Lastly, we engaged in an exciting new initiative to take our Alumni engagement online. Using a new platform for networking and connecting called Graduway. The platform gives SHC the capability to:

- Drive engagement through directory connections, in-platform messaging, peer-to-peer video chat and group video conferencing.
- Empower our Alumni to connect anytime, anywhere on desktop or mobile with our Alumni networking software.
- Graduway reaches our Alumni community through visual feed posts, custom activity digests, and automated email outreach to further promote Alumni engagement.

The launch date for this initiative is mid-2024.

## **Parent Satisfaction**

Data from the MACSSIS survey indicated areas of satisfaction for families at SHC were:

- A strong school climate where their child felt safe and engaged, showcasing the overall positive environment at the College.
- There is a sense of welcome when entering the College, with an approachable Leadership team. We attribute this to our continued focus on clear and consistent forms of communication, which families have quickly come to rely on, including the efficient and effective methods we engage to keep them updated.
- The score of 100% of families using our online portal reflects high engagement with our online tools.
- In the results for family engagement and connection there was room for growth, this space will be an area of focus in 2024.

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## 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](http://www.acnc.gov.au).

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