



2023

Annual Report to the School Community



St Brigid's College
Horsham

St Brigid's College

97 Robinson Street, HORSHAM 3400

Principal: Gerard Raven

Web: www.stbc.vic.edu.au

Registration: 1122, E Number: E2044

Principal's Attestation

I, Gerard Raven, attest that St Brigid's 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 01 May 2024

About this report

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

Governing Authority Report

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Tom Sexton

Executive Director DOBCEL

Vision and Mission

Our Vision

Guided by our Catholic identity, St Brigid's College ensures high levels of learning and success for all.

Our Mission

Through the three pillars of Catholic Identity, Teaching and Learning and Wellbeing, we commit to:

- * Nurturing faith and fostering positive, healthy and respectful relationships.
- * Being a Professional Learning Community focused on a high level of learning, collaboration, results and outcomes.
- * Upholding the safety and wellbeing of all.
- * Preparing students to be positive contributors to society.

College Overview

St Brigid's College is a co-educational Catholic Secondary College serving the Parish of St Paul VI, Wimmera-Mallee.

Before St Brigid's College began, Horsham was serviced by the Brigidine Convent School in McLoughlin St when the foundation stone of the original building was laid on the 14th September 1919, by the Right Reverend Dr. D. Foley, Bishop of the Ballarat Diocese. The Parish Priest responsible for the foundation was Very Rev. D. Howell. Five Brigidine Nuns arrived in Horsham in April 1920, and the school was officially opened in May. Three boys and five girls were enrolled. The first Superior was Mother Stanislaus Tobin.

In 1968, the Brigidine Convent school was relocated to our current site and relaunched as St Brigid's College. The Foundation Principal was Sr Brigid Arthur.

St Brigid's College aims to promote personal development, individual determination, responsibility and academic excellence of each student in order to achieve their full potential. Student Pathways include Australian Curriculum, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE),

Vocational and Educational Training (VET) as well as the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL). There is a strong Pastoral Care emphasis for each individual student.

St Brigid's College is a Professional Learning Community (PLC) where our commitment is to ensure high levels of learning for all our students. Our staff is composed of collaborative teams who work interdependently to achieve common goals for which we are mutually accountable.

Our College runs on a Vertical Homeroom System with students being members of a House and a Homeroom which contains a range of students from Years 7-12. We find this a very positive structure that helps with pastoral care, student management and healthy relationships amongst students in the school.

Within the Homeroom structure is the Teacher Advisor program. This program is designed around individual interviews for each student in a homeroom to discuss how they are progressing in their subjects, set goals, monitor tasks and their organisation in addition to any other issues they wish to discuss. Student interviews occur approximately every 5 weeks and a report, summarising the interview is made available to parents through the online Parent Access Module (PAM).

With Christ as the centre and focus, St Brigid's College strives for the development of the whole person. The College sees itself as offering an invitation to its members to "come and see" and experience the human values as portrayed by Christ, expressed in a modern educational establishment.

Some of the more specific aims of St Brigid's are as follows:

- a) To provide a rich, broad curriculum which, through participatory and co-operative learning, develops basic skills and provides access to our cultural heritage.
- b) To provide an environment which allows students to experience the hope and optimism of

the Gospel as well as the Gospel values of freedom, truth and love.

c) To promote the integral development of students: physical, emotional, intellectual, moral, aesthetic and spiritual, in accordance with the belief that each student is unique.

d) To encourage young people to weigh moral values with an informed conscience, illuminated by faith and thus embracing Christian values by personal choice.

St Brigid's College is a community. Community is at the centre of our being. All students need to accept that, when they enroll to attend St Brigid's College, they enroll into our community.

Our College is noted for its friendliness, helpfulness, and courtesy of our students, and this characteristic is frequently commented upon by employers, municipal officials and voluntary organisations.

Basic to our policy is the requirement that no student may disrupt the work, or wellbeing of another student. In co-operation with the parent, the College will act quickly, positively and most firmly to achieve this. The College believes that all students must learn to have:

a) respect for themselves as a person.

b) respect for other people, their rights and their property.

c) respect for community and community property

d) respect for the ethic of study and work. The relationship between parents, members of staff and students is based on mutual respect and care.

In 2022, St Brigid's College undertook a School Improvement Process and began a new 5-year strategic plan with the 3 key priorities of:

1. **Leadership and Stewardship:** Foster a positive collegial culture, informed by our Vision and values.

2. **Wellbeing:** Create a shared understanding of what wellbeing looks like for the St Brigid's community.

3. **Learning and Teaching:** Develop and implement a shared vision for learning and teaching that empowers, engages and inspires growth.

Principal's Report

In 2023 St Brigid's engaged the Leading Teams consultant team, under the supervision of Brendan Maher, to further develop our school's culture. The aim of this program was to take an Inquiry Based approach to reviewing our practices and processes, asking 'What is Working Well' and 'Even Better if' questions. Staff were encouraged to have genuine conversations and to take responsibility for the outcomes of the whole team.

Through a series of professional development days, the staff developed a College Trademark - "We are a team that acts with Strength and Gentleness". Arising from this trademark are a series of expected behaviours that we agree to hold one another to account for. The ultimate aim is to improve student outcomes and experiences.

In 2023, the College was also fortunate to receive a State Government grant for \$3 million to upgrade students facilities, home economics kitchen and create a student cafe. The works for this refurbishment are expected to be undertaken in 2024.

Our senior students departing the College achieved their desired outcomes and were successful in following their post school pathways.

The refurbishment of the staffroom was completed in Term 1 and staff now have a comfortable and professional workspace in which to collaborate and plan in.

At the end of the year we farewelled two members of our Leadership Team, Mrs Bettina Bird and Ms Jillian Wright who had both added a level of professionalism and dedication to our community.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- * To build capacity for all staff to appreciate and articulate the theological purpose of our existence.
- To continue to contextualize our programs, including curriculum, using a local context that offers students a viable belief system framed by our Catholic Faith.

Achievements

Religious Education

- With regard to Religious Education, CHECS data suggests that effective practices are mostly evident (4.12)

* We welcomed Fr Matt Restall to visit our RE classes on a regular basis.

- Staff are engaging in Awakenings Curriculum.
- Unit plans are available on SIMON.
- All staff accredited to teaching in a Catholic school but only five to teach RE.
- Successful retreat programs.

Enhancing Catholic School Identity

- With regard to ECSI, CHECS data suggests that effective practices are mostly evident (3.88).
- The Mission and Identity Leader being on leave, the principal has assumed this role.
- The Brigidine heritage is honoured through the modern artwork representing the 100 year history of Brigidine education in Horsham.
- The Brigidine cross and other iconography is prominently displayed around the college.
- Opportunities for school liturgies.

Value Added

Social Action & Justice

- With regard to Social Justice, CHECS data suggests that effective practices are evident (4.29)
- Year 11 retreat include social justice activities including working with the homeless.

* Year 9 Eco Spirituality camp

• Year 11 students are engaged in community activities within the local communities, eg Vinnies, support at the St Michael's & St John's, Christian Emergency café.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

In order to believe in and achieve high levels of learning for all students, we will collaboratively develop and improve teacher efficacy and collective responsibility for students' learning outcomes. A range of professional development and resources are provided to staff. As a school, we are targeting the following outcomes:

1. Improved VCE outcomes.
2. Improved student engagement in learning.
3. All staff participate and contribute in an efficient and effective manner in teams in order to build a collaborative culture within the school.
4. All staff to have consistency of curriculum taught, pacing of teaching program, assessment and reporting for year level subject teams.
5. Students can identify their learning outcomes and the steps to achieve in each task set by teaching staff. Students are able to co-contribute to outcomes and measures of success.

Achievements

1. Developed & implemented a shared vision for learning and teaching that empowers, engages and inspires growth.
2. Established a guaranteed and viable curriculum by developing and updating Scope and Sequence documents and Unit Plans for each subject.
3. Continually review and improve our Professional Learning Community.
4. Demonstrated the effective role and interdependence of Professional Learning Teams through regular collaboration to document curriculum and exchange ideas to better engage students in their learning.
5. Strengthened student feedback processes in the assessment program via the Teacher Advisor program.
6. Identified cross-curricular learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander topics across the school.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Improved student performance as indicated by a justified increase in 'above standard' and 'well above standard' results.
2. Increasing use of rubrics to assist staff and students to understand and identify achievement levels.
3. Successful completion of the Victorian Certificate of Education, Vocational Major and Victorian Pathways Certificate for Year 11 and 12 students increases to 90%. Students

achieve 90% success rate in:

- Achieving a full-time apprenticeship or traineeship
- Undertake further tertiary study
- Achieving full time employment
- Achieving a School Based Apprenticeship or Traineeship

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards			
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 7	524	65%
	Year 9	561	52%
Numeracy	Year 7	536	76%
	Year 9	562	77%
Reading	Year 7	535	76%
	Year 9	561	68%
Spelling	Year 7	520	65%
	Year 9	564	71%
Writing	Year 7	547	74%
	Year 9	567	61%

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

Senior Secondary Outcomes	
VCE Median Score	27
VCE Completion Rate (includes VCE VM completions)	100.00%
VCAL Completion Rate (VCAL Intermediate)	*

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

Post-School Destinations as at 2023	
Tertiary Study	27%
TAFE / VET	18%
Apprenticeship / Traineeship	0%
Deferred	0%
Employment	55%
Other - The category of Other includes both students Looking for Work and those classed as Other	0%

Data is based on On Track Year 12 completer survey 2023 for Post School Destinations of Year 12 or equivalent completers in 2022.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals

- Create a shared understanding of what wellbeing looks like for St Brigid's community.
- Building a shared commitment towards expected student behaviours.
- Develop a sense of pride and belonging to the College.
- Embed positive education/respectful relationships within wellbeing.

Outcomes

- To develop student motivation, confidence, self-awareness and responsibility for managing aspects of their learning and behaviour
- To foster healthy, respectful relationships to promote and encourage positive engagement and connectedness of students to our school college
- To develop compassion, understanding and inclusivity of all students, including those who are vulnerable

Achievements

In 2023, there was a strong focus on student wellbeing. 2023 was a year where initiatives implemented in 2022 were strengthened.

The pastoral care program for students from 7-12, continued. Topics such as resilience, emotional literacy, goal setting and gratitude were explicitly taught in classes each week for the year. The program focused on positive education and respectful relationships to enable the students to flourish - to feel good and do good.

The school used a check-in system called "Pulse". Each week students completed a 60-second online check-in using the Pulse program. This enabled students to seek help from a trusted staff member of their choice if they were struggling. It also provided valuable data on the overall school experience and culture.

Funding through Wimmera Uniting enabled St Brigid's to have a counsellor on-site for two days each week. With waiting lists for outside agencies growing, this has provided much needed intensive support for our students. It has also provided much needed support and expertise to the Student Wellbeing Team. We continue to strengthen relationships with outside agencies such as Headspace

2021 saw the introduction of the Student Commendations Program and this program continued throughout 2023. The St Brigid's College commendations program is used to affirm students who strive to achieve personal excellence. It recognises a range of endeavours to which our students contribute and encourages positive behaviours that can enable student talents to be celebrated as a community. The system will be recorded electronically on SIMON using student commendations. These commendations will form a cumulative value, to encourage students to strive towards badges which were presented at assemblies and at the end of year awards ceremony. Students can receive commendations in recognition for genuine achievement across the following categories:

- Academic
- Community Service and Social Justice
- Leadership
- The Arts & Cultural Experiences
- Sports

In line with the implementation of School Wide Positive Behaviour Support, we began to review the commendation system with staff, students and parents, to capture students who demonstrate the expected behaviours consistently. We hope to implement an acknowledgement of positive behaviour system in 2024.

School-wide positive behaviour support (SWPBS) is a framework that brings together school communities to develop positive, safe, supportive learning cultures. SWPBS assists schools to improve social, emotional, behavioural and academic outcomes for children and young people. In 2022, a lot of work was done to prepare for its implementation in 2023, developing a matrix of expected behaviours at St Brigid's. The expected behaviours are explicitly taught and reinforced. In 2023, we implemented a behaviour management flow chart to support staff when following up behaviours.

St Brigid's continued their journey with the ReLATE program in 2023. Reframing Learning and Teaching Environments (ReLATE) aims to make real, measurable and lasting change in schools to better the teaching, learning and wellbeing of not only students but staff, leaders and the whole school community. Staff developed their knowledge of trauma informed care which provided strategies to implement in the classroom to further support our students.

Value Added

The Year 7 orientation camp at Robe, South Australia, was another huge success, with the students developing long-lasting relationships with other students and staff.

Our Year 8 students enjoyed the outdoor challenges at their camp at Roses Gap. This camp aims to provide fun, adventure, outdoor skills and teamwork. It was another very successful camp.

In year 9, students participated in a fun filled camp to Anglesea, where they experienced different outdoor activities.

Our year 10 students participated in work experience and driver education, while our year 11s went to Adelaide for their retreat. We again provided a Presentation Ball for our Year 11 students. Students were able to further develop relationships and a sense of belonging in preparing for the ball. A great night was had by the school community.

Finally, our year 12s began the year with a retreat to Halls Gap that set them up for the year ahead. They concluded their time at St Brigid's with a beautiful graduation celebration in November. We wish them well for the future.

These programs provided the students with some great experiences.

Student Satisfaction

The Pulse data also give us great insight into the school experience and culture moving forward. The data reflects a student cohort who are largely satisfied with the offerings that the College is making. The pulse data indicated improvements in areas such as feeling valued and safe, and positive sense of identity and culture. We look to grow our student voice further.

Student Attendance

Without regular and consistent attendance, students cannot maximise academic, social and emotional achievement. Parents are contacted about any unexplained absences on the day of the absence. Regular absences are followed up by the Teacher Advisor and/or Student Wellbeing Team

There are many strategies that are implemented to assist families with student absences depending on the individual student needs.

Years 9 - 12 Student Retention Rate	
Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	55.0%

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y07	85.2%
Y08	89.1%
Y09	88.8%
Y10	89.7%
Overall average attendance	88.2%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Effective leadership is vital for strong organisational culture and maximising opportunities for staff and students within the College community. In 2023 St Brigid's College has engaged with Leading Teams for targeted and contextualised implementation of a performance improvement program through professional development for our staff. Leading Teams have helped us understand organisation change, and what high-performing teams and leaders are. Through regular workshops with either the College Leadership Team or whole staff we have:

- Reflected on our clarity of purpose
- Developed our 'Trademark'
- Completed peer and self-assessments
- Empowered 'next tier' leadership
- Reflected on our Team Talk, Team Image and Team Behaviours.

St Brigid's commitment to Leadership and Stewardship is documented in our 2023-2026 Strategic Directions and evident in our Annual Action Plan. Key priorities and steps were to:

- Build relational trust through consistent, transparent and respectful interactions.
- Develop and articulate clear, consistent expectations.
- Empower staff, build responsibility and ownership of behaviours.
- Ensure all communication is clear, timely and respectful.
- Develop clear processes for induction for all staff into the St Brigid's community.
- Articulate and implement transparent processes for decision making.

An Interim Deputy Principal has been appointed for 2024. CLT will consist of Principal, Business Manager, Deputy Principal, Head of Learning and Teaching, Head of Wellbeing.

Achievements

- Development of the School Wide Behaviour matrix and flowchart
- Development of St Brigid's Team Trademark

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
ReLATE Program	
Leading Teams Training	
First Aid and Anaphylaxis training\	
Curriculum specific	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	30
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1240.00

Teacher Satisfaction

2023

After engaging with Leading Teams, an improved culture of maintaining higher expectations has begun to emerge.

The most recent School Improvement Survey (2021) showed:

- a solid 11.4% improvement (2019 to 2021) in the aggregate indicator (actual scores) for Teaching Climate, a measure of quality of the school's teaching and learning environment, and includes indicators of Student Management, Curriculum Processes, Student Motivation, Respect for Students, Parent Partnerships, Teacher Confidence, Engaging Practice and Quality Teaching.
- There has been growth in the Insight SRC SIS data in terms of Teamwork, Empowerment, Ownership and Engagement.

In 2023, St Brigid's College experienced:

- Strong attendance at College liturgies, Sports Days and assemblies
- Regular and productive staff meetings with a focus on student learning, wellbeing and safety, and on staff upskilling.
- The College staff began the ReLate (Reframing Learning and Teaching Environments) program, especially important following two years of mixed remote learning & teaching, and combed with
- a Restorative Practices program.
- Excellent staff engagement in Awakenings Curriculum, support for Caritas, Catholic Missions and SRC fund-raising.
- The Teacher Advisor (TA) program, with regular 5-weekly meetings with each student from year 7- 12. The TA Program continues to provide parents with a detailed and accurate picture of their child's participation in school life - both academically and socially, and continues to assist students in developing a positive level of engagement

within school.

- The further development of Professional Learning Teams with teamwork being the focus.
- A continued investment into Professional Development opportunities for staff

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	7.1%
Graduate	16.7%
Graduate Certificate	4.8%
Bachelor Degree	57.1%
Advanced Diploma	4.8%
No Qualifications Listed	9.5%

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	35
Teaching Staff (FTE)	26.7
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	29
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	21.5
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	1

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals

- Identify, build and strengthen community partnerships
 - continue with, and build new involvement with, local community events such as ANZAC day, Remembrance day, Field Days - Careers,
 - Seek out and involve our school community in local art gallery events, community drama productions, public speaking, and the like.
 - Further develop our VET partnerships with local businesses
 - Source College resources wherever possible through local business channels
- Seek innovative opportunities to engage our school community.
 - Work collaboratively with SS Michael & John Primary School to build upon the combined strength of the two schools.
 - Continue to grow the Bright Sparks Program and reach further into the local community
 - Involve our students in supporting local community events
 - Maximise two-way communication through the Parent Reference Group
- Unlock the potential advocacy and support of the alumni for the College.
 - Collect and collate alumni data and seek to involve alumni in the future of our College
 - establish cyclical "back to" events for alumni

Achievements

The Parent Reference Group (PRG) continued from its founding year in 2021 with families volunteering their time on a regular basis to engage with the school on issues or concerns that they held or heard in the school community. Through this very functional group, we see more effective communications and timely outcomes on school community matters.

'Bright Sparks' was again completed in the first semester with a growing number of students from around the Wimmera participating in activities for three Wednesdays leading up to a presentation on the final night.

The College annual Open Day was held in May where families were able to complete 'Learning Walks' through the school. Prospective students were able to engage in tasters of subjects to gain a perspective of what learning at St Brigid's College looks and feels like.

Families then attended our Information Evening held in the stately STEAM building.

Facilities of St Brigid's College were offered to local community groups with sporting clubs accessing our stadium for four out of five nights.

Our Parent Access Module (PAM) and Simon Everywhere App continue to improve, providing families with easy access and live notification updates on progress and other matters pertaining to the school and to their child(ren), including the completion of medical information, homework, reports, notices and school events. Parent-Teacher interviews are also booked through PAM, allowing parents the choice of times and teachers.

Our SMS system provides a global messaging service to our parents, for student absences and short-notice advices, and continues to be a positive communication technique between school and home.

Parent Satisfaction

- Parent-Teacher interviews recorded good attendance by parents who utilised the available options of onsite and phone interviews to engage with the College. Working families found the phone interviews extremely helpful.
- High level attendance by Parents and Students at Subject Selection and information evenings.
- Willingness of parents to openly discuss issues with the school through the Parent Reference Group.
- Parents volunteering in the school canteen.
- School improvement survey data (Insight SRC) reflects a parent body who are largely satisfied with the progress that the College is making with their children.

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.stbc.vic.edu.au