



---

# St. Patrick's School School Advisory Council

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Annual General Meeting 4th December 2023, 7.00pm





## Contents

<a href="#">Agenda</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Minutes of previous meeting</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Chairperson's Report</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Principal's Report</a>	<a href="#">5</a>

## Agenda

1. Opening, Attendance, Apologies
2. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting
3. Reports
4. Election of parent representatives
5. Close



## Minutes of previous meeting

### St. Patrick's School, Nhill School Advisory Council



Minutes of Annual Meeting

held at St Patrick's Community Hall

on Tuesday, 6 December 2022

Meeting Chairperson - Emily Gladdis

Minutes Taker - Karen Rintoule

#### 1. Welcome

##### 1.1. Opening

The Chairperson welcomed everybody and opened the meeting at 7.35pm.

1.1.1. Mons. Glynn led the prayer.

1.1.2. Emily read the acknowledgement of country.

##### 1.2. Attendance

1.2.1. Present

Mons Glynn Murphy (video link), Kingsley Dalgleish, Ann Munro, Helen Cannell, Emily Gladdis, Zanny McEldrew, Karen Rintoule.

1.2.2. Apologies

Moo Khu James, Nathan Wheeler, Rebecca Curtis, Michaela Koop.

**Motion:** Moved by Helen, seconded by Ann, that the apologies be received. Carried.

1.2.3. Agenda

No corrections necessary.

#### 2. Previous meeting minutes

2.1. **Noted** that the Annual Meeting scheduled for 4 December 2021 was cancelled due to a large number of apologies. The business of the meeting (election) was held at the first council meeting in 2022 (23 February 2022) and the Annual Report was distributed to school community members with the newsletter.

#### 3. Reports

3.1. As tabled in the Annual Report, read in summary to the meeting.

3.2. Resolution to approve the reports

**Motion:** Moved by Zanny, seconded by Helen, that the Annual Reports be received. Carried.

#### **4. Election of parent representatives**

- 4.1. The Chairperson declared that four (4) two-year positions are vacant.

Two nominations were received Michaela Koop and Rebecca Curtis, who were declared duly elected.

Two positions remain, and the following nominations were received from the floor:

Moo Khu James was nominated by Kingsley, seconded by Helen; having indicated prior to the meeting that she would accept the position, was declared duly elected.

Zanny McEldrew was nominated by Helen, seconded by Ann; she accepted the nomination and was declared duly elected.

- 4.2. Kingsley thanked all past, continuing and new Council members for their contributions to the school, noting in particular Helen's 8 years of service.

Ann announced that as Fr Matt Restall will be more active in Nhill, she intends stepping down as Parish representative on SAC.

Kingsley also acknowledged the following school staff members who are finishing their service at the end of this year - Ann (32 years), Lisa Creek (8 years), Ainslee Walker and Jo Murphy; and a new appointment to staff for 2023, Margaret Attard; there is one position yet to be filled.

#### **5. Close**

The Chairperson closed the meeting at 7.49 pm.



## Chairperson's Report

Well, what a busy year we have had this year and cannot believe another year is coming to an end. I have enjoyed being an active member of the school community, working on the School Advisory Council and being the Chairperson for the last two years. I would like to thank all SAC members for their support and assistance during this time.

The school has finished the year with a total of 58 students, which is 8 students more than at the commencement of 2023. As noted in a recent newsletter, St Patrick's School had been listed amongst the schools with the highest growth rate in Victoria over the past four years (to February 2022).

SAC members have helped support and run some fantastic events during the year including a family fun night, which was well supported by staff, students, and their families. Face painting, outdoor activities including a tug of war got families interacting together and everyone enjoyed a shared meal, and a fun time was had by all.

We supported a quiz night held by the Parish, selling raffle tickets for some excellent prizes and this event was well supported by the St Patrick's community as well as the wider Nhill community.

During the year SAC members also arranged a Mother's Day finger food luncheon, and assisted with the Father's Day and Grandparent's Day events. Students and families also enjoyed participating in the annual Nhill Show's Grand Parade and proudly carried the school banner.

A review of the current school uniform was undertaken, and we have introduced navy tights, a royal blue soft-shell jacket, and a school beanie as optional additions to our school uniform for the winter months. We are currently in the process of looking for a reliable supplier for the summer dresses and looking at options to offer support to families with our school uniform requirements.

We are looking forward to the Annual Nhill Carols on Saturday, 16 December where we will be supporting our students who are participating in singing at the event, as well as running a drinks stall as a fundraising event.

Planning of events for 2024 is already in full swing, which includes a family night in first term, a book fair at the Nhill Market and selling personalised tea towels as fundraising events.

Thank you to all staff for their hard work and dedication in providing a fulfilling and valuable education to our students so they can grow and develop to their full potential.

Lastly, a big thank you to everyone involved in our wonderful school; it is pleasing to see our school continues to grow in numbers. I wish our outgoing three Year 6 students all the best in their transition to secondary school next year, and we look forward to welcoming ten Foundation students in 2024.

I would like to wish everyone a happy and blessed Christmas and look forward to seeing our school and school community grow and flourish in 2024.

**Emily Gladdis**  
**Chairperson**



## Principal's Report

It is difficult to believe that we are at the end of another school year. This year seems to have flown by and yet, when I stop and think back to the start of the school year, it seems so long ago.

We commenced 2023 with two new staff members, Miss Margaret Attard and Miss Jessica Squires, and 13 new children – 11 of these were Foundation students. It is most pleasing that we have continued to increase the number of Foundation enrolments from previous years. It's nice to know that parents are seeing St Patrick's School as a great option for their children.

After finishing 2022 with 44 students, we commenced 2023 with an enrolment of 50. Throughout the year we actually had 26 new enrolments. This included the Foundation students and other families who joined our school community as the year progressed. We also had departures at the end of 2022 and a family who moved from the area in Term 3. After peaking at 60, we will finish the year with 58 students.

We have ten Foundation students enrolled for 2024 and look set to start the year with 62 students.

During the year we farewelled Miss Squires who we were aware was only going to be with us for six months before travelling for the remainder of the year. Mrs Helen Wills then joined the staff at the beginning of Term 3. Learning Support Officer, Mr Joshua Keller resigned from his position at the end of Term 3 and Mrs Rebecca Woods and Miss Charlotte Dickinson were employed early in Term 4.

I wish to acknowledge the whole staff of St Patrick's School who are wonderful assets for our school community and particularly for our children. Their professionalism and caring natures help in maintaining the great rapport that they each have with the children of our school.

All of our actions continue to be guided by our Vision and Mission Statement, "As partners in Catholic education and open to God's presence, we pursue fullness of life for all."

In keeping with the goals of our Annual Action Plan, our emphasis has been to improve student learning outcomes, as well as providing opportunities for classroom teachers to increase their knowledge of the Ballarat Diocese's Awakenings curriculum and its implementation within the classroom.

We have again been very fortunate to have the services of Samantha Meerbach from Catholic Education Ballarat who supported the teaching staff with their professional learning. Bernadette Luckman from Catholic Education Ballarat also guided teaching staff in the development and implementation of unit plans for Religious Education. Anne Ruddell (CEB) assisted with the implementation and development of our School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS). We have also been assisted by other CEB staff throughout the year, particularly Ashleigh Freckleton (Speech) and Maria Richards (Learning Diversity).

The support of these CEB personnel has been greatly appreciated by our staff throughout the year.

It is also important to mention our ongoing partnership with Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School, Murtoa. Teaching staff of the two schools have worked collaboratively in planning units of work, as well as scope and sequences.

In reviewing our year, it is worth reflecting on the five key Characteristics of a Highly Effective Catholic School (CHECS) – Catholic School Culture, Community Engagement, Leadership and Stewardship, Learning and Teaching, and Wellbeing.

## **Catholic School Culture**

### ➤ **Masses**

We celebrated our Opening Mass with Fr Matt Restall who offered blessings upon all students, staff and parents for the 2023 school year.

Fr Matt lead our Ash Wednesday Mass and both Fr Matt and Mons Glynn joined us for our St Patrick's Day Mass.

We also celebrated Mass in Term 3 on the Feast Day of Our Lady of Sorrows.

It has been most pleasing to have Fr Matt join us on a regular basis throughout the year as part of our liturgical and pastoral program.

### ➤ **Project Compassion**

Families supported Catholic Mission through Caritas Australia's Project Compassion as part of our Lenten journey. Weekly updates and stories were shared on our newsletter and all families were provided with collection boxes.

### ➤ **Easter**

Jess Squires and her Years 2-4 class led us in the Stations of the Cross as part of our Holy Thursday Liturgy.

### ➤ **Catholic Education Week**

Our students and staff travelled to Hopetoun to join with St Joseph's, St Mary's Warracknabeal, Our Lady Help of Christians Murtoa and St Mary's Sea Lake to celebrate Catholic Education Week.

### ➤ **The Feast Day for Saint Mary MacKillop**

The school celebrated the Feast Day for Saint Mary of the Cross Mackillop on 8 August during our Assembly

### ➤ **Sacramental Program**

Two students, Sophie and AJ, celebrated their First Holy Communion Sacrament with Fr Matt.

### ➤ **Monsignor Glynn Murphy**

Mons Glynn celebrated 40 years of Priesthood which was recognised by the Parish and our school.

### ➤ **Weekly Gospel**

A reflection on the Sunday Gospel is shared each week on the school newsletter. An abridged version is also shared with the students during our Monday morning assembly.

### ➤ **Social Justice**

Our students have been kept aware and involved in a number of significant Social Justice 'weeks' or 'days' throughout the year. These included, but were not limited to, Project Compassion, ANZAC Day, National Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week, World Environment Day, World Refugee Week, National Anti-Bullying Week, Remembrance Day, and more. It has been very pleasing to see our children engaging in these social awareness and social justice events. As a Catholic school it is important for us to be aware of the plight of our brothers and sisters as well as our environment as stewards of God's world.

## Community Engagement

### ➤ **Australia Day**

I was honoured to be invited to speak at the Nhill Australia Day Ceremony this year and was also asked to be a judge for the Lions Youth of the Year competition.

### ➤ **St Patrick's Day Family Fun Night**

A great night of fun and games and fellowship was enjoyed on St Patrick's Day. The evening was very pleasing as we had such a huge representation of families in attendance.

### ➤ **ANZAC Day**

It was wonderful to see so many students at the ANZAC Day march and commemorative service. As we gathered with our local community to remember the brave and courageous sacrifice of our fallen heroes who fought for our freedom and peace, we gave thanks to those who served and those who continue to serve. This was an opportunity for us to stop and reflect on the ANZAC's values of mateship, loyalty, selflessness, and service.

Sienna represented our school community by laying a wreath at the Cenotaph on our behalf.

### ➤ **AED**

The school installed an Automated External Defibrillator on-site. It is situated in a location which is accessible by the community if there is a need. It is registered with the Ambulance Victoria AED Registry.

### ➤ **The Push-Up Challenge**

Two of our staff members once again participated in The Push-Up Challenge. The challenge was to complete 3144 push-ups between 1-23 June. This number represents the number of Australians who took their own lives during 2021. By completing the push-ups and fundraising efforts we were helping to promote awareness of Mental Health issues as well as supporting organisations such as Headspace and Lifeline.

### ➤ **School Improvement Survey**

All families, students (Years 4-6), and staff received invitations to complete an online survey regarding our school. These School Improvement Surveys which are conducted by InSightSRC on behalf of DOBCEL, help guide the direction of the school over the next five years and are used as a basis for our next School Review.

### ➤ **School SAC Survey**

All families received invitations to complete an online survey regarding their involvement in school activities and events.

### ➤ **Middle Years Parents Lunch**

A Middle Years parents lunch was held with parents of Years 2,3,4 coming in to have lunch with the class staff and their children. This was an informal opportunity for parents to meet with each other and with the classroom teacher. Whilst we did not get around to having these for other classes we will endeavour to conduct one of these per term next year.

### ➤ **Mother's Day / Father's Day / Grandparents' Day**

It was pleasing to see a great number of our mums, dads, grandmas, grandpas, aunts, uncles and other special friends be able to join us for our Mother's Day, Father's Day and Grandparents' Day activities throughout the year.



### ➤ **Nhill Supa IGA Sponsorship**

Steve Braybrook from Nhill's Supa IGA presented St Patrick's School with a cheque for \$500 to use towards resources for our children.

### ➤ **ADF Parcels**

We once again partnered with Nhill RSL Sub Branch Blue Lounge Social Club to send Christmas parcels off to those serving with the Australian Defence Forces.

### ➤ **Nhill Free Press**

Nhill Free Press has continued to support us by allowing us to share articles of interest with the wider community and with a regular page showcasing what has been happening within the school.

### ➤ **Local businesses sponsorship**

Through our Little Joey Awards, we received wonderful support from Cambrelle's and Nhill Bakery as sponsors of the awards.

### ➤ **Nhill Christmas Carols**

Our students will again be performing on stage at the Nhill Christmas Carols. Students will sing and sign 'Can You Hear What I Hear' and 'Rudolph the Red-Nose Reindeer'. There was a lot of positive feedback about their performance last year, particularly regarding their Auslan, and I am sure there will be a similar response this year.

## **Learning & Teaching**

### ➤ **Staffing**

Following the retirement of Lisa Creek at the end of 2022 and Ainslee Walker giving notice that she would not be returning in 2023 after her extended leave, together with Jo Murphy's contract expiring, there was a need to employ two teaching staff members.

Consequently, Miss Margaret Attard was appointed to the Year 5/6 class and Miss Jessica Squires to the Year 2,3,4 class. Mrs Tracey Bell also increased her allocation from two days to three days per week.

Mrs Ann Munro also retired at the end of 2022 after 32 years on staff at St Patrick's School.

Classroom teachers, Miss Kate Williams (full-time) and Mrs Tracey Bell (part-time) continued in their teaching roles, although Kate moved from the 2-3 classroom to the F-1 class. Learning Support Officers, Mrs Emma Dickinson, Mrs Caroline Pilgrim, Mrs Annette Hamilton and Mr Joshua Keller also continued in 2023. Mrs Karen Rintoule also remained the welcoming face and voice of the school in her office Admin role.

Miss Squires left mid-year to travel and Mrs Helen Wills joined the staff as the Years 2,3,4 teacher.

Mr Joshua Keller, LSO, resigned at the end of Term 3 and two LSO were appointed at the start of Term 4 – Mrs Rebecca Woods and Miss Charlotte Dickinson.

### ➤ **Staff Roles**

Apart from their respective teaching roles, the following staff were appointed to specialist roles as follows: Religious Education Leader – Jess Squires (Kingsley in Semester 2); Curriculum Coordinator – Kate Williams; Learning Diversity Leader – Kingsley Dalgleish.

## ➤ **Enrolments**

We had eleven new Foundation students join us at the start of the year, together with an additional student in each of Year 3 and Year 5. Our enrolment at the start of the year was 50 students, broken down as follows:

Foundation – 11 students, 10 girls and 1 boy

Year 1 – 9 students, 4 girls and 5 boys

Year 2 – 5 students, 3 girls and 2 boys

Year 3 – 7 students, 4 girls and 3 boys

Year 4 – 5 students, 2 girls and 3 boys

Year 5 – 10 students, 5 girls and 5 boys

Year 6 – 3 students, 2 girls and 1 boy

Overall enrolment – 50 students, 30 girls and 20 boys.

## ➤ **Class Structure**

This year we have changed the structure of the Middle and Senior classes. Our class structures and numbers at the start of the year and end of year were:

F-1    20 students    22 students

2-4    17 students    23 students

5-6    13 students    13 students

## ➤ **Staff Professional Learning**

Professional Learning by staff occurred in

- Scaffolding Literacy
- First Aid, CPR and Anaphylaxis
- Religious Education
- Catholic Identity
- Literacy, Numeracy, Science
- Positive Partnerships
- Dibels Testing
- and more
- Kate Williams was selected to participate in CDLP

There have been collaborative sessions between staff of St Patrick's and Our Lady Help of Christians schools as we continue to work together in a number of areas that we have in common.

## ➤ **Auslan**

We are pleased to be continuing our partnership with Auslan in the West, DOBCEL and Buffy Harrison for our Auslan program.

## ➤ **Days/Weeks of Significance**

Classes participated in activities related to the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence (NDA), Harmony Week, Refugee Week, National Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week, and others.

### ➤ **NAPLAN / PAT Testing**

Students in Years 3 and 5 undertook national NAPLAN testing in Literacy and Numeracy in March. All students were involved in PAT Testing in Reading, Maths and Spelling (Year 2 and above).

### ➤ **Sports Clinics and Events**

Throughout the year our students have been involved in numerous sporting clinics and events. These have included: Hockey; Golf; Water Safety and Awareness; Hip Hop Dance, Freestyle Dance Ministry; Swimming, Athletics, Hockey 7s, and Cross Country.

### ➤ **Excursions / Incursions**

We were fortunate to have visits from a number of travelling shows throughout the year. These included Meerkat Productions, Freestyle Dance Ministry, Sussing Out the Solar System, and Beats 'n Pieces. Our students also travelled to performances at Horsham Town Hall for Horsham Arts Council's production of Seussical the Musical, and a performance by Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

### ➤ **Camps**

The Year 5-6 students attended a three-day camp in Melbourne in March and the Year 2-4 students went to Little Desert Lodge for an overnight camp in November. The F-1 class will have a day excursion to Horsham in December.

## **Leadership & Stewardship**

### ➤ **Emergency Management Drills**

All students and staff participated in Emergency management drills throughout the year.

### ➤ **Playground Audit**

An external audit was completed for the playground and all was found to be compliant.

### ➤ **Child Safety Risk Register**

Karen Rintoule and myself worked with Donna Wood and Bridie Curran from DOBCEL to update our Child Safety Risk Register and Emergency Management Plan

### ➤ **Long Jump Pit**

Nathan Wheeler again arranged for the Long Jump pit to be replenished with sand prior to our athletics sports.

### ➤ **DOBCEL Visits**

We have had visits from Catholic Education Deputy Director: Stewardship, Megan Ioannou; Leader: Teaching and Learning, Joseph Ewing; and Manager: Planning and Infrastructure, Ashley Wiseman.

### ➤ **DOBCEL Board Meeting**

Our school hosted the full DOBCEL Board for their November meeting. Our senior students led the Acknowledgment of Country and Opening Prayer, as well as signing the National Anthem. On the second day, the students showed Board members around our school. We received very positive feedback from all in attendance.

## ➤ **Building Program**

The ceiling in the hallway was replaced due to water damage

Capital Grants Funding applications have been submitted for extensions and refurbishment of existing buildings.

A portable classroom will be moved on to our site during January.

## **Wellbeing**

### ➤ **Mosquito Risk Management**

The Victorian Department of Health detected Murray Valley encephalitis (MVE) virus and other similar viruses in mosquitoes across northern Victoria. Consequently we had the school buildings and surrounding foliage sprayed with insecticide.

### ➤ **Flu Vaccinations**

West Wimmera Health administered flu immunisations for staff members.

### ➤ **Lions Vision Testing**

The Lions Eye Health Program visited us to conduct Free Vision Screening for our children. Children of all year levels were able to have their vision tested at school.

### ➤ **Primary School Nursing and Dental Health Program**

All Foundation students were visited by the Primary School Nursing Program. The aim of this program is to help identify children with potential health related issues that may impact on their learning and development.

The Dental Health van also visited during the year and parents were able to have their children visit the dental health nurse here at school during their visit.

### ➤ **PSG Meetings**

These meetings continued in accordance with NCCD requirements.

### ➤ **Little Joey Awards and Reading Certificates**

The Little Joey Awards continued to be presented at assemblies and shared in the newsletter in recognition of the achievements of the students.

Reading Certificates were also presented for achieving 'nights of reading' targets which increase in increments of 25. Again, these have been presented at assemblies and recognised via the various platforms of community engagement.

### ➤ **Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) and Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs)**

PLPs and BSPs have helped to develop and improve the confidence in our children as the learning tasks they undertake are developed to meet their specific learning needs.

### ➤ **SunSmart School**

St Patrick's School was once again recognised by Cancer Council Victoria as a SunSmart School and we have been re-accredited until 2026.



## Child Safe Standards

### ➤ Child Safe Standards Workshop

Four senior students attended a workshop in Horsham, made up of representatives from each of the five Primary schools within our Parish. Collectively, the students discussed the new Child Safe Standards and then rewrote these in child-friendly language, which they have taken back to their schools to share with the student population. These Standards were shared at assembly, on the newsletter and within the classrooms.

### ➤ eSmart School

We have continued our relationship with eSmart Schools and encourage cybersafety and responsible online usage among our school community.

### ➤ Child Safe Standards

St Patrick's School continues to hold the care, safety and wellbeing of students as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is drawn from an inherent belief in the teaching and the mission of the gospel. St Patrick's School acknowledges that creating a child safe environment is a dynamic process that involves active participation and a shared responsibility from all within the school community. Child Safety Standards remain a regular agenda item at Staff meetings where the school's child safety strategy, risk management processes and their effectiveness are reviewed.

In closing, I thank all members of the St Patrick's School community for their contributions to our school this year. I particularly wish to thank the following:

- The staff of St Patrick's School for your dedication and support to our students and families.
- The parents and children of St Patrick's School for the expectations that you have of us as a school and the faith that you have in us to deliver on those expectations.
- The School Advisory Council for your willingness to be actively involved in the operations of our school.

2024 promises to be a year of great growth for our school and I look forward to working with you all as we embark on the next stage of our journey together.

I wish you all a very safe, happy, and Holy Christmas and wish you well for a Happy New Year.

***Kingsley Dalglish***  
***Principal***

