

# Annual Report to Community



**ST JOSEPH'S**  
SCHOOL

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IN ALL THINGS KINDNESS

IN ALL THINGS KINDNESS

**2023**

# Table of Contents

**1.1 Introduction and Background**

**1.2 Satisfaction Survey 2022**

**1.3 School Improvement**

**1.4 Principal Report**





## 1.1 Introduction and Background

St Joseph's School, Murray Bridge, is an R-9 Catholic school catering to approximately 500 students. The school was founded in 1925.

*We acknowledge and respect that we exist within the central homelands of the Ngarrindjeri people and appreciate the diverse cultures we are a part of in and around Murray Bridge. For almost one hundred years, we have strived to instil in our community the values of Community, Cooperation, Respect, Kindness, Compassion, and Inclusion.*

Ours is a place that knows every child and gently guides each one to uncover who they are. To us, the well-being of our students always comes first, and their voices shape our respectful and safe learning environment. We provide a Catholic Reception to Year 9 curriculum, focusing on those exciting discovery years of education.

Our offering also embraces the Josephite tradition, where small acts of kindness have the power to become extraordinary. We form meaningful relationships with our students and families, which helps us understand each individual and tailor the learning to their needs. We can bring out the best in every child through cooperation and compassion.

We also create genuine connections with our community and strive to make everyone feel included, building upon Mary MacKillop's positive work and her nurturing of a strong sense of belonging among so many.

Together, we make a difference in the lives of our students because we know their St Joseph's experience becomes part of who they are, and who they are makes a difference to the world.

*Mrs Ros Oates*  
PRINCIPAL

**OMNIUS CARITAS**  
**In All Things Kindness**

# 1.1 School Background

## School facts

School sector	Non-government
School type	Combined
Year range	R-9
Location	Inner Regional

## School staff

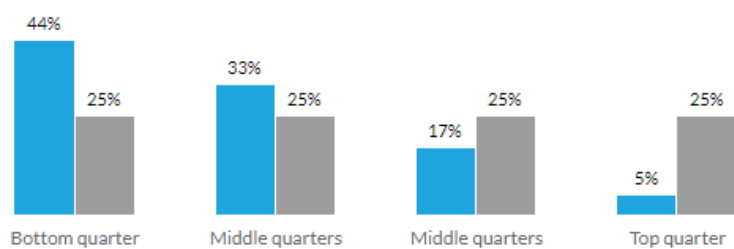
Teaching staff	37
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	33.1
Non-teaching staff	36
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	23.3

## Student background

### Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)

School ICSEA value	958
Average ICSEA value	1000
School ICSEA percentile	27

### Distribution of Socio-Educational Advantage (SEA)



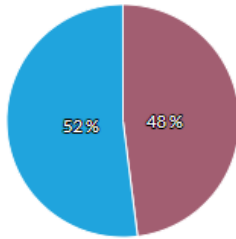
■ School distribution ■ Australian distribution

Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100

## Students

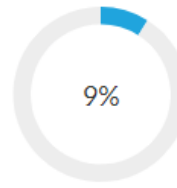
Total enrolments: 472

Boys 246  
Girls 226



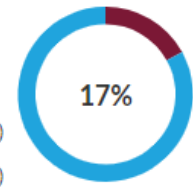
Full-time equivalent enrolments: 472.0

Indigenous students



Language background other than English

Yes (17%)  
No (83%)  
Not stated (0%)



St. Joseph's Murray Bridge is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students. In 2023, we continued to focus on supporting those with additional needs. Approximately 30% of our student population qualifies for a school card, and we are proud of our highly regarded special and adaptive needs program that benefits roughly 15% of our students.

While our Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) score of 958 sits slightly below the national average, it's important to note that 40% of our Socio-Educational Advantage (SEA) falls within the bottom quarter. This data highlights the specific needs of our student population and fuels our drive for continuous improvement.

St. Joseph's core mission remains steadfast: to promote the Catholic faith, instil the Josephite Sisters' charism, and collaborate with families and the wider community. We create opportunities for our students to experience a rich and rewarding education.

We value the dignity of every member of our school community. Our dedicated staff employs a variety of formative, challenging, and engaging learning methods. These methods are specifically designed to be inclusive and cater to each child's unique needs, fostering a just and compassionate environment.

In 2023, we prioritised maintaining and strengthening a learning environment that is significant for students and their families.

Prayer remains an integral facet of daily life at St. Joseph's. We actively strive to ensure that Catholic social teaching is woven into the fabric of our classrooms and permeates the entire school experience.

We look forward to building upon these successes and continuing to serve our students and community in the future.

# 1.1a Student Attendance

The average student attendance rate for our school in 2023 was 84.30%.

This is broken down by year groups as follows:

% ATTENDANCE 2023

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
85.12	86.38	87.86	83.76	87.85	86.13	84.58	87.90	72.33	81.17

Year Level	Term 1 2023	Term 2 2023	Term 3 2023	Term 4 2023
Rec	88.65	84.25	82.65	84.95
Year 1	88.55	86.15	84.30	86.55
Year 2	90.60	87.7	85.05	88.10
Year 3	86.45	82.40	81.75	84.45
Year 4	87.30	87.20	87.60	89.40
Year 5	89.00	85.10	84.55	85.90
Year 6	88.70	82.35	84.60	82.70
Year 7	90.75	90.60	88.00	83.90
Year 8	79.05	68.65	72.75	68.90
Year 9	86.05	84.85	80.70	73.1

The process for Non-Attendance is monitored daily, and phone calls to parents follow up on absences. Student individual absence and punctuality are reported in mid-semester and end-of-year reports. The principal and/or student leadership team address repeated or persistent absences with an identified pattern with parents.

The school has engaged with the local Attendance Officer, CAHMS, and Families SA in the cases of chronic non-attendance.

The school also uses the Department of Education process of completing ED171 and ED175 forms.

# 1.1b Post St Joseph’s School Pathways

At St. Joseph's, the Year 7 cohort chooses many different education settings for their Secondary Schooling. The table below outlines the percentages of students moving to Secondary School settings:

Secondary School Preference	Percentage of Students moving to this setting
St Francis de Sales College, Mt Barker	3%
Murray Bridge High School	84%
Unity College	13%
Other	5%

## 1.1c Staff Profile

At St. Joseph's, 37 teaching staff have an FTE (Full Time Equivalent) of 33.1, while 36 non-teaching staff colleagues have an FTE of 23.3. Two staff identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

## 1.1d Teaching staff qualifications at St Joseph's School

Our school is fortunate to have teachers committed to lifelong learning. The breakdown of the qualifications of the teaching staff are:

	Percentage
Master's Degree	16%
Bachelor of Education Degree	78%
Diploma of Education/Advanced Diploma	5%
Other	1%

## 1.1e Finance

2023 School Income/Expenditure by Funding:

<b>St Joseph's School Murray Bridge AGM</b>		
<b>Financial Summary Report - 2023 (Draft)</b>		
	Actual	
	2023	
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>%</b>
Australian Government Funding	\$6,374,762.00	66
State Government Funding	\$1,916,439.00	20
Other Income	\$1,421,481.00	14
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$9,712,682.00</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>%</b>
Tuition Expenses	-\$ 6,030,761.00	70
Administratiin Expenses	-\$ 2,532,478.00	30
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>-\$ 8,563,239.00</b>	<b>100</b>
Trading Accounts (Nett)	-\$ 3,149.00	
<b>Nett Surplus</b>	<b>\$1,146,294.00</b>	



The financial information presented in this report is based on the School's Revenue and expenditure report for the year ended December 31, 2023. KPMG is our approved auditor.

The school's total income for the year 2023 amounted to \$9,712,682.00. The funding sources are broken down as follows:

**66% Australian Commonwealth Funding:** This funding is provided by the Australian Government to support the operation of public schools.

**20% State Government Funding:** The state government provides this funding to supplement Australian Commonwealth Funding and support specific educational programs or initiatives.

**14% Other Income:** This category includes income from various sources, such as:

- School Fees: Revenue collected from families for school attendance.
- Funded Programs: Grants or funding received from external organisations to support specific educational programs.
- Reimbursement of Salary Costs: This is reimbursement received from external organisations for the salaries of staff involved in specific programs.
- Insurance Claim: Compensation received from an insurance claim.

We understand that some families may experience financial hardship. The school is committed to supporting families through fee remission programs. We are pleased to report a school fee collection rate of 87% for the year 2023. This demonstrates our families' strong commitment to their children's education. We will continue to work with families facing financial challenges to ensure all students have access to a quality education at our school.

## 1.2 Satisfaction Survey 2023

The leadership team of St. Joseph's Murray Bridge elected to work with National School Improvements Partnerships and collect data from the Living Learning Leading Surveys. The Living Learning Leading Surveys were developed in collaboration with Curtin University and are to help schools rate participants' perceptions of the school's performance according to the Living Learning Leading (LLL) Standard.

The LLL Survey suite consists of the following instruments.

1. LLL Parent and Caregivers Survey (to assess the perceptions of parents and caregivers within the school community).
  2. LLL Teaching and Leadership Staff Survey (to assess the perceptions of teachers and leadership (principals, deputy principals, and APRIMs) within the school).
  3. LLL ESO Staff Survey (to assess the perceptions of education support officers within the school).
  4. LLL Student Surveys for:
    - a. Students in years 2, 3 and 4
    - b. Students in years 5 and 6
    - c. Students in years 7, 8 and 9
- LLL Component 1: Catholic Identity
  - LLL Component 2: Curriculum and Co-Constructed Learning Design
  - LLL Component 3: Student Agency, Identity, Learning and Leadership
  - LLL Component 4: Community Engagement

- LLL Component 5: Safety
- LLL Component 6: Infrastructure

See Appendix A for results.

## 1.2a Student Survey

- 139 participants of Years 2, 3 & 4 students responded.
- 78 participants of Years 5 & 6 students responded.
- 50 participants of Years 7,8 & 9 students responded.

## 1.2b Teacher and Leadership Survey

- 28, 75% of participants of the teachers and leaders responded.

## 1.2c Education Support Officers

- 16, 45% of participants of the Education Support Officers responded.

## 1.2d Parent Survey

- 24, 13% of participants of the parents/carers responded.

## 1.3 School Improvement

In 2023, the school engaged in a self-assessment process that led to the development of a School Improvement Plan based on the domains specified in the Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools (CESA).

In 2023 the School Improvement focused specifically on:

### 1.3a Enhancing Catholic Identity

#### Religious Education Assessment

Year 4 students participated in the online Religious Literacy Assessment Tool (ReLAT) testing in 2023. This assessment provides valuable insights into student learning and helps identify areas where future teaching efforts should be focused. Each year, the specific curriculum strand assessed is selected from the "Crossways" program. The results of the 2023 ReLAT will inform curriculum planning for future years.

#### Parish-School Collaboration

The arrival of our new Deacon, Arturo Jimenea, to assist the parish priest Moderator, Father Philip Marshall, has fostered a stronger relationship between the School and the Parish. This collaboration is evident through the continued involvement of several staff members in various Parish committees, including:

- Parish Council
- Children's Liturgy Committee
- Liturgy Team
- Parish Maintenance



## 2023 RELIGIOUS LITERACY ASSESSMENT - YEAR 4

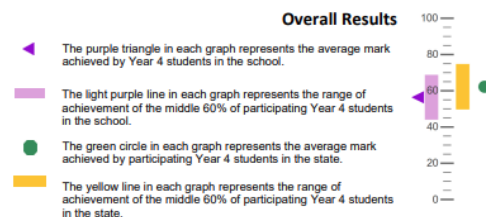
### St Joseph's School MURRAY BRIDGE

### School Summary

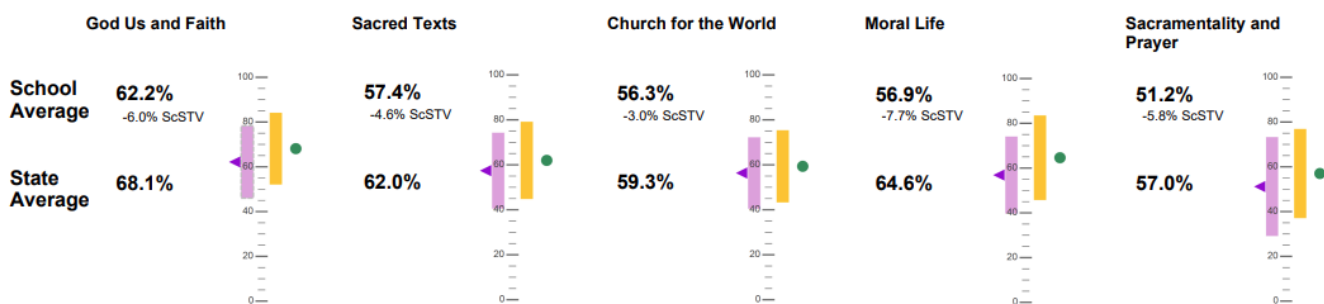
The average total for all Year 4's in this school is **19.7 out of 35** or **56.4%**

The average total for all Year 4's in South Australia is **21.8 out of 35** or **62.2%**

This school's average is -5.8% below the state average



## KNOWLEDGE STRANDS



**ScSTV** the difference between the school and the state average is the **School State Variance**

Other ways we continue to work towards enhancing our Catholic Culture include:

- Celebrate special feast days
- Welcome to School Mass
- Raise money for Catholic Charities and Kickstart Breakfast Program
- Continue to celebrate class liturgies and prayer
- Staff Prayer
- Made in the Image of God (MITIOG)
- Preparation for Easter – plays, presentations
- Mary MacKillop Day
- PRIMA—Professional association for APRIMs. To implement the RE curriculum program changes, Online Crossways reviewed MITIOG and subsequently coordinated training in MITIOG.

## 1.3b Focused Vision and Goals

The school leadership team underwent a period of transition in 2023. Mrs. Ros Oates, the principal, released Mrs. Sonja Smith to pursue an Acting Principal role at St. Mary's Memorial School, Glenelg. Mr. Jamie Mulcahy was appointed as the Acting Deputy Principal to ensure continuity in leadership.

Furthermore, the school strengthened its student well-being support by securing two experienced professionals, Mr. Oscar Dearman and Mrs. Monica Doherty, who joined the team as Leaders of Well-being in the Middle School. These appointments demonstrate the school's commitment to providing a nurturing and supportive environment for all students.

### **Building works included:**

The start of 2023 presented an unexpected hurdle. On New Year's Day, a burst water pipe caused significant flooding in the newly renovated library and food innovation centre, disrupting planned schooling operations. The incident also placed a strain on school resources, with delays arising from insurance claims and sourcing qualified tradespeople to rectify the damage. The most significant impact was felt in the displacement of library staff and resources. Additionally, three vital teaching areas remained unusable at the beginning of Term 1. Despite these challenges, the school staff demonstrated remarkable hard work and patience, ensuring a smooth start to the academic year.

In an effort to enhance teacher recruitment and retention in Murray Bridge, we approved the renovation of 45 McHenry Street, which had a total project budget of approximately \$55,000.

The scope of work included:

- Electrical Upgrades
- Interior Painting
- Bathroom Renovation
- Kitchen Renovation
- Landscaping

Several minor WH&S improvements and repairs have been carried out, including shades over the seating on the newly established Middle Years lawn space.

## 1.3c Effective Use of Data

A key focus for the school leadership team in 2023 was fostering a more cohesive learning environment. This involved several strategic initiatives informed by data analysis. NAPLAN, Phonics Screening Check, and PAT-M data indicate a significant need for improvement. The principal sourced knowledgeable others to lead and be committed to consistency across the school and teaching the Australian Curriculum.

# School Performance Report

Selected School

St Joseph's School - Murray Bridge

Year 2023

Latest Year

Year Level	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
3	362 ↓	376	362 ↓	356 ↓	358 ↓
5	450 ↓	445	450 ↓	452	457
7	492 ↓	470 ↓	487 ↓	458 ↓	492 ↓
9	534	518	561	528	523

Selected School

St Joseph's School - Murray Bridge

Year 2022

2022

Year Level	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
3	390	371	371	377	371
5	468	443	458	447	454
7	526	485	520	498	509

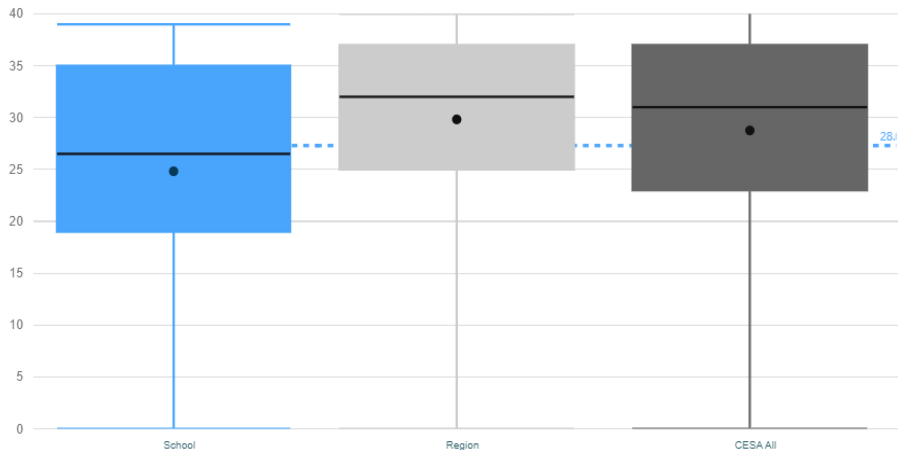
## Phonics Screening Check

86.7% of eligible Schools in the East Region have submitted results for the Phonics Screening Check.  
 95.4% of all eligible CESA Schools have submitted results for the Phonics Screening Check.

Year

2023

	School	Region	CESA
Average Score (out of 40)	24.8 ↓	29.8 ↑	28.8 ↑
% of students above the expected achievement score of 28 correct response out of 40	44.4% ↓	64.1% ↑	62.4% ↑



## **Shared Vision and Growth**

Collaborative efforts were undertaken to identify staff members with the potential to develop a shared understanding of the school's purpose. This involved data analysis and discussions with teachers to identify individuals with strong leadership qualities and a commitment to school improvement.

To further support teacher growth, roles and mentors were strategically assigned. This professional learning team was based on data-driven insights into specific areas where the school could benefit from focused improvement efforts. Roles within the team included the Leader of Learning, SEQTA (learning management system) support, MiniLit intervention specialists, Wellbeing champions, and SAPSASA (South Australian Primary Schools Amateur Sports Association) P.E. coordinators.

## **Focus on Numeracy and Literacy**

Recognising the importance of strong numeracy and literacy skills, the leadership team prioritised areas through targeted professional development opportunities. Data analysis revealed a need for stronger alignment between the pedagogical models and concepts used in the Primary and Middle Years programs. The professional learning team members who were explicitly involved in Literacy and Numeracy developed St Joseph's School Literacy, Numeracy, Assessment, and Reporting Agreements.

## **1.3d Strong Home School Community Engagement**

In line with Catholic Education South Australia's (CESA) system-wide funding review, the school continued its commitment to affordability in 2023 by maintaining a reduced school fee structure. This initiative aligns with CESA's vision of being an excellent school system that prioritises excellence in learning, student well-being, and affordability.

In 2023, the school community proudly celebrated its students' accomplishments with dedicated celebrations and graduation ceremonies. We were proud to recognise the achievements of 34 students who graduated from the Children's University program. This initiative aimed to cultivate inquisitive young minds with a lifelong love of learning. Through participation in the program, these graduates accumulated an impressive total of 1,920.5 hours of additional learning experiences outside the traditional classroom setting.

Marking the end of their primary school journey, Year 6 students participated in a special community End-of-Year Mass followed by a celebratory day. This event provided an opportunity to acknowledge their achievements and foster a sense of closure as they transitioned to St Joseph's Middle School or secondary schooling elsewhere.

The school's first graduating class of Year 9 students enjoyed a special Mass and presentation evening held in the parish hall. This inaugural ceremony marked a significant milestone for both the students and the school, highlighting the successful completion of their lower secondary education.

## Building a Supportive Community

The school community celebrated achievements and milestones whenever possible, fostering a positive and encouraging atmosphere. To highlight our achievements, we produced our second annual school magazine.

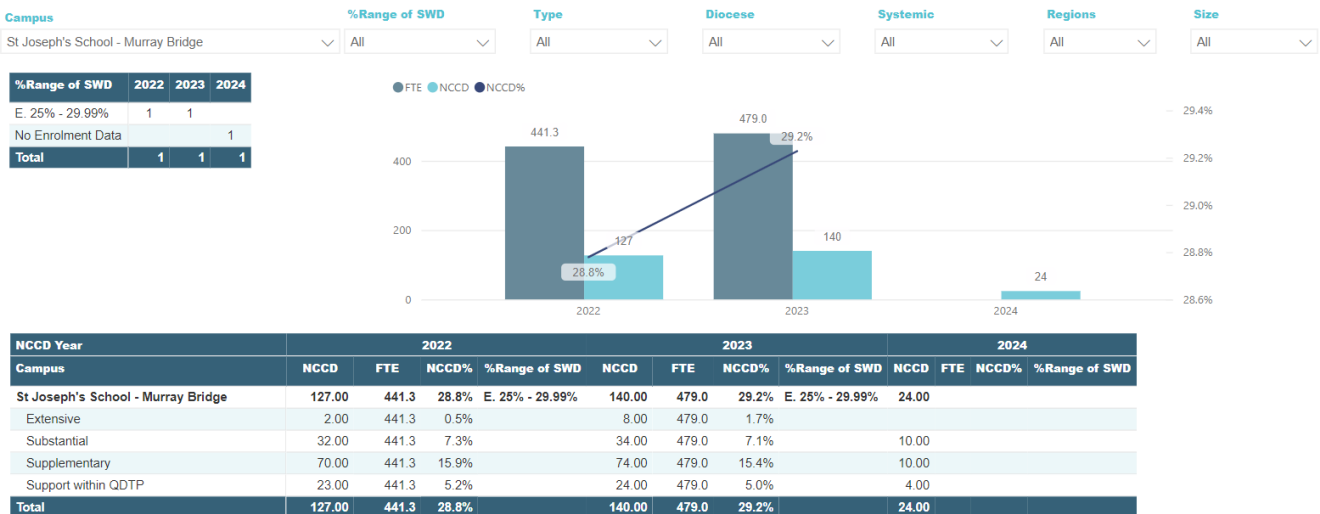
### 1.3e High-Quality Teaching and Learning

#### Strengthening Educational Outcomes: Collaboration and Data-Driven Approach

This year, the School Quality Performance Team (SQPT) partnered closely with the CESA consultation team, which included Literacy and Numeracy coaches, a School Performance Leader, and a Learning, Diversity, and Equity advisor. This bi-weekly collaboration utilised a case management approach to analyse student learning data, including NAPLAN and PAT scores and internal assessments.

We progressed in implementing the Students with Disabilities Strategy, which was approved by the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) in late 2022. A comprehensive three-year Action Plan (2023-2025) was established, outlining specific tasks with clear lines of responsibility, accountability timelines, and allocated budgets.

#### NCCD – 29% of the school population is recorded on the NCCD Data.



#### Student Needs and Support

At St. Joseph's School, we recognise the importance of catering to our students' diverse learning needs. Approximately 30% of students across all grade levels receive adjustments documented in the National Consistent Collection of Data on Students with Disability (NCCD).

A significant portion of our students requiring adjustments fall under the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis. Specifically, 22% (31 out of 140 students) are identified as on the Autism Spectrum. It is important to note that half of this group (approximately 11%) necessitates Substantial or Extensive adjustments within their learning environment.

In 2023, we gained a comprehensive understanding of each student's unique learning context, including those with diagnosed needs, which is paramount to the successful implementation of the IMPACT program. By tailoring our instructional approach to individual student profiles, we created a truly inclusive and supportive learning environment that empowered all students to achieve their potential.

Recognising the need for cultural change within the school community, the SQPT focused on promoting effective pedagogical approaches and fostering a shared responsibility for student success among all staff members. CESA's commitment to this initiative is reflected in their decision to dedicate the consultation team members to the school for up to a full day each week throughout most of 2023.

The school remained committed to Restorative Practices, a teaching and learning approach that promotes respectful behaviour and encourages students to take responsibility for their actions. This approach empowers students to repair any harm caused to others, fostering a positive and supportive learning environment. The Life Buoyancy Institute (LBI) provided IMPACT refresher training for all staff, focusing on new personnel. This comprehensive program focussed on the core principles and practices of metacognition, equipping students with essential skills for critical thinking, self-awareness, and effective communication.

## **1.4 Principal Report 2023**

As we conclude the 2023 school year at St. Joseph's, I am reminded of Dr. Seuss's profound message in "Oh, the Places You'll Go!" This timeless story reflects on life's journeys, both joyful and challenging while encouraging us to find success within ourselves. This message resonates with all of us, particularly graduating families and those navigating changes within the school year.

St. Joseph's School fosters an environment that ignites curiosity, encourages exploration, and celebrates the transformative power of education. We strive to keep a childlike spirit alive, embracing laughter and creativity as we guide students' educational, social, and emotional journeys. As captured in Dr. Seuss's vibrant illustrations, we embrace unpredictability and encourage students to be open-minded and courageous learners.

Throughout this year, we have witnessed tremendous growth and resilience in our students. Each student expresses hope and a thirst for knowledge. Our dedicated staff creates a nurturing environment where individuals can feel supported, celebrate their achievements, and extend kindness to their peers. We are especially proud of our inaugural Year 9 graduating class, who leave us as confident young leaders prepared for the next chapter of their educational journeys.

As we conclude the school year, we bid farewell to many staff, families, and the graduating class. We do so with optimism and a renewed sense of purpose. We remain committed to providing a vibrant learning environment that equips students with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to thrive in a changing world. Thank you to the parent/carer community and especially the members of our School Board for collaborating with us to support students' educational journeys and for your dedication and collaboration, which are instrumental in fostering a truly special learning environment.





**ST JOSEPH'S**  
SCHOOL

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