

2025

Annual Report to the School Community



St Monica's School

91 High Street, KANGAROO FLAT 3555

Principal: Matthew Knight

Web: www.smkangarooflat.catholic.edu.au

Registration: 204, E Number: E3004

Principal's Attestation

I, Matthew Knight, attest that St Monica's School 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 2025 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 31 Mar 2026

About this report

St Monica's School 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 Catholic Education Week theme for 2025, “Pilgrims of Hope” aligned Catholic Education Sandhurst with the Catholic Church’s international Jubilee Year, inviting our education community to take up Pope Francis’s call to “fan the flame of hope that has been given us”. As St Paul reminded us in his letter to the Romans “hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Romans 5:5).

Magnify Sandhurst

The rollout of Magnify Sandhurst across our 51 schools has been the most significant educational initiative in our system’s history. With the support of our partners—Steplab, Knowledge Society, MultiLit, and Ochre Education—Magnify has begun to transform classroom practice, curriculum delivery, and professional learning. The introduction of low-variance curriculum models, instructional coaching, and MTSS frameworks has provided a consistent and evidence-informed foundation for teaching and learning.

Early indicators from NAPLAN and PAT assessments suggest promising trends in student growth. The Magnify model’s emphasis on clarity, structure, and responsiveness has been well received by educators, and the gradual release of responsibility for both students and teachers is fostering a culture of deep learning and professional agency.

Academic Progress and Achievement

While full impact data will take time to mature, 2025 has seen encouraging signs of improvement in student outcomes. Schools implementing Magnify with fidelity are showing gains in foundational literacy and numeracy. VCE results across Sandhurst secondary schools continue to vary, but the system-wide focus on instructional quality and curriculum alignment is expected to stabilise and lift performance over time.

System Solidarity and Subsidiarity

The balance of solidarity and subsidiarity remains central to our system’s identity. In 2025, CESL continued to provide centralised support while respecting the unique character and needs of each learning centre. This approach has enabled shared growth and innovation, while empowering local leadership to respond to their communities with agility and insight.

Know Better, Do Better

As we deepen our commitment to continuous improvement, we have embraced the principle of “Know Better, Do Better.” This has meant courageously de-implementing programs that no longer serve our evolving goals, and supporting staff through transitions with empathy and

clarity. The humility to reflect, learn, and grow has been a hallmark of our leadership this year.

I remain deeply grateful to our school staff, CESL Office personnel, and the members of the CESL and Board for their unwavering commitment to our shared mission. The leadership and dedication demonstrated across our schools have made an outstanding impact in bringing Magnify to life throughout 2025, and the collective efforts of our entire education community continue to ensure that our young people and their families are empowered to have “life to the full” (John 10:10).

Kate Fogarty

Executive Director, Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited

Vision and Mission

Identity Statement

St Monica's is a Catholic school embracing faith and learning together, as a community, reflecting Christ.

Our School Vision

Celebrates Learning and Faith Together in the Light of Christ

- We believe in a Catholic community that fully develops the whole child and celebrates their faith journey with Jesus.
- We believe that the community, families, teachers and students are partners in the learning process challenging each other to grow and be the best we can be.
- We acknowledge our founders who started our school and chose St Monica as our patroness enabling us to provide a Catholic education whose faith, compassion and love we seek to reflect.
- We are committed to promoting a curriculum that is diverse, relevant and meaningful to an ever-changing society.
- We are a welcoming school community that promotes self-worth and recognises the dignity and uniqueness of each individual.
- We are stewards of our environment who respect, care for and maintain the resources that God has provided us.

School Overview

St Monica's is situated in Kangaroo Flat, which is a suburb of the Victorian Regional town of Bendigo. The school celebrated its 150th year in Catholic Education in 2010. The first school, a building made of vertical slab walls and a bark roof was built for Dr Henry Backhaus in 1860.

The Mercy Sisters were requested to take over the running of the school in 1920 by Bishop McCarthy. The Mercy sisters continued with their dedicated service to the community of Saint Monica's until the end of 2002, when the first lay Principal was appointed.

The school is situated in High St. Kangaroo Flat, which is on the main highway going through Bendigo. The students who attend the school mainly come from Kangaroo Flat, Golden Square, Maiden Gully and outlying areas such as Lockwood.

The school's enrolment at the February Census was 304. There were 14 classes divided into 4 Units across the school- Prep, Junior, Middle and Senior. The school has an active School Advisory Council and Parent's and Friends Association.

School functions are well attended and there is a strong community spirit in the school. Before School Care is offered every morning, staffed by school staff. After School Care is offered every night at the school and is run by the YMCA.

Graduate Outcomes

At St Monica's Kangaroo Flat, we endeavour to educate students who:

- follow Christ in their care and respect for life, self, others and the environment
- are able to develop and sustain relationships with a sense of justice and empathy for others
- have the academic confidence to develop the skills and strategies to succeed in an ever-changing society
- follow their ideals with confidence and resilience

Principal's Report

In 2025, the school continued its strong commitment to developing teacher practice through professional learning that was purposeful, targeted and aligned with whole-school improvement priorities. Professional learning at St Monica's was guided by Magnify Sandhurst, providing a shared framework for intentional growth, coherence and continuous improvement across learning, wellbeing and Catholic identity.

Staff were supported with a low variable curriculum that aligned with Magnify Sandhurst priorities and were carefully cross-referenced with whole-school goals, strategic directions and student learning needs. A strong emphasis was placed on building consistent, high-impact classroom practice through Knowledge Society routines, StepLab instructional coaching and classroom drop-ins, strengthening teacher confidence and collective efficacy.

Deepening our Catholic Identity remained central to our work in 2025. Staff engaged in professional learning that supported faith formation and the implementation of Source of Life, ensuring Religious Education remained contemporary, reflective and firmly grounded in Catholic tradition and values.

Schools thrive through shared responsibility, collaboration and partnership. The commitment of staff, leaders, clergy and the wider school community to ongoing learning ensures that all we do at St Monica's continues to benefit the children in our care, supporting their growth academically, socially and spiritually.

Thanks to following individuals and groups who have supported the ongoing opportunities for learning for all in our community:

- Fr Brian and Fr Jackson for their wisdom and presence at masses and school events.
- The leadership team for their tireless work in supporting the school.
- Our staff for their commitment to the children and families in our care.
- The School Advisory Council, Parents and Friends for their ongoing work of building the school community through community events. Schools cannot function without sharing the workload and I hope that all those who contributed to St Monica's in 2025 have also shared the joy that comes from participation knowing that all that we do benefits the children in our care.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Support staff reflection and collective efficacy in delivering high-quality Religious Education through shared learning and dialogue.
- To consistently live our Catholic Identity through our daily actions and words.
- Provide a range of opportunities for students to connect with God/faith
- Strengthen our families' faith through involvement in school and parish community
- Deepen our understanding of St Monica's as a Catholic school in Kangaroo Flat in relation to the centrality of the Eucharist in our lives.
- Continue to develop an understanding of re contextualising our faith story in the modern world.
- Enhance theological understanding and professional growth of staff through targeted Religious Education formation and professional learning.

Achievements

In 2025, St Monica's continued to strengthen staff capacity and confidence in the teaching of Religious Education, ensuring learning experiences were faith-centred, purposeful and aligned with system priorities. Professional learning focused on developing theological understanding, consistent planning practices and high-quality classroom pedagogy in Religious Education.

The school continued to implement a clear and structured Sacramental pathway, supporting students in the preparation and celebration of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.

Teachers were further supported through participation in system-wide spirituality days, providing opportunities for prayer, reflection and renewal aligned with Catholic Education Sandhurst priorities. Staff also accessed Blessed, Broken and Shared professional learning sessions, which supported theological understanding, personal faith formation and contemporary Religious Education practice. These opportunities strengthened consistency, confidence and shared understanding in Religious Education across the school, while supporting staff to engage meaningfully in faith-based professional learning.

Value Added

- Caritas involvement- Project compassion, Shrove Tuesday (Pancake) Morning,
- School and parish masses, prayer and delivery of Source of Life.

- Sacraments celebrated were Eucharist, Reconciliation and Confirmation for school students and parish members
- Mini Vinnies as a student outreach program
- Continuation of the Mercy in Action - family support
- Students attended mass in their classes each Friday on a schedule so that students were present at parish masses.
- The introduction of "Founders Week," celebrating our School House patrons and culminating in the celebration of St Monica's Feast Day.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Embed instructional coaching practices, including StepLab coaching and classroom drop-ins, to improve consistency and quality of teaching practice.
- Align assessment practices with the Magnify Sandhurst Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Framework.
- Strengthen instructional consistency through Knowledge Society routines, StepLab and low variable curriculum and evidence-based pedagogical practices.
- Ensure curriculum planning is vertically aligned, inclusive and accessible for all learners.
- Support students with additional learning needs through consistent referral processes and targeted support.
- Ensure consistent use of agreed school-wide approaches to planning, teaching and assessment.

Achievements

In 2025, Learning and Teaching at St Monica's focused on strengthening instructional consistency and coherence, guided by the Annual Action Plan and Magnify Sandhurst. Priorities included professional growth, data-informed practice and the delivery of a guaranteed and viable curriculum.

A strong coaching culture was embedded through StepLab instructional coaching and classroom drop-ins, supporting reflective practice and consistent use of high-impact strategies. Implementation of MultiLit (InitialLit) for Foundation to Grade 2 students, aligned to Magnify Sandhurst assessment frameworks, strengthened instructional clarity.

Knowledge Society routines further supported predictable learning environments, student engagement and consistency of teaching practice across the school.

- Speech work, under the guidance of our Speech Pathologist, has been extended to include multiple articulation and language groups.
- Implementation of invention programs, MiniLit Sage and MacqLit to support students development in Literacy.
- St Monica's utilized the Sandhurst assessment schedule, ensuring immediate access to all relevant data using online data trackers and timely response to student learning needs.

Throughout 2025, staff focused on the implementation of Magnify Sandhurst, consolidation of key learning initiatives, strengthening practice and aligning classroom approaches with strategic school and diocesan priorities. Key initiatives embedded across the school included:

- InitialLit: Early Years teachers embedded InitialLit practices to strengthen foundational literacy instruction through consistent, evidence-based classroom routines.
- Ochre Education: Teachers implemented Ochre resources to support the delivery of a consistent, knowledge-rich curriculum across learning areas.
- Knowledge Society: School-wide routines and approaches were embedded to support structured literacy practices, build content knowledge and promote consistency in teaching and learning.
- StepLab: Instructional coaching and classroom drop-ins were implemented to support reflective practice, feedback cycles and continual improvement in teaching practice.
- Source of Life (Revised Curriculum): Teachers implemented the updated Religious Education curriculum, strengthening consistency in planning and delivery while deepening understanding of Catholic identity and contemporary theology.

Student Learning Outcomes

Assessment data was completed per the CESL assessment schedule in 2025. The data collected was analysed by school leaders and teachers to evaluate students' progress and to inform future teaching and school priorities. Student progress is closely monitored throughout the year through the use of data charts and data trackers across the school.

In Year Three, strong results were evident across all assessed domains. A high proportion of students met the NAPLAN Proficient standard in Writing (84%), Reading (74%), Spelling (67%), Grammar and Punctuation (63%) and Numeracy (62%), with results across all areas exceeding the two-year average. These results indicate consistent achievement and growth for students at this year level.

The Year Five data shows generally solid performance, particularly in Numeracy (67%), Reading (71%) and Spelling (69%), with results broadly in line with or above the two-year average. Grammar and Punctuation (47%) and Writing (67%) were below the two-year average and will remain focus areas in 2026 to support improved student outcomes in these domains.

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards					
	2025 (current year)			2-Year Average	
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient	Mean Scale score	Proficient
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 3	420	63%	400	51%
	Year 5	475	47%	474	57%
Numeracy	Year 3	393	62%	388	56%
	Year 5	481	67%	474	65%
Reading	Year 3	423	74%	409	72%
	Year 5	478	71%	471	67%
Spelling	Year 3	422	67%	407	61%
	Year 5	474	69%	471	68%
Writing	Year 3	413	84%	405	80%
	Year 5	476	67%	482	70%

*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2025 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.

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Strengthen a Safe, Inclusive and Positive Learning Environment
- Promote student wellbeing through consistent, predictable and supportive learning environments.
- Strengthen student engagement, belonging and positive behaviour across the school.
- Ensure students with additional learning or wellbeing needs are supported through consistent and evidence-based processes.
- Embed Child Safeguarding practices and policies.

Achievements

Wellbeing actions that have been enacted in achieving goals in 2025:

- Safety Plans have continued to be updated, folders and hardcopies in all rooms. The team has worked with staff to develop new Safety Plans.
- Peaceful Kids started with Wellbeing Officer and schedule for at risk kids identified by SWB team.
- Family Support Officer- running social skills groups and friendship groups, commenced in Term 2.
- Implementation of RRRR – Is completed across the whole school; once a week in all classrooms.
- Maintaining Child Safeguarding Standards and regulations to ensure compliance.
- All Staff provided with a Child Safe Wellbeing resource that included all relevant policies and documentation.
- Student behaviour data continued to be tracked electronically and is accessible to all teaching staff via SIMON. This allows our school wide SWPBS focuses to be proactive and specific.
- Knowledge Society school-wide routines were embedded, supporting calm, structured classrooms and predictable expectations for students.
- Consistent classroom practices strengthened student wellbeing, engagement and readiness to learn.
- A shared language and approach to behaviour supported a positive school culture.
- Continuous PD regarding Behaviour Management Policies and staff expectations.

Value Added

- SWPBS whole school rewards continue to be effective in ensuring positive behaviour.

- Child safe standards shared with all staff.
- Staff and children have knowledge of the procedures to be followed in matters relating to safety and wellbeing.
- Students at Risk have been identified, their needs recognised and with the support of school staff and the services of the Catholic Education Office, St. Monica's has put into place specific intervention based on those needs. Individual student safety plans are continuously developed and reviewed.
- The Wellbeing Officer has liaised with other wellbeing workers across the Diocese. The Wellbeing Officer has made regular contact with families in their own setting as required. This is in line with the schools salutogenic approach to wellbeing.
- Communication has been a priority through the publication of a comprehensive newsletter, text messages, the school website, and the use of the school app.
- Referral and support processes were refined to ensure timely identification and targeted intervention.
- Students requiring additional support accessed appropriate resources and adjustments through Personal Learning Plans (PLPs).
- Collaboration between teachers and leadership supported inclusive practice and student wellbeing.

Student Satisfaction

Data from Orima Student Surveys suggest that overall student satisfaction in 2025 showed stable to modestly improving perceptions, with overall positive endorsement increasing compared to 2024. The data indicates that students generally feel supported by their teachers, experience a sense of belonging, and recognise clear expectations for learning, with consistently stronger results in Rigorous Expectations, Teacher–Student Relationships, Learning Disposition, and School Belonging. These domains suggest a solid relational and instructional foundation across the school community.

Encouragingly, perceptions of Catholic Identity improved from 2024 to 2025, reflecting increased student recognition of faith-based practices and school identity. Overall, the data highlights strengths in relationships, belonging and learning culture, alongside clear priorities for continued focus on engagement, wellbeing and student voice to further enhance student satisfaction.

Student Attendance

Attendance at St. Monica's involves the classroom teachers marking attendance twice a day. The school administration officer follows up any unexplained absence with parents in the first instance. The Administration Officers monitor all attendance data that is entered into the Simon administration package.

Student non-attendance was addressed through the promotion of the “Every Day Matters” program. Attendance data was regularly shared with the school community through the newsletter, including both grade-level and whole-school attendance figures, along with promotional materials highlighting the importance of regular school attendance.

Student attendance was closely monitored, and parents were contacted when concerns arose, initially by the Administration Officer. Ongoing attendance concerns were then followed up by the classroom teacher, Family Liaison Officer, and Wellbeing Leader, who worked collaboratively with families to provide support. Where necessary, individual attendance plans were developed and implemented.

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level	
Y01	92.08
Y02	93.07
Y03	92.86
Y04	92.54
Y05	86.87
Y06	90.05
Overall average attendance	91.25

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Strengthen Professional Growth and a Coaching Culture
- Lead Data-Informed Decision Making
- Promote a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum
- Strengthen Catholic Identity and Faith Leadership

Achievements

Throughout 2025, leadership at St Monica's focused on building coherence, strengthening professional practice and sustaining improvement through clear direction and shared accountability. With the appointment of a new Principal, Deputy Principal and Leadership Team, a strong emphasis was placed on establishing shared vision, role clarity and collaborative leadership aligned to the Annual Action Plan. Leadership actions ensured that teaching, learning, student wellbeing and Catholic identity remained central to school improvement, supporting a smooth transition and continued focus on high-quality outcomes for students.

- School leaders implemented and supported StepLab instructional coaching and classroom drop-ins, strengthening feedback, reflection and consistency in teaching practice.
- Increased clarity and coherence in teaching and learning expectations were evident across the school (consistent and aligned practices with Magnify Sandhurst)
- Data discussions and monitoring practices supported informed decision-making and targeted intervention.
- Improved consistency in assessment and reporting strengthened instructional oversight and accountability.
- Referral and support processes for students with additional needs were refined.
- Leadership enabled staff participation in system-wide spirituality days and Blessed, Broken and Shared professional learning.
- Creation and implementation of new Master Plan

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2025	
In 2025 staff across the school participated in a range of professional learning opportunities provided by CES and other providers, as well as sharing their in-house expertise through staff meetings and planning sessions. Some training was to meet compliance expectations and professional learning was provided to build teacher skill and knowledge and administration staff skills and knowledge including: • Primary Budget workshops AFS & FBT workshops • Emergency Management Child Safe Training • CPR & Anaphylaxis Training • NCCD training • Various other RE, Learning & Teaching and Wellbeing PL opportunities occurred and are outlined in those sections of this report Staff Training aligned with Magnify Sandhurst training of new initiatives including: InitiaLit, MacqLit and MiniLit Sage, Knowledge Society, StepLab, Science of Learning, OCHRE, Source of Life PD.	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2025	40
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$281.00

Teacher Satisfaction

In 2025, St Monica's experienced significant positive change in staff perceptions, particularly in leadership, professional culture and workplace climate. These improvements coincided with the appointment of a new Principal, Deputy Principal and Leadership Team, providing clearer direction and strengthened trust across the school.

The greatest area of growth was in staff-leadership relationships. Trust between leaders and staff increased markedly to 96% in 2025, while confidence that leaders work in the best interest of the school rose to 100%. Staff reporting that leaders care about them as individuals also improved significantly to 92%, indicating a substantial strengthening of relational trust and confidence in leadership.

Perceptions of school climate and psychological safety also improved strongly. Positive views of the working environment increased to 80%, and comfort in speaking up rose to 68%, reflecting a more open, supportive and collaborative professional culture.

Overall, the 2024 to 2025 comparison shows a transformational shift in staff confidence, trust and coherence, establishing a strong foundation for sustained improvement, staff wellbeing and effective teaching and learning.

Teacher Qualifications	
Doctorate	0
Masters	3
Graduate	5
Graduate Certificate	4
Bachelor Degree	17
Advanced Diploma	4
No Qualifications Listed	7

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	1
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	30
Teaching Staff (FTE)	24.06
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	21
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	12.94
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- Strengthen community identity through shared experiences and celebration.
- Strengthen Community Connection and Belonging
- Engage families and the wider community in the faith life of the school.
- Encourage shared responsibility for school improvement through consultation and collaboration with families and the wider community.

Achievements

In 2025 we continued to resource a Wellbeing Office, however staff retention throughout the year did impact the consistency of this role. Our Wellbeing Officer engaged and supported our community by running the following initiatives:

- Implemented our Breakfast Club.
- Supported families through Mercy in Action.
- Supported staff, students and families around the implementation of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) program.
- St Monica's Learning Diversity Leader liaised with external welfare providers and coordinated school based referrals.
- St Monica's offered out of hours parent information sessions.
- St Monica's contributed on a regular basis to the community newsletter "Flat Matters".
- Families were actively engaged in school life through community events, celebrations and learning opportunities.
- Community events and liturgical celebrations provided opportunities for families to engage with the life and mission of the school.
- The Parents and Friends Association and School Advisory Council continued to play an active role in supporting community building initiatives.
- The School Advisory Council provided ongoing support and guidance, contributing to strategic planning and school improvement (e.g. Master Plan).

Parent Satisfaction

Feedback from families' ORIMA Surveys in 2025 highlights the strong, positive relationships that underpin life at St Monica's. Families reported feeling welcome and supported, with 85% indicating that staff are approachable and 85% feeling welcome when entering the school.

Confidence in teaching and care was also strong, with 73% of families reporting that teachers meet their child's learning needs.

Communication and trust between home and school continued to be a strength. 69% of families said they would recommend St Monica's to other families, and many felt comfortable reaching out to the school for support (62%) and sharing information with staff (77%). These results reflect a growing sense of partnership between families and the school.

Families also affirmed the school's Catholic identity, with 77% agreeing that the Catholic mission is clearly emphasised and 85% recognising strong respect for Catholic beliefs. Feedback also identified opportunities to further strengthen family understanding of school goals and increase involvement in learning conversations, which will guide future improvement.

Overall, family feedback reflects a welcoming, caring and community-focused school, where strong relationships support student learning, wellbeing and faith formation.

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.smkangarooflat.catholic.edu.au