



Sacred Heart College

GEELONG

SACRED HEART COLLEGE GEELONG

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY



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## **Sacred Heart College Geelong**

Retreat Road, NEWTOWN 3220

Principal: Anna Negro

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Registration: 219, E Number: E1027

# Principal's Attestation

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

- The minimum standards and other requirements for school registration and school boarding premises (if applicable) as specified in the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic).
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 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 11 May 2026**



# About This Report

Sacred Heart College is registered by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). The Annual Report to the School Community (ARSC), provides parents and the wider community with information about the school's activities and achievements throughout the year including information about various aspects of school performance.

The Report is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the school community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can also be obtained from the [My School website](#).



# Governing Authority Report

The 2025 Annual Report to the School Community provides an excellent commentary on the endeavours of the talented staff, parents, caregivers, and students at Sacred Heart College Geelong who have worked generously with dedication and excellence to achieve success in this past year.

We hope that as you read this report, you too will share my delight and that of the Mercy Education Board of Directors and the staff at the Mercy Education National Office at the many triumphs of 2025. From academic and sporting achievements to the spiritual, social and emotional care, all who are associated with Sacred Heart College Geelong can be proud of the tangible evidence of success across all areas of school life.

2025 was a significant year in the life of the Universal Catholic Church. It was a Jubilee Year, held every 25 years. The theme for this year is Pilgrims of Hope. A report of this nature captures the inherent hope in the community that is Sacred Heart College Geelong. This report is explicit in describing the inherent hope in this school community and its aspiration to engender hope to the world. This aspiration is what is precious to all of us who are connected with this community and Mercy education.

As a Catholic school, informed by the legacy of Catherine McAuley and the Sisters of Mercy, Sacred Heart College Geelong educates generations of students and empowers them to enter the world as Mercy people with a mission to look beyond themselves and drive change. Guided by our values of Compassion, Justice, Respect, Hospitality, Service, and Courage all of us are called to be, in the words of Catherine McAuley, 'shining lamps, giving light to all around us.'

The Board of Directors and the staff at the Mercy Education National Office recognise the incredible commitment of the principal, Anna Negro, the College Advisory Council, Leadership Team and all staff in fostering a strong community where everyone thrives. From leaders, to staff, students and families: your contributions have added to the College's and Mercy Education's rich history and will be joyfully shared in years to come.

We look forward to the journey ahead as we work together to ensure Catherine's shining lamp continues to light our ways in service to others.

Karen Jongebloed  
*Acting Chair, Board Director*  
**Mercy Education Limited**

Andy Kuppe  
*Chief Executive Officer (Interim)*  
**Mercy Education Limited**

# Vision and Mission

## Strategic Plan 2021 and Beyond

### Our Vision

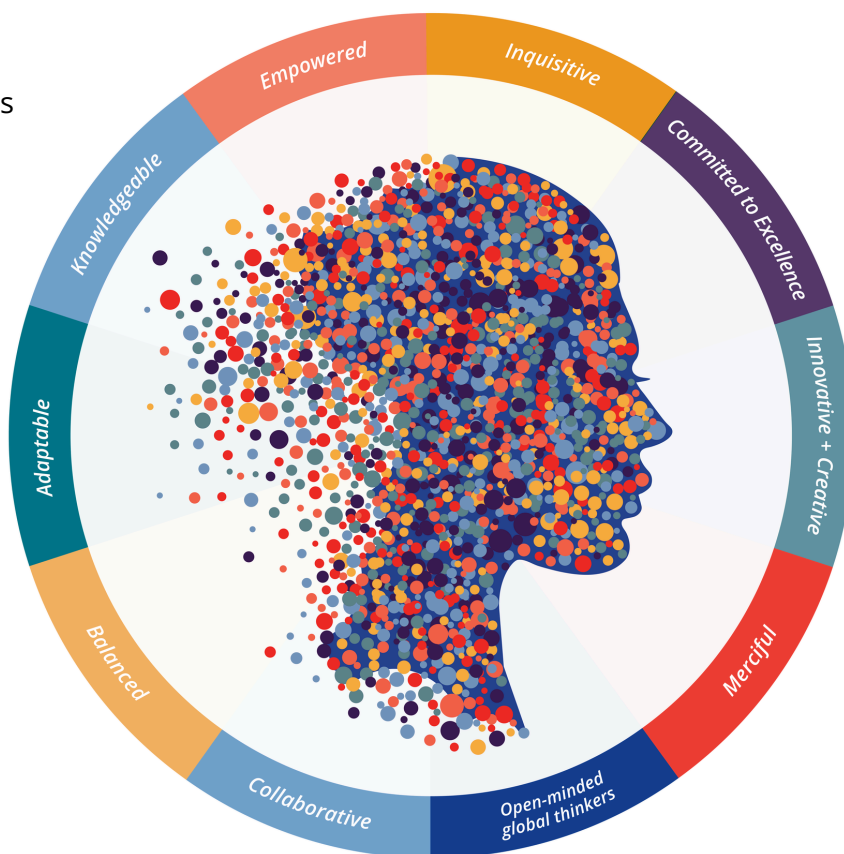
The Sacred Heart Way is about educating girls in the Mercy tradition to make a difference in our changing world.

### Mercy Education Values

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

### Hallmarks of the Sacred Heart College Experience

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



## Vision Cornerstones

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

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

**Spirituality:** In the Mercy tradition, continue a meaningful, contemporary connection with faith in Jesus, in our community and strengthen the understanding of God's presence and love in daily life.

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

## Our Strategic Priorities

1. **Living the Sacred Heart Way:** Spirituality is nurtured and Catholic faith is shared and strengthened.
2. **Clever and Creative Learning:** An education innovation hub.
3. **Culture of Wellness:** An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially-connected community which enhances and nurtures a child-safe environment.
4. **Care for our Common Home:** An integrated approach to sustainable living.



## College Overview

Established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1860, Sacred Heart College Geelong is a Catholic secondary College for girls in the Mercy tradition which, together with all the Mercy-sponsored Colleges, pursues the Mercy values of compassion, courage, hospitality, justice, respect and service.

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

The College currently employs 239 staff across teaching and non-teaching roles and is serviced by dozens of contractors, including regular cleaning and canteen staff, as well as various trade and other service providers. The College is supported by generous sub-committees and the College Advisory Council, all experts in the community who provide advice to the College on matters of communications and marketing, finance, planning and facilities, strategy and wellbeing.

*As students progress through Sacred Heart, the College aims for them to graduate as global citizens ready to challenge, engage, lead and make a positive contribution to society that reflects their Catholic identity and the Mercy Ethos.*

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

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

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

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

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

Sacred Heart has a large, diverse, and active alumni base, with many families having educated generations of students at the College.

As a College, Sacred Heart participates in a broad social justice Mercy Outreach Program with a variety of local agencies (particularly those affiliated with the Sisters of Mercy) and the region's Catholic primary schools.

Proud of its excellent grounds and facilities, the College opens its doors to the community and offers them for hire. The wider community can hire the College tennis courts, gymnasiums, playing fields, commercial kitchens, Chapel for alumni weddings, meeting rooms and the Performing Arts Centre.



# Principal's Report

In the Jubilee Year of Pilgrims of Hope, Sacred Heart proudly celebrated its 165th Anniversary. Guided by the student-led theme *'Be the Light that Inspires Hope'*, our daily activities and celebrations fostered a deep sense of purpose and unity across our community. Throughout 2025, we remained steadfast in our commitment to our Strategy 2021 and Beyond, balancing a rich heritage with forward-thinking innovation to ensure our students are prepared for a dynamic future.

We reinforced our commitment to social justice and environmental stewardship through Strategic Pillars One – Living the Sacred Heart Way and Four – Care for our Common Home. In 2025, we added Feed Me Geelong to our outreach schedule. Each week, Year 11 students, accompanied by a member of the Leadership Team, sorted rescued produce and prepared food hampers. Mid-year data from Feed Me Geelong showed the extraordinary impact of our students' work, with 184,141 units of produce diverted from landfill and 40,000 meals prepared for those struggling with the cost of living. Furthermore, the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and Laudato Sí Goals, now in their fourth year, further embedded cultural reconciliation into our College fabric.

We continued to evolve our curriculum through research and hands-on innovation under Strategic Pillar Two – Clever and Creative Learning. Our current timetable was the focus of a collaborative research project with Deakin University. This project will assess how the reorganisation of time affects students' preparation for life beyond school.

The Makerspace and Design Futures Lab continue to evolve across three distinct areas: the Design Futures Lab, STEAM Career Pathways, and Open Lab sessions. A key feature of the Design Futures Lab was the Tiny House Project. In partnership with 11 organisations, our students commenced research into building a Tiny House which, once completed in 2026, will be donated to one of two charities – Global Sisters or Horizon House. Our sustainability partnership with Orotan Australia, which forms part of Open Lab sessions, continued in 2025, with students repurposing garments and leather handbags that would otherwise end up in landfill. The proceeds from the sale of repurposed items bolstered our fundraising efforts to support Mercy Works. Additionally, our Biology students collaborated with St Joseph College Systems Engineering students to design a vertical garden for the new Materials Lab, a project aimed at raising awareness and understanding of future food systems.

Our students were not the only ones to explore creative technologies. To further support our community, we launched an AI chatbot during the Year 7 Family Welcome night to provide families with immediate answers to school-related queries.

The 2025 graduating class consisted of 241 students:

- 217 students received an ATAR score
- 7 completed VCE 'S'
- 14 obtained a VCE VM Certificate

The College Dux received an impressive ATAR of 99.6. Our median ATAR was 71, and the average ATAR was 70.63.

Notably, three Year 10 students who completed a Unit 3/4 subject achieved an average study score of 36.33, and 192 3/4 Units were completed by Year 11 students who achieved an average study score of 33.

22 students achieved a study score of 40 or higher. In addition, four students completed university courses through Deakin Accelerate, and 22 students received Early University Offers from a range of local and interstate Universities. In celebration of the Arts, one Year 12 student's work was selected for Top Designs 2026.

The physical and emotional wellbeing of our students continued to be a top priority. In 2025, we were designated a Respectful Relationship lead school. The focus on wellness was also supported by our physical environment. Our Master Plan Stage 5 – Phase 1: The Sports and Wellness Precinct was completed in December. This new building takes a multi-dimensional approach to wellness, comprising cognitive, emotional, physical, psychological and social wellbeing. Using a proactive approach, this new Centre will expose our students to a variety of activities and spaces that promote physical and mental wellness. Our aim is to support students in developing healthy habits at school that they will carry into their adult lives. The Sports and Wellness precinct disrupts the current siloed approach to health services, which is more heavily weighted to intervention and crisis management and instead creates a proactive network approach. This multi-function space doubles as a gathering space that accommodates up to 2,000 people. Our Master Plan Stage 5 – Phase 2 includes the demolition of Mercy House, the construction of a new Maintenance Facility, landscaping work and is due to be completed by July 2026.

To promote belonging and resilience, Year 7 students attended Camp Manyung in Mount Eliza, while Year 9 students attended The Summit Outdoor Adventure Park, both of which were new venues for the College.

Opportunities for family engagement and community collaboration continued throughout the year. Celebrating student achievement, our community gathered for the Maguire Ceremony, which showcased academic excellence and the performing arts, whilst also launching our 2025 College theme 'Be the Light that Inspires Hope'. In May, we hosted a Nourish and Flow Mother's Day celebration event, followed by a Father's Day Dinner featuring football guest speakers in September. Additionally, our Chapel hosted the 'Singing Joyfully' choral performance and 'Jam for Refugees', where proceeds from this concert supported the Combined Refugee Action Group (CRAG) and our College Refugee Scholarship Fund.

With an eye on our future leadership and stakeholders, workshops were held to address five key risks, including teacher retention and the relevance of all-girls education. While our action plans for teacher retention are complete, we are now developing a Value Proposition Statement and exploring 13 'future scenarios' for the year 2035 – the College's 175th Anniversary.

Anna Negro  
Principal



# Catholic Identity and Mission

## Goals and Intended Outcomes

1. Harness the College's history and traditions to ensure we walk and talk our values.
2. Lead and act for social justice and community outreach.
3. Ensure that the student population reflects diversity in the Geelong region.
4. Respect, engage with and learn about First Nations People's culture, history and knowledge
5. Develop a whole school sustainability plan.

## Achievements

Drawing on Pope Leo XIV's 2025 Jubilee message and the 2025 College theme, the College called students to be tangible signs of hope in the world today. Grounded in Mercy values and Catherine McAuley's legacy, Sacred Heart empowered young women to advocate for justice and peace. By serving the poor and fostering community partnerships, students became compassionate global ambassadors and active witnesses of faith, building bridges in a divided world.

### **1. Harness the College's history and traditions to ensure we walk and talk our values.**

Students were prepared as agents of change through a contemporary curriculum where social justice was fully integrated. As 'Pilgrims of Hope', they engaged in Mercy-centred learning, fostering moral challenge and ethical conviction. The core Religious Education curriculum encouraged critical dialogue, meaningful encounters and service-oriented responsibility. This awareness empowered students to take meaningful action and address injustice at the local and global levels in the spirit of the Jubilee Year.

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

During the Jubilee Year, students and staff engaged in initiatives that deepened their faith and understanding of social justice. Inspired by Pope Leo XIV and Catherine McAuley, they provided a deliberate response to the marginalised through sustained outreach and fundraising. Operating under the 2025 College theme, students delivered essential aid to local and international agencies. This Mercy Justice Advocacy approach empowered them as active citizens, fostering the critical thinking needed to build a more equitable world.

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

The Inclusion and Diversity Education Program (IDEP) Advocacy Team fostered inclusivity at Sacred Heart, specifically by supporting refugee families. Through the Refugee Education Support Program (RESP), the team implemented a Whole School Approach that focused on transitions, family engagement and school climate. In 2025, the program provided 20 scholarships. These initiatives, grounded in Catherine McAuley's vision, ensured that students of refugee backgrounds continually feel safe, valued and empowered to succeed.

### **4. Respect, engage with and learn about First Nations People's culture, history and knowledge**

Sacred Heart fostered reconciliation through 'Tjatjarrang' mentor groups and the Nyarrngakgo program. Guided by 'Bridging Now to Next', the RAP and FIRE Carriers drove engagement in National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week and National Sorry Day. Through workshops and truth-telling, the College enlivened its Mercy values. This commitment was physically realised in the new Sports and Wellness Precinct, where the First Nations narrative and Wadawurrung language were integrated to honour Traditional Custodians and promote a holistic sense of wellbeing for all.

### **5. Develop a whole school sustainability plan**

Guided by the Laudato Si' Action Plan, the College integrated Strategic Pillar Four – Care for our Common Home through ResourceSmart Schools and Catholic Earthcare. Initiatives embedded in the curriculum addressed the Cry of the Earth and supported Ecological Economics and Sustainable Lifestyles. The Design Futures Lab pioneered Ecological Education via biocomposite innovation. By answering the Cry of the Poor, students acted as empowered stewards, ensuring Integral Ecology remained at the heart of the Mercy tradition.

## **Value Added**

### **1. Harness the College's history and traditions to ensure we walk and talk our values**

- Student empowerment, Mercy and Mission Leaders
- Student conferences, camps and initiatives
- Significant Liturgical Day Liturgies, House Feast Days and College Masses Foundation Day Mass and Celebration Day
- Opportunities for faith formation, spirituality and social justice
- Professional learning staff opportunities
- Alumni 100 years celebration
- AMSSA Staff Conference 2025
- 2025 Australian Catholic Education Conference (ACEC)
- Jubilee Year Pilgrims of Hope student and staff liturgy
- Year Level Faith Days Masses, liturgies, renewals and retreats
- Mercy Day and RUOK Day
- Lead and act for social justice and community outreach

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

- Fundraising initiatives and outcomes that support the Mercy Justice Advocacy Policy:
  - Project Compassion
  - Mercy Empowerment Dinner
  - College House Mercy Works
  - Annual Christmas Appeal
  - Payroll Deductions
- SHC Outreach Opportunities and Self-Initiated Community Service
- Student Leadership Initiatives (e.g, Make March Matter, International Women’s Day and Self-Aware September)
- Mentor Food Drives and Christmas Hampers
- Year 7 Joy Project
- Year 8 Outreach Hampers
- Year 9 Community Project
- Year 11 Outreach
- Year 12 Mercy in Action Program
- Immersion Programs, community partners and Mercy Empowerment Dinner

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

- Identifying and supporting families in need
- Financial assistance (all students) and health card holders •School fee assistance
- Staff payroll deductions
- IDEP and Team
- Refugee Education Support Program
- Language Loop
- 100 Story Building Program
- Harmony Week
- Refugee Week
- Community Connection Geelong Catholic College Days

## **4. Respect, engage with and learn about First Nations People's culture, history and knowledge**

- College RAP
- College FIRE Carriers and commissioning
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community BBQ
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tutoring support
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mentor Group – Tjatjarrang
- Significant Days (e.g. Close the Gap, National Reconciliation Week)
- NAIDOC Week
- Staff and student Cultural Workshops
- Koorie Aspirations Day

- Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie: Little Sis Space
- First Nations narrative, Wathaurong Glass panel narrative, Wadawurrung Traditional
- Owners language agreement – Room names

## **5. Develop a whole school sustainability plan**

- Laudato Si' Action Platform commitment
- ResourceSmart Schools commitment
- Catholic Earthcare Program
- Season of Creation
- Laudato Si' Week
- Sacred Heart Sustainability Challenge
- Reducing carbon emissions
- National Recycling Week
- Wipe for Wildlife
- The Design Futures Lab



# Learning and Teaching

## Goals and Intended Outcomes

2025 was a year of deliberate investment in the people and structures that underpin learning and teaching at Sacred Heart. The School Improvement Plan guided the College to focus on three connected priorities:

1. Establishing a fit-for-purpose Learning and Teaching team
2. Launching a revised pedagogical model
3. Building the intervention infrastructure needed to meet students at every point of the achievement spectrum.

These priorities were not discrete projects; they reinforced one another, and together they have laid a strong foundation for 2026 and beyond.

## Achievements

One of the most significant structural decisions of 2024 was the recognition that the Learning and Teaching team needed dedicated specialist roles to match the College's ambitions. In 2025, the College completed the recruitment process for a suite of new positions: Learning Designers, a Transdisciplinary Specialist, a Learning Futures leader and an expanded My Learning Journey team. These are roles the College has not had in this form before, and finding the right people for them required careful, deliberate work. All appointees will commence in 2026, and their arrival will, for the first time, give Sacred Heart dedicated capacity to lead curriculum design, transdisciplinary innovation and student pathways at a depth that classroom teachers simply cannot sustain alongside their teaching load.

Hand in hand with the team build was the creation of the first draft of our Learning and Teaching Handbook. This is a resource the College has long needed – a single reference point that makes its pedagogical expectations clear and consistent for every staff member, regardless of where they are in their career or which part of the College they work in. The Handbook introduced a revised four-phase model: Design, Construct, Deliver and Reflect. The Reflect phase is new. It is not cosmetic. It asks teachers to close the loop on their practice in a structured way, and it brings the model into closer alignment with how learning is understood to occur. Practical resources to support the Wednesday 30-minute timetable block are housed in the Handbook, giving staff clear structures for that time from the outset.

In 2025, the College also strengthened its commitment to data-informed teaching through continued work with Intellischool. The focus shifted from platform establishment, which was the work of 2024, to genuine use. Leadership worked alongside staff to build their confidence in reading and responding to the data available to them, with the explicit goal of narrowing the gap between what the data show and what happens in the classroom.

2025 also brought two important decisions about Sacred Heart's literacy approach. Following a thorough review of the literacy circles model, it was identified that a more structured, whole-school framework was needed – one that creates consistent expectations across all year levels and disciplines. As a result, the College will transition to a School-Wide Reading Program in 2026. Alongside this, Sacred Heart piloted a Tier Three literacy intervention with a small group of students in the 25th percentile, focusing specifically on decoding. The results were strong enough to justify scaling: a full intervention program for both literacy and numeracy will be in place in 2026, with specialist learning support officers working with students both within and outside of normal classroom time.

Finally, 2025 brought a fundamental rethink of the professional learning model. A review made clear that the existing model needed to work harder – to be more coherent, more responsive to staff needs, and more directly tied to the Annual Action Plan. The new model, launching in 2026, offers a genuine suite of professional learning that speaks to staff at different career stages and responds to what the data tells the College its students need. In 2026, the Learning Designers will also turn their attention to an instructional playbook: a practical, evidence-based resource to support consistent, high-quality teaching across every classroom.



## Student Learning Outcomes

NAPLAN data for 2025 tells a story that is both encouraging and instructive. Year 7 and Year 9 students are performing at or above state levels overall, with a particularly strong pattern at the lower end of the achievement spectrum, where Sacred Heart students consistently outperform their state counterparts. This reflects the sustained effort the College has made in intervention and support, and it is a trend that Sacred Heart intends to protect and build on.

At the top of the cohort, the picture is more complex. While the highest-achieving students are performing comparably to their peers statewide, there is room to do more. Stretching students at the upper end through greater classroom challenge, extension tasks and enrichment opportunities remains a clear priority heading into 2026.

In literacy, the data points to two specific areas where more explicit instruction will make a difference: helping students understand how and why language features work across different text types, and strengthening the grammatical control and vocabulary range in their writing. These are not new challenges, but the data provides the College with a clearer picture of where to focus, and the revised approach to literacy, including the School-Wide Reading Program and Tier Three intervention, directly addresses both.

In VCE, students recorded a median study score of 31 in 2025, reflecting a positive academic culture across our senior years and the ongoing support provided to students as they navigate the demands of Year 11 and 12.



## NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards

### Grammar and Punctuation

#### 2025 (current year)

Year Level	Mean Scale Score	Proficient
Year 7	559	75%
Year 9	574	69%

#### 2-year average

Mean Scale Score	Proficient
561	75%
573	64%

### Numeracy

#### 2025 (current year)

Year Level	Mean Scale Score	Proficient
Year 7	549	78%
Year 9	573	76%

#### 2-year average

Mean Scale Score	Proficient
549	79%
569	73%

### Reading

#### 2025 (current year)

Year Level	Mean Scale Score	Proficient
Year 7	564	85%
Year 9	588	79%

#### 2-year average

Mean Scale Score	Proficient
568	86%
588	78%

### Spelling

#### 2025 (current year)

Year Level	Mean Scale Score	Proficient
Year 7	546	81%
Year 9	567	74%

#### 2-year average

Mean Scale Score	Proficient
549	84%
568	76%

### Writing

#### 2025 (current year)

Year Level	Mean Scale Score	Proficient
Year 7	571	84%
Year 9	606	82%

#### 2-year average

Mean Scale Score	Proficient
574	85%
602	80%

\*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.

## Senior Secondary Outcomes

VCE Median Score	31
VCE Completion Rate	100%
VCE VM Completion Rate	100%
VPC Completion Rate	*

\* Data not reported for 2025 due to insufficient data i.e. less than 4 student enrolments for VCE/VCE VM/VPC or none of the students in a school received study scores.

# Student Wellbeing

## Goals and Intended Outcomes

1. Increase student resilience to enhance learning engagement and learner agency through supported risk-taking.
2. Commit to nurturing a child safe culture across all aspects of school life.

## Achievements

Sacred Heart became a Respectful Relationships lead school in 2025. The College supported local cluster meetings to share expertise and best practices.

To facilitate broader and more timely Youth Mental Health First Aid training for College staff, two experienced teachers were trained to deliver this qualification in-house. The first group of staff trained completed their course in Term Four of 2025. Additional training is scheduled throughout 2026.

The College's reimagined Mentor Group structure was further consolidated, featuring a revised schedule:

- Monday: Checking in and weekly planning.
- Tuesday: Wellbeing curriculum based on Respectful Relationships and the SEARCH Framework.
- Thursday: House connection and celebration.

Student and Staff Child Safety Teams were active:

- The student team made policies more accessible to the student body via infographics.
- The staff team reviewed whole-school safety concerns and completed a major revision of the College's Child Safety Risk Register, including a full review of Child Safe Standard One.

The College's partnership with LifeChanger continued, focusing on student growth in leadership, mentoring and healthy habits.

## Value Added

Annual school camps for Years 7 and 9 were maintained and reimagined following significant planning in 2024. To enact this vision, new venues were utilised to reflect the College's growth and better meet student needs.

The Year 9 Camp moved to a new 'hands-on' venue capable of hosting the entire cohort simultaneously, fostering stronger student connections.

Year 11 students participated in three 'renewal' days in Term Two to broaden each student's perspective on the world around them and their positive societal impact. Year 12 students participated in three House group retreat days, their final Sacred Heart camp, for reflection and considering important life connections before graduation.

Students participated in a joint production of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' with Iona College, Clonard College and St Joseph's College.

The College continued engagement with the local Rainbow Alliance for secondary schools and Sacred Heart's 'Free to Be Me' group promoted and celebrated inclusion and diversity.

Sacred Heart conducted a study tour to Italy in 2025, with tours to France and Japan planned for 2026.



## Student Satisfaction

In previous years, the College participated in the MACS School Improvement Survey. In 2025, the College designed and conducted its own 'Student Experience Survey', which was completed by 923 students in September 2025.

As a direct statement of student satisfaction, 63% of students responded favourably when asked if they enjoyed coming to school. 64% of students responded favourably when asked if they would recommend the College to a friend looking to start at a new school.

Students continue to report that the College's physical environment has a significant impact on their day-to-day experience, with high-quality study spaces and areas to hang out with friends being of strong importance to students.

An area for improvement relates to the social-emotional wellbeing of students and their interactions with one another. While more than 50% of responses indicated that students at the College look out for one another and show kindness to one another, the data for Years 9 and 10 exceeded a 25% negative response rate.

To interrogate these data points and inform next steps, the College utilised the skills and insights of its student leaders in Term Four of 2025. The raw data from the Student Experience Survey was shared with the Student Leadership Team as part of a Data Driven Dialogue. This process helped to inform the focus and design of student-led projects in 2026 and ensure alignment with staff-led initiatives to improve student connectedness and belonging in 2026 and beyond.



## Student Attendance

In 2025, following extensive consultation and design in 2024, two new positions were introduced to enhance student attendance and engagement.

1. The Information Support Specialist (Wellbeing) managed daily attendance follow-up, calling families when absences were unexplained by 10.30am, and where families had not responded to an automatic text message advising of an unexplained absence. This role logged information provided by families, analysed trends and made necessary referrals to key staff.
2. The School Engagement Leader focused on whole-school engagement, identified concerning absence trends, and collaborated with House Leaders on family follow-up.

These roles prompted further automation within the Student Management System. Support was channelled through the Inclusive Learning Network and the School Engagement Network Team, who met with students and families to collaboratively adjust student programs to support improved attendance.

## Years 9 - 12 Retention Rate

Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	91.98
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## Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level

Y07	87.61
Y08	83.37
Y09	83.13
Y10	81.73
Overall average attendance	83.96

# Leadership

## Goals and Intended Outcomes

In accordance with the College Strategy 2021 and Beyond, the goals and intended outcomes for leadership and management were driven by the following four Strategic Priorities:

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

## Achievements

Key achievements in line with the College's four Strategic Priorities were:

- Throughout 2025, the leadership team continued to prioritise proactive consultation with key stakeholders regarding the timetable, focusing on Mentor Group and access to additional support for Unit 3/4 students. Collaborative efforts were fostered through various platforms, including surveys, dedicated meetings and focus groups, to make iterative adjustments.
- The professional growth of POLs and ESS was maintained as a key priority, with staff setting and progressing in team and individual goals.
- Teacher professional learning was supported through the second year of the RISE Program. Through Communities of Practice, teachers enhanced their understanding and practice of Visible Wellbeing and culminated the year by presenting their findings to the College Leadership Team.
- Staff maintained and acquired Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School, which was supported across a variety of platforms, including key offerings from expert staff within the College.
- The Graduate Teacher Program continued to successfully attract first-year teachers to join the Sacred Heart community, and the Early Career Teacher Program continued to support their transition to the teaching profession.
- The review of the Teaching and Learning and Inclusion POLs was concluded, and new and refined leadership positions were advertised and filled for the 2026 school year.
- Student Development and Mercy and Mission leadership positions in 2025 delivered strong program outcomes that aligned with the College's Strategic Priorities.
- Efficiencies and support for the work practices of leaders and teams were maintained through improved processes and communication, technology automation, and a commitment to improving general daily operations.

## 2025 Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

In 2025, the College supported staff in reflecting on practice and utilising data, research, and evidence to enhance professional growth. Professional learning at the College encourages staff to develop innovative and best practices in teaching and learning, with staff accessing internal and external professional development opportunities.

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

- Building capacity and capability
- Empowering staff to personalise professional learning
- Prioritising staff collaboration in sharing skills, knowledge and expertise
- Strengthening their data analysis skills for informed decision-making
- Integrating new technologies into the classroom
- Deepening the understanding of inclusive education practices
- Furthering their knowledge of First Nations Perspectives.

The opportunities for professional learning in 2025 included:

- Communities of Practice professional learning teams engaged in a model of continuous improvement targeting Visible Wellbeing
- Whole Staff Professional Learning Sessions covering the following areas:
  - Catholic Identity and Faith Formation
  - Data Literacy
  - Cognitive Load Theory
  - Culturally Safe Schools
  - Creating Inclusive Learning Environments
- Conferences and webinars delivered by curriculum associations, educational providers and consultants with a focus on VCE study designs, IBMYP curriculum and assessment and discipline-specific curriculum and pedagogy
- Postgraduate study – Master's, Graduate Diplomas and Graduate Certificates
- Mercy Education Limited – Middle Leaders Program
- Youth Mental Health First Aid Training
- Pedagogical coaching and classroom observation
- Compliance training, including first aid, child safety and emergency training.

Number of teachers who participated in Professional Learning and average expenditure per teacher:

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2025	150
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$834.75

## Teacher Satisfaction

Committed to continuous improvement, the College transitioned from the 2024 MACSIS Survey to a more tailored Staff Pulse survey. This new approach was designed to capture specific, actionable feedback to better identify areas for improvement to support staff. Key findings from the Staff Pulse survey fell into the following categories:

### Strengths

- **Strong Catholic Identity:** staff continue to see strong faith leadership at the College.
- **High Job Satisfaction and Belonging:** overall staff feel a sense of pride and satisfaction in their work.
- **Compassionate Leadership:** staff feel supported by leadership during personal and professional challenges.
- **Collegial Support:** staff feel connected to their colleagues and know that teams generally work well.

### Challenges

- **Inconsistent Student Behaviour:** staff expressed concerns about inconsistent management of student behaviour and a lack of clear follow-through.
- **Need for greater curriculum clarity:** staff articulated the need for clear priorities and task pruning.
- **Time Poverty:** staff highlighted workload and resourcing as a key need in the current education system.
- **Mixed Trust in Leadership Follow-through:** staff expressed a need for their input to result in change.



The College leadership remains committed to working with staff to unpack themes and develop an effective action plan, focusing on clarity, consistency and communication. The main objectives identified to support staff satisfaction relate to workload solutions to address visible frustrations, reducing variability in student behaviour and increasing transparency in decision-making.

## Teacher Qualifications

Doctorate	1
Masters	50
Graduate	51
Bachelor Degree	111
Advanced Diploma	11
No Qualifications Listed	17

## Staff Composition

Principal Class (Headcount)	5
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	145
Teaching Staff (FTE)	120.53
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	119
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	90.4
Indigenous teaching Staff (Headcount)	1

# Community Engagement

## Goals and Intended Outcomes

At Sacred Heart, we believe that students thrive when they are supported by a strong, active community. Our goal is to increase engagement through direct, meaningful connections with our stakeholders and partners, ensuring our collective influence creates a positive impact on student outcomes. We achieve this by focusing on clear collaboration and a commitment to continuous improvement in everything we do, refining our approach to stay effective and responsive to our community's needs.

## Achievements

### 1. Admissions and Retention Strategy

In early 2025, the College established a dedicated Admissions and Retention Group, with representatives from each stage of the student lifecycle or from functions that are impacted by student numbers. Through greater collaboration and data-driven clarity, the group aimed to positively impact enrolments and retention to meet targeted student numbers now and in the future.



Central to this effort was the development of a dedicated Retention Strategy, which prioritised fostering a greater sense of belonging and strengthening student-staff connections. The impact of this work was positive – by the end of 2025, the College achieved a 25% reduction in student exits compared to previous years. While still in the early stages of implementation, these encouraging results validate our strategic focus and reinforce the importance of nurturing every student's connection to the Sacred Heart community.

The 2025 academic year also saw a remarkable trend across the region, with Catholic schools experiencing a significant spike in demand. Sacred Heart received a high number of applications for the 2026 Year 7 intake and was pleased to welcome 281 new students and families. To manage this continued interest, the team is strategically building a waitlist to backfill positions across all year levels, ensuring the College remains at peak operational capacity.

## **2. Sacred Heart Value Proposition**

Following a comprehensive review of the College Risk Register, the Advisory Council identified five key strategic risks for review:

1. Teachers attraction and retention
2. Negative reputation
3. Relevance of an all girls education
4. School community engagement
5. Fundraising and outreach engagement.

Following a workshop in June 2025 with a specific focus on reputation, the relevance of all-girls education, and community engagement, the Development Team and the Strategy and Communication Sub-committee were assigned these areas. Recognising that these challenges are deeply interconnected, the team moved away from isolated fixes in favour of a single, integrated strategy: developing a definitive Sacred Heart Value Proposition. This foundational project serves as a guiding principle for all future decisions, clearly articulating our identity, our aspirational reputation, and the unique promise of a Sacred Heart education to ensure long-term resilience and sustainability.

To ensure this Value Proposition authentically reflects our community, Term Four was dedicated to extensive consultation and data gathering. The team actively sought input from key stakeholders through a series of targeted surveys and collaborative workshops. This collective insight is now being used to align the College's core ethos with operational delivery, positioning Sacred Heart to meet community expectations and thrive in an evolving educational landscape.

### **3. Events**

The College continued to foster its rich traditions through our signature annual events. Maguire Celebration and Foundation Day served as vital touchpoints for celebrating with the College community, while the Carols by Candlelight provided a festive conclusion to the year. These events remain essential for maintaining community engagement at the College, bringing together students, staff, families, alumni and the wider community in a shared celebration.

In 2025 the College also introduced a new event honouring Mother's and Father's Day. In alignment with the College's broader focus on health and wellbeing, these new celebrations were imagined through a wellness lens. Rather than traditional gatherings, these events emphasised shared experiences, mindfulness and connection, reinforcing the Strategic Pillar Three - Culture of Wellness that will be the hallmark of our new Sports and Wellness Precinct. Both events were a sell out, bringing together students and their families to enjoy time together.

### **4. Giving**

The Capital Appeal for the Sports and Wellness Precinct emerged as a cornerstone of our community engagement efforts in 2025, with an ambitious goal of raising one million dollars. This dedicated fundraising drive was designed to support the construction of a state-of-the-art facility that will serve as the heart of our 'Culture of Wellness' for generations to come. Throughout the year, the Appeal acted as a catalyst for connection, bringing together alumni, current families and local partners who share a commitment to enhancing our students' physical and mental wellbeing.

A highlight was the inaugural Giving Day on Thursday 4 September, which utilised a 12-hour matching-fund model. The event surpassed its target by raising \$404,798. This incredible achievement was down to 539 donors who contributed on the day, quadrupling their impact thanks to our matching partners.

As a result of this community-led effort, the Capital Appeal has surpassed \$575,000 of its one million goal.

While the Capital Appeal took centre stage, the College maintained its vital Annual Giving program. This ongoing support for the Scholarships activity ensures that the College can continue to provide equity and support to those in need. In 2025, Sacred Heart was proud to offer six full Equity Scholarships, a testament to the community's enduring commitment to the Mercy values of compassion and social justice.

## Parent Satisfaction

The progress made in 2025 highlights the incredible strength and generosity of the Sacred Heart community. By aligning our strategic goals with meaningful action, from reducing student exits to surpassing fundraising milestones, we have built a solid foundation for the future.

As we move into 2026, we remain committed to listening to our stakeholders and refining our practices to ensure the College remains a place where every student feels a deep sense of belonging and is empowered to succeed. We look forward to another year of shared growth and continued connection.



# Financial Performance

The College's financial performance information and a report of the financial activities of the College's boarding premises (if applicable) have been provided to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) and will be available for the community to access from their website at [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au).

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

