



# DOXA School Bendigo Bendigo

## 2021 Annual Report to the School Community



Registered School Number: 2037

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## Minimum Standards Attestation

I, John Russell, attest that DOXA School Bendigo is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in *the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)* and the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)*, except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2021 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in Schools.

18/03/2021

**NOTE:** The School's financial performance information has 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)

## Governing Authority Report

Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd identifies learning and teaching as two parts of the same action designed to ignite the 'spark of the divine' in every child. We seek to provide safe, supportive and secure environments that value diversity, promote care, respect and co-operation. In 2021 our schools went into overdrive once again to plan and prepare for a learning model that would respond to the continuing impact and uncertainty of Covid-19.

Bishop Shane established Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd in 2021 to assume the ownership and operation of Catholic schools which previously operated as an unincorporated body. This change in our governance structure coincides with a time of increasing challenges that call us to imagine new and inspiring structures that will meet the needs of a changing Church.

Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd governance requirements meant that schools would now develop School Advisory Councils to support the principal and school Leadership Teams to ensure the smooth running of our schools and continue the life-giving relationship between our schools and parish communities.

During extremely challenging times our schools were able to maintain their focus on each child, implementing the Victorian Curriculum and the Sandhurst Source of Life Religious Education Curriculum while providing outstanding pastoral support both on-site and through remote learning.

Significant investment in new learning facilities and school infrastructure through the Catholic Capital Grants Program and the hard work of our school communities have ensured the provision of high-quality learning and teaching facilities for both staff and students.

I continue to be extremely grateful for the commitment and professionalism that is clearly identified by the efforts throughout 2021 of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd- our schools and personnel in the Catholic Education Office. They continue to work tirelessly for the students and families in our schools, bringing the 'spark of the divine' into focus every day.

Paul Desmond

Executive Director

Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd

## Our College Identity and Vision Statements

### OUR SCHOOL VISION

Doxa School Bendigo is a Catholic School in the Diocese of Sandhurst that is committed to the safety of all young people. We uphold values of our Faith, the dignity of human life made in the image of God and the right of our young people to live safely in ours and the wider community.

### VISION

To inspire a greater number of young people and families in our community to reach their full potential through quality leadership and practice.

### MISSION

Doxa School Bendigo is a transition school in the Catholic tradition, which engages young people, their families and the wider community in an experience of whole person growth.

### GRADUATE OUTCOMES

That young people leave the Doxa School community with greater confidence as independent learners, more emotionally self-aware and better able to manage themselves as they undertake their future pathways.

Situated on Jaara Land.

We acknowledge all who have cared for  
and travelled this land before us

## College Overview

Doxa School Bendigo has been established to meet the need for an alternative option for education for vulnerable students in the wider Bendigo region. This school complements other alternate educational providers in the region and it is open to students from all sectors.

This program aims to re-engage students who are at risk of not completing their compulsory years of education because of a range of difficulties that affect their ability to engage in learning in a mainstream school setting. It provides supported and flexible education options for vulnerable students 12 years of age and older whose educational journey has been a challenging one for them.

The Doxa Youth Foundation and the Catholic Education Office of the Diocese of Sandhurst are the stewards of our school. Doxa School Bendigo educates in the Marist tradition of service to the marginalised and vulnerable continuing our relationship in this way with former stewards, the Marist Brothers. We are Governed by Diocese of Sandhurst represented by Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited.

Our current programs provide for students in years 7 to 12 in an enrolment of 12 months or more to support their re-entry into their mainstream school or another appropriate educational setting. We also transition students to vocational pathways. We have a strong focus on literacy, numeracy and social and emotional learning to help our students build the resilience and confidence they need to take the next steps towards success on their life's journey. We undertake this work with a curriculum that offers the Victorian Curriculum and VCAL, and a strong Student Wellbeing Team that supports the diverse and complex needs of our students.

During 2021 we had 53 students enrolled in our community and we are committed to building strong and supportive relationships with our students and their families, and also the various organisations and individuals that provide a range of supports for young people in our region.

## Principal's Report

The challenges that 2020 brought continued during 2021. The uncertainty created by the COVID 19 pandemic, general lockdowns on a state-wide scale and still doing our best to provide the support required by our students and their families has been challenging for our community. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our staff team, our students and their families for their support and understanding throughout the year.

### Staff News

Our community has been fortunate over the past few years to have experienced a stable staff team. This was the same during 2021. One of our teachers, Brad Gargiulo, left us during the year and I wish him well in his future endeavours. It was fortunate that our part-time tutor, Aminda Polonowita was able to join the staff team in a full-time capacity and fill in after Brad's departure. Aminda has become a valued member of our team and I thank him for his contribution to the Doxa School community during the year.

Negotiating a second year of COVID has certainly challenged our staff team, but they are to be commended on the manner in which they worked together to provide a high level of care and support for our students.

### Board News

I am very fortunate to have a very supportive group of people that make up our Advisory Council. During 2021 the Council was lead by Mr Michael Hockley as chair. Michael has been a Council member for 6 years now, and I thank him and the rest of the group for their support during the year.

All members of the Advisory Council provide support and advice on a range of issues that face our community. Other members include Ms Cath Dillon, Deputy Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst, Ms Julie Harrison, CEO of the Doxa Youth Foundation, Ms Liz March, CEO of Access Group Australia, Ms Carolyn Harkin, Ms Kyleigh Rivett, our staff representative and Ms Emma Boxshal, our Finance Officer and Council Secretary. I formally thank them for their support throughout 2021.

### Professional Learning

Ongoing Professional Learning is essential for continued professional growth of our staff team and to enable our school community to support our students and families in the best possible way. Accessing Professional Learning has been difficult through 2021 due to restrictions and lockdowns. We did make the best of this with on-line learning and lots of Zoom and Google meetings.

### School Life

I would like to congratulate the staff team for their efforts in providing a relevant program for our students. They took on the challenges of remote learning and on-line classrooms and made these work for many of our young people. It was difficult to maintain and build on our experiential learning program with little happening as far as excursions and camps for 2021.

Various aspects of our normal school life were absent as well such as work experience, and structured workplace learning, our elective program that sees our students interact more broadly in the community, our Doxa Café was closed for the year and lots of other activities that would normally occur, didn't.

I thank our parents for their patience during 2021, as they were encouraged not to attend the school for meetings or to catch up with staff members due to COVID restrictions. Many meetings happened on-line and while this wasn't ideal our parents helped to make it work.

Thanks to all who supported our community during 2021, I'm sure we all hope for a different year in 2021 where we will have more freedom to undertake a greater range of opportunities and interact more openly. We have learnt a lot during the past two years, and I am confident we will be stronger for it. Take care and may God's Blessings go with you all.

John Russell

Principal

## Catholic Mission and Identity and Education in Faith

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

2021 presented our community with many of the same challenges of 2020 in dealing with the COVID 19 pandemic. The impacts of restricted visitations to the school, remote learning and managing COVID protocols impacted our work in Catholic Identity. Some of our goals for the 2021 school years were:

- Redesign our sacred spaces (appealing, calming, informing, sacred)
- Conduct an Action Research Project 2020-2023  
Recontextualisation and Prayer
- Provide termly professional development for all staff
- Provide access to 'Ministry of Catholic Schooling' course to all staff (3 staff per year)

### Achievements

Our main achievements in 2021 were:

- The successful continuation of our Action Research Project
- The redevelopment of our entry foyer to be more welcoming and encouraging of cultural safety
- Our staff team preparing and presenting prayer regularly
- Continuing to embed a culture of prayer in our community
- Maintaining our professional learning sessions each term
- To have staff team members complete the CESL course 'The Ministry of Catholic Schooling'

### VALUE ADDED

While many activities were unable to go ahead as they would normally do we were able to:

- Celebrate Marcelin Champagnat's feast day
- Recognise and celebrate special seasons such as Lent and Advent
- Visit St Kilian's Church
- Hold staff liturgies
- Hold our end of year Awards Evening to celebrate our community and student achievement

## Learning & Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Our staff team are to be commended on their focus on supporting our students to achieve their learning goals during 2021. Along with their work in providing an individualised and differentiated curriculum to suit each student in their care they were able to work to achieve many of our Learning and Teaching goals from our 2021 Annual Action Plan, these were:

- Developing a strategic Professional Development (PD) plan, identifying key focus for development as a Teaching Team, individuals and Whole School
- Developing clear and consistent procedures to support PD attendance and sharing with colleagues
- Undertaking a review and redevelopment of our school wide Social Emotional Literacy (SELS) program
- Undertaking a review and redevelopment of our school wide Student Experiences program
- Continue development of Scope and sequence, Whole School unit development and Moderation sessions
- Continue to develop online learning resources to support student participation, learning and attendance

### Achievements

While the challenges of remote learning and on-line meetings made progressing our goals challenging we did achieve some excellent outcomes during 2021. Some of these achievements were:

- The development of a leadership structure to better support Learning and Teaching Goals, with specific roles for SELS and Student Experiences.
- The development of a review process for important aspects of our program, Social and Emotional Literacy and Student Experiences.
- The continued development of a collaborative Whole of School Teacher Team.
- A whole school team approach to unit planning, preparation and presentation.
- The implementation of consistent Unit and weekly planning structures across the school.
- The embedding of a more consistent and NCCD friendly data collection and recording process and practice.
- The introduction of the Science of Learning as an underpinning Pedagogical Structure across the school.

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

While standardised assessments have limited value for us in tracking student progress we do use them. We also rely on a range of testing tools to inform our Individual Learning Plans to provide information about student learning.

All students demonstrated an ability to set goals and work towards and achieve them. All students demonstrated growth in their academic, social and emotional learning throughout 2021.

Our teaching team are to be commended on their dedication to their students and the flexibility they embraced to provide a mix of on-site and remote learning in order to cater for all students' needs.

Of the handful of students who left us at the end of 2021, two successfully completed their VCAL certificate, two transitioned to a mainstream school to complete their senior years, three have gained full-time employment and two are seeking other learning or employment opportunities.

## MEDIAN NAPLAN RESULTS FOR YEAR 9

Year 9 Grammar & Punctuation	573.5
Year 9 Numeracy	592.4
Year 9 Reading	546.0
Year 9 Spelling	562.2
Year 9 Writing	464.7

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2019 %	2020 *	2019 – 2020 Changes *	2021 %	2020 – 2021 Changes *
YR 05 Grammar & Punctuation	***	-	-	***	-
YR 05 Numeracy	***	-	-	***	-
YR 05 Reading	***	-	-	***	-
YR 05 Spelling	***	-	-	***	-
YR 05 Writing	***	-	-	***	-
YR 07 Grammar & Punctuation	***	-	-	***	-
YR 07 Numeracy	***	-	-	***	-
YR 07 Reading	***	-	-	***	-
YR 07 Spelling	***	-	-	***	-
YR 07 Writing	***	-	-	***	-
YR 09 Grammar & Punctuation	**	-	-	**	-
YR 09 Numeracy	**	-	-	**	-
YR 09 Reading	**	-	-	**	-
YR 09 Spelling	**	-	-	**	-
YR 09 Writing	**	-	-	**	-

\* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

\*\* Data cannot be reported for this year as the number of students that sat the test was below 5 and the data has been suppressed for privacy reasons in accordance with the ACARA NAPLAN data reporting provisions.

\*\*\* No students sat the NAPLAN tests in this year level and in one or both of the relevant years.

[Image.NaplanYear5]

[Image.NaplanYear7]

[Image.NaplanYear9]

## Pastoral Wellbeing

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

The Wellbeing of all members of the Doxa School community is of paramount importance for leadership as well as our staff team who work tirelessly to provide an environment that is welcoming, safe for all community members regardless of faith, culture, gender and sexuality and where everyone can experience kindness every day.

Our annual goals in Pastoral Wellbeing included:

- Identifying the key areas of wellbeing assessment
- Building practices for the use of appropriate wellbeing tools
- Provide targeted professional learning for all staff, informed by our practice model and individual staff needs
- Continue to review and evaluation of Positive Behaviour policy and practices
- Review the existing wellbeing practices

### Achievements

Some of our achievements in the area of pastoral wellbeing during 2021 were:

- Continuing to embed a culture of being Safe, Kind and Curious throughout our community.
- Further develop a collaborative and team approach oriented Wellbeing Team through strong consistent leadership.
- Continue to develop appropriate tools to gather data and plan support for all students individual needs.
- To continue to use processes through leadership to support staff members' wellbeing and professional practice.
- Professional learning for staff to support student wellbeing.
- Regular student focussed sessions in staff meetings directly addressing individual student needs.
- Participation in an Equine therapy program open to all students across terms two and three.
- Continued development of our Individual Learning Plans
- Maintenance of positive and regular family contact and involvement throughout the COVID impacted year.

### VALUE ADDED

Activities or strategies that supported Pastoral Wellbeing in the Doxa School community during 2021 included:

The Thoroughbred Heroes Equine Therapy Program.  
Development of a modified COVID impacted Safe, Kind and Curious afternoon activities program.

**STUDENT SATISFACTION**

End of year reflective conversations and evaluations indicated a high level of student satisfaction with the school. Most often commended by students was the smaller setting worked better for them, the relationships with the staff particularly their teacher and designated wellbeing support worker was identified as another positive. Students also expressed an appreciation of the way issues were dealt with, citing the different way of doing things at Doxa School meant they felt more respected and listened to that they had experienced at other schools.

ILP Meetings and goal setting meetings were conducted each term within COVID safe guidelines, and were a positive experience for students and families. In this forum students consistently expressed confidence in their program, their ability to achieve their goals and the supportive way our staff team worked with them to achieve them.

**STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

At Doxa School student attendance is recorded through the SIMON management system. SIMON is used by many schools in the Diocese and is an effective tool for a range of management tasks.

Student attendance is recorded for each individual session by classroom educators.

Student absences are noted and each morning administration staff contact parents/guardians to seek information regarding why students are absent. This is recorded in SIMON.

If a student leaves the school without permission, or doesn't present for subsequent sessions, the same protocols are followed and parents/guardians are contacted as soon as possible and informed of their student's absence.

Classroom educators are responsible for recording attendance in the SIMON system each session. Follow up regarding absentees is conducted by the administration staff.

This process is the same for all students regardless of age.

**YEARS 9 – 12 STUDENT RETENTION RATE**

Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate 21.4%

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL	
Y05	null%
Y06	null%
Y07	null%
Y08	47.9%
Y09	48.1%
Y10	43.3%
Overall average attendance	46.4%

POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS AS AT 2021	
Tertiary Study	[psd.bachelor]%
TAFE / VET	[psd.vet]%
Apprenticeship / Traineeship	[psd.apprentice]%
Deferred	[psd.deferred]%
Employment	[psd.employed]%
Other – The category of Other includes both students Looking for Work and those classed as Other	[psd.other]%

## Child Safe Standards

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Child Safety is at the forefront of all we do at Doxa School. The schoolwide approach to the Child Safe Standards has impacted the work of our Leadership Team as well as the broader staff team during 2021.

The change of Governance structure to Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited has resulted in a review and revamping of many policy and procedural documents which provided an opportunity to re-evaluate these documents and more explicitly state our commitment to the Standards and how we comply with them in our community.

Our goals in this area in 2021 were:

- To continue to provide Professional Learning for our staff about their obligations regarding the Child Safe Standards.
- To review and update all relevant Codes of Conduct.
- To better organise our Child Safe staff room information area to better communicate the Child Safe message for the staff team.
- The review and evaluation of our Child Safe policy and procedural documentation.
- The review and evaluation of our Child Safe Risk Register.

Our intended goal in the area of the Child Safe Standards is to provide a safe environment for all young people in our care.

### Achievements

Our achievements with regard to the Child Safe Standards during 2021 were:

- Regular Professional Learning for the staff team.
- All staff members completed online Mandatory Reporting and PROTECT learning modules.
- The review and updating of all relevant policy and procedural documentation relating to the Child Safe Standards, including the Child Safe Risk Register and the Child Safe Policy.
- Regular information sharing regarding the school's Child Safe practices with the broader school community.
- Child Safety a regular agenda item in all staff, leadership team and Advisory Council meetings.

## Leadership & Management

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

The key goals of the Doxa School during 2021 in the area of Leadership and Management were:

- Audit and review current family engagement strategies.
- engage in 'Leading teams' Professional Development (Brendan Maher) to develop internal leadership capacity.
- Develop strategic Leadership processes (Strategic Vision & Mission).
- Build understanding of new governance structures through professional development. (Board, LT and staff group) and sharing of information, as available, with all staff.
- Implementing and embedding new governance structures, including delegations.
- Maintain and developing sustainable connections to professional networks.
- Access finance office support with accounting and budgeting practices and processes.

### Achievements

While the disrupted year we experienced in 2021 hampered our ability to achieve all our goals we were able to work towards completing many of them. Some of our achievements were:

- The establishment of a Family Engagement Staff Team to review our practices in this area.
- Participation of our Leadership Team in professional development provided by Brendan Maher from Leading Teams.
- The development of a Strategic Plan for 2021 - 2026.
- Continued development of a whole school understanding of the new Governance Structure and its impact on policy and procedure.
- Continued work with our Advisory Board regarding the new Governance structures.
- The implementation of a new budgeting model using CESL developed tools to support our budgeting procedures.
- Regular access to CESL Finance Office staff members to strengthen our daily financial management processes.
- Transition to a new CESL approved auditing company and process.

### PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

#### Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2021

It was challenging for staff to participate in external Professional Learning activities that would usually be accessed during the school year in 2021, however, a number of opportunities were accessed online. Some of the Professional Learning activities that staff participated in during the year were:

Whole Staff Team:

- First Aid Training
- Mandatory Reporting online module
- Disability Standards in Education online modules
- Emergency Management modules presented through Dynamic
- Staff training in "PROTECT: Responding and Reporting Child Abuse" training modules
- Action Research Project on Prayer at Doxa School.
- Spirituality days - Marks Gospel.
- Staff and Student Professional Boundaries and relevant Codes of Conduct.
- Refresh and Reframe - Choice Theory Re-cap
- COVID Safety for Community Workers
- PPE for Community Workers

Other Professional Learning opportunities accessed by some staff teams or individuals included:

- Authentic leadership - Ben Crowe
- Science of Learning - Craig Simpson
- Advanced Behaviour Modules - Dan Petro
- The Science of Language and Reading - Dr Nathaniel Swain
- Learner Diversity PL - Lynn Stone
- The 4 Step Process - Life Long Literacy
- Mental Health & Crisis Support

## TEACHER SATISFACTION

Our staff team is to be commended on their positive approach to the challenges they faced during the past two years. There was a high level of collegial support amongst the team and a willingness to learn the new ways of doing learning and teaching online. Each day our staff team works tirelessly supporting vulnerable, disengaged and marginalised young people and do this with compassion, care and professionalism.

Past Insight SRC school surveys have consistently indicated a high level of staff satisfaction pertaining to Organisational and Teaching Climate. This data puts levels of staff satisfaction in the top percentile in comparison with Victorian secondary schools.

Through Annual Review Meetings teaching and non-teaching staff regularly discuss their passion for this work and reflect a dedication to their roles, the staff team and the school community that is generally indicative of strong levels of satisfaction.

**TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE**

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	91.8%
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**ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE**

Staff Retention Rate	89.5%
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**TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	20.0%
Graduate	60.0%
Graduate Certificate	20.0%
Bachelor Degree	60.0%
Advanced Diploma	20.0%
No Qualifications Listed	0.0%

**STAFF COMPOSITION**

Principal Class (Headcount)	2.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	7.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	7.0
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	8.2
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

## College Community

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Key focus areas for our School Community during 2021 were:

- To review evaluate and enhance our Parent Engagement strategies.
- To continue the work on strengthening our Catholic Culture within our staff team, in our curriculum through the celebration of sacred seasons and feast days and developing a more obvious Catholic environment.
- Embedding our Positive Behaviour Culture of being Safe, Kind and Curious in our every day life within the school community and throughout the Curriculum.

Developing a Culturally safe environment and community.

### Achievements

Achievements in the area of College Community include:

- The creation of a welcoming and Culturally sensitive entry foyer.
- The development of Curriculum materials to support our Positive Behaviour initiatives.
- The continued celebrations of Easter, Advent and Marcellin Champagnat's Feast Day.
- The commissioning of a Message Stick by indigenous artist, Troy Firebrace, to include in our Sacred Space.
- The formation of a Staff team dedicated to Parent Engagement which reviewed our Parent Engagement Strategies.

### VALUE ADDED

We were able to participate in a few activities and celebrations related to such occasions as Book Week, Easter and Lent, Advent and Christmas, Marcellin's Feast day, Naidoc week, Anzac and Remembrance Day and our End of Year Awards Evening.

### PARENT SATISFACTION

Anecdotally parents and guardians provide overwhelmingly positive feedback to our staff team regarding their experience of being part of the Doxa School community. Parents and guardians generally have a high regard for the support experienced by their students, and the approachability and support they experience from our staff team.

This is reinforced by the data from past Insight SRC survey results that indicate very high levels of satisfaction amongst our families, particularly in the areas of Community and Staff Engagement, where the results are in the 80's and 90's percentile ranges in comparison with

all schools surveyed in Australia. These results have been consistently high over the past decade.

Staff members consistently report that conversations held with parents and guardians reflect a high level of support for our school community and the support we provide students and families. These conversations occur during regular ILP meetings and through the many casual conversations and phone calls between staff members and parents and guardians.

## Future Directions

2021 saw the development of a new Strategic Directions document for 2021 - 2026 some of our future goals include:

- Completing our Action Research Project on our Prayer Culture.
- Developing a strong visual connection to our Catholic Identity within the school environment.
- Recording and Celebrating our school story.
- Providing support for the Spiritual Growth of our staff team.
- Enhance and embed a Leadership Culture within our community.
- Build Leadership Capacity.
- Develop a Family Engagement Framework.
- Continual Curriculum development including review and enhancement of our SELS and Student Experience programs.
- Continue to develop and improve pathway strategies to support our students.
- Review, evaluate and enhance our student engagement strategies.
- Continue to provide a Child Safe and Culturally Inclusive community.
- Continue to have a strong focus on Wellbeing for all community members through Family Engagement, the development and use of appropriate Wellbeing Tools, staff Professional Learning and support.
- Embed all school management Policies and Procedures in line with CESL governance structures.