



# 2023

## Annual Report to the School Community

**doxaschoolbendigo**

valuing the diversity, resilience and potential of young people



### DOXA School Bendigo

118 Hargreaves Street, BENDIGO 3550

Principal: Vanessa Brown

Web: [www3.doxabendigo.catholic.edu.au](http://www3.doxabendigo.catholic.edu.au)

Registration: 2037,

E Number: E3057

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## Principal's Attestation

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I, Vanessa Brown, attest that DOXA School Bendigo 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 2023 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 27 Mar 2024

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## About this report

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DOXA School Bendigo 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](#).

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## Governing Authority Report

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The 2023 Catholic Education Week theme “Let the Words You Speak Always Be Full of Grace” reminds us of Pope Francis’s call to be a synodal Church in which our understanding of others and respect for diversity is shaped by respectful dialogue borne from deep listening.

Catholic Education Sandhurst continues to be committed to providing contemporary and innovative learning environments that value diversity and promote care, respect and co-operation. In 2023 we launched the CES Ltd Strategic Plan 2023-2027 which sets out directions and priorities that will guide the way in which our Catholic schools pursue excellence in fostering the development of each person in all the dimensions of human existence: intellectual, spiritual, emotional, bodily, relational, environmental and cultural.

Schools have begun the process of developing School Improvement Plans aligning their local strategic planning to the CES Strategic Plan, under the direction of Principal Consultants and in response to schoolbased review findings.

Our governance structure continues to mature, with both CES Ltd and SCECEC Ltd committed to ensuring the highest quality student outcomes in a safe and nurturing environment.

Our learning data has identified pockets of excellence in school communities across the diocese but also highlighted greater scope for improvement in the future. The development of the CES Ltd Catholic Learning and Teaching Framework will promote greater collaboration and focus on student learning growth.

The nation-wide shortage of teachers continues to impact all schools demanding new and innovative ways to attract and retain high quality and committed Catholic educators. Strategic initiatives will prioritize workforce placements that are sustainable and ongoing with particular attention given to our remote and smaller communities.

CES Ltd has a small number of schools with low enrolments and personnel and the Catholic Education Office works closely with leadership in these schools to ensure continued viability. An incentive scheme to attract and retain educators has been initiated and the CES Ltd Board has taken a robust interest in the way small schools are promoted through the CES Ltd Marketing Strategy.

I am extremely grateful for the commitment and professionalism that is clearly identified by the efforts throughout 2023 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, true bearers of the Mission to which they have been called.

PAUL DESMOND

Executive Director, Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited

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## Vision and Mission

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### 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 great 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.

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## College Overview

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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 compliments 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 2023 we had 46 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.

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## Principal's Report

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Our small school has continued to thrive over the past year and I would like to extend my gratitude to the staff, students and families of our school community who contributed to make 2023 a rewarding and successful year at Doxa School. Supporting our young people is a team effort and relies on our dedicated and passionate staff members, families that value our community and a plethora of individuals and agencies who partner with us in the care and support of our students.

### Staff news:

Our community has been fortunate over the past few years to have experienced a level of stability in our staffing. We were fortunate to welcome Len Watson to the team as the Deputy Principal. He brought a high level of experience in education and supporting young people and their families. Len will be leading the learning and teaching of the school.

We also welcomed Colleen Marchant as the Business Manager mid year. Colleen has vast experience in finance and brings a huge bank of knowledge to the team.

Throughout the year we said goodbye to long term staff members Lou Stobaus and Jacinta May. Both Lou and Jacinta joined our team in 2013, Lou as a classroom teacher and Jacinta as a member of the wellbeing team. They have both shared their knowledge and experience and grown within the staff team. They both worked tirelessly to support and engage with young people and their families.

### Council news:

We welcomed back Brenda Keenan, Principal consultant, to the Advisory Council. Brenda is the representative from Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited. She was been on our council as the chair and a member over her involvement with our school. We are extremely pleased to have Brenda join us again and share her passion and knowledge.

All members of the Advisory Council provide support and advice on a range of issues that face our community. Other members include Mr Michael Hockley, our council chair, Ms Julie Harrison, CEO of the Doxa Youth Foundation, Ms Carolyn Harkin, Ms Kyleigh Rivett, our staff representative, Ms Colleen Marchant, our Business Manager and Ms Emma Boxshall, our



Finance Officer and Council Secretary. I formally thank them for their support throughout 2023.

At the end of the year there were a few changes to the Advisory Council membership. Two long-standing members retired from the council, this included Mr Michael Hockley, our council chair and Ms Carolyn Harkin. Both Michael and Carolyn have committed an enormous amount of time and energy to our council, our school and myself. We thank them for their support and time that they have given generously to the council and Doxa School community and wish them endless joy as they retire from their council duties.

Annual Doxa School Celebration Evening:

Our celebration at the end of 2023 was a moving and joyful occasion with many students acknowledged for their efforts during the year. It was pleasing to see so many family members, community representative, supporters from the many organisations that support our school and representatives from our parish and governors attend. This wasn't just an opportunity to celebrate the students' successes but also thank families and supporters for their efforts throughout the year but also congratulate and thank the staff for their dedicated and patient support of their students.

School life:

Our school community is rich with extracurricular opportunities for students to explore their passions and interests. We have continued to offer a wide range of activities and experiences in the afternoon programs, allowing students to connect with their peers and pursue their interests outside the classroom.

We have begun a termly morning tea for students, families, staff and Catholic Education staff to come together over a yummy treat. This has been a lovely opportunity to build relationships, give feedback and share stories.

We have learnt a lot about our strength, stamina and kindness that we hold as a community. Take care of each other and may you find joy in the small things.

Vanessa Brown

Principal

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## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

We aim to:

- redesign our sacred spaces to be appealing, calming, informing and sacred.
- Conduct an Action Research Project 2020- 2023 - Re-contextualisation and Prayer.
- Investigate how to 'Celebrate the Doxa School Bendigo Story.' Building the story from its foundations up to its current structure in celebration of the work achieved and for historical context.

### Achievements

Our main achievements in 2023 were:

- The successful conclusion of our Action Research Project.
- The redevelopment of our entry areas to be more welcoming, encouraging of cultural safety and Catholic.
- Continuing to embed a culture of prayer in our community.
- Maintaining our professional learning sessions each term.

### Value Added

- Introduction of community morning tea. Each term a different class groups organisers and prepares for the Morning Tea. Staff, Students, families and CES Ltd staff share stories over a selection of delicious treats.
- Increased participation in St Kilian's Parish and events, including market days.
- Recognise and celebrate special seasons such as Lent and Advent.
- Celebrate Marcellin Champagnat's Feast Day.
- Hold staff liturgies at St Kilian's Parish.

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## Learning and Teaching

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

We aim to:

- Review and implement processes for the collection and tracking of learning data
- Develop and implement whole school understanding of The Science of Learning (SoL).
- Implement and review our careers program (meeting the needs of our community).
- Implement changes to VPC certificate

### Achievements

Our main achievements in 2023 were:

- Review the collection of Learning data and implement processes to collect useful learning data.
- Continue to develop whole school understanding of The Science of Learning (SoL) and begin the discussions of what this looks like, feels like and sounds like for learning and Teaching.
- Implement changes to our careers program
- Implement VPC certificate

### Student Learning Outcomes

This year we have spent time in shaping our planning documentation and Assessment methods to inform teachers and students about learning. We will continue to access a range of assessments and tools to inform our Individual learning Plans and student learning growth.

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 2023.

Of the students who left us at the end of 2023, three transitioned to a mainstream school to complete their senior years, seven transitioned to another educational setting for vocational training, five have gained full-time employment and two are working with agency support to seek other learning or employment opportunities.

<b>NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards</b>			
<b>Domain</b>	<b>Year level</b>	<b>Mean Scale score</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 7	*	*
	Year 9	*	*
Numeracy	Year 7	*	*
	Year 9	*	*
Reading	Year 7	*	*
	Year 9	*	*
Spelling	Year 7	*	*
	Year 9	*	*
Writing	Year 7	*	*
	Year 9	*	*

\*A school's NAPLAN test must have a minimum of 11 participants and 80% participation rate. Data not reported for 2023 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.

<b>Senior Secondary Outcomes</b>	
VCE Median Score	*
VCE Completion Rate (includes VCE VM completions)	*
VCAL Completion Rate (VCAL Intermediate)	*

\*Not reported due to insufficient data i.e. less than 4 student enrolments for VCE/VCAL.

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## Student Wellbeing

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

We aim to:

- Identifying the key areas of wellbeing assessments.
- Building practices for the use of a wellbeing tool.
- Provide targeted professional learning and support for all staff, informed by our practice. model and individual staff need.
- Review and develop sustainable procedures

### Achievements

Our main achievements in 2023 were:

Continuing to embed a culture of being Safe, Kind and Curious throughout our community.

Continue to develop appropriate tools to gather data and plan support for all students individual needs.

Professional learning for staff to support student well-being assessment.

Professional learning for staff to support effective implementation of policy and practice approaches.

Regular student focused sessions in staff meetings directly addressing individual student needs.

Maintenance of positive and regular family contact to build positive and effective relationships with the school community.

### Value Added

Activities and strategies that supported Pastoral Wellbeing in the Doxa School Community during 2023 were:

- Expansion of formal internal student assessment capability
- Formation of Art Therapy partnership with Latrobe University
- Review of Wellbeing service delivery model
- Implement new procedures for cross collaboration within the diocese

### Student Satisfaction

At the end of the school year is a great time to have reflective discussions about how students feel about their school and learning. End of year discussions and evaluations indicated a high level of student satisfaction with the school. Students are most reflective on the smaller setting allowing them to learn at their pace and level, the strong relationships that they develop with all staff; particularly with their classroom teacher and wellbeing support worker. Students have appreciation for the ways in which conflict and arising issues are dealt with, expressing that they felt more respected and listened to when things were going wrong and able to learn how to do things differently.

Individual Learning Plan meetings were conducted each term and invited each young person and their family to experience positive feedback and individual goal setting. In this forum students consistently expressed confidence in the program, their ability to achieve their goals and the support way in which our staff team work 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 and is the responsibility of the 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. Follow up regarding absentees is conducted by the administration staff.

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

<b>Years 9 - 12 Student Retention Rate</b>	
Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	15.4%

<b>Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Level</b>	
Y07	*
Y08	39.8%
Y09	41.6%
Y10	38.7%
Overall average attendance	40.1%



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## Leadership

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

We aim to:

- Implement family engagement strategies
- Develop strategic Leadership processes (Supported change for 2023)
- Develop an internal leadership capacity plan

### Achievements

Our main achievements in 2023 were:

- The implementation of a Family Engagement Strategy
- Continued development of a whole school understanding of the new Governance Structure and its impact on policy and procedure.
- Continued work with our Advisory Council regarding the new Governance structures.
- Development of capacity building strategy for leadership positions

<b>Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning</b>	
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023	
<p>First Aid Training</p> <p>Mandatory Reporting online module</p> <p>Emergency Management modules presented through Dynamiq</p> <p>Staff training in "PROTECT: Responding and Reporting Child Abuse" training modules</p> <p>PROTECTING CHILDREN-Mandatory Reporting and other obligations - training modules</p> <p>Action Research Project on Prayer at Doxa School</p> <p>Spirituality days- The Gospel of Mark and Jesus Christ</p> <p>Catholic Identity in Catholic Schools Introduction</p> <p>Staff and Student Professional Boundaries and relevant Codes of Conduct</p> <p>Other Professional Learning opportunities accessed by some staff teams or individuals included:</p> <p>National Education Summit</p> <p>Choice Theory- Basic Intensive Week</p>	
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	6
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$1400.00

### **Teacher Satisfaction**

Our staff team has maintained their positive and engaging approach to working in our space. There is a high level of collegial support amongst the team and a willingness to grow their knowledge and practice to engage with and support our young people and their families.

Past Insight SRC school surveys have consistently indicated a high level of staff satisfaction pertaining to school climate, staff and leadership relationships, support and safety. This data

puts levels of staff satisfaction at a high level 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.

<b>Teacher Qualifications</b>	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	0.0%
Graduate	37.5%
Graduate Certificate	12.5%
Bachelor Degree	37.5%
Advanced Diploma	0.0%
No Qualifications Listed	12.5%

<b>Staff Composition</b>	
Principal Class (Headcount)	2
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	6
Teaching Staff (FTE)	6.0
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	10
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	9.2
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0

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## Community Engagement

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### Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To enhance and implement revised Family 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 identity.
- Embedding our Positive Behaviour Culture of being Safe, Kind and Curious in our everyday life within the school community and throughout the Curriculum.

### Achievements

- Introduction of community morning tea. Each term a different class groups organisers and prepares for the Morning Tea. Staff, Students, families and CES Ltd staff share stories over a selection of delicious treats.
- Increased participation in St Kilian's Parish and events, including market days.
- The continued development of a welcoming and culturally sensitive entry and waiting area.
- The continued development of Curriculum materials to support our Positive Behaviour initiatives.
- The continued celebrations of Easter, Advent and Marcellin Champagnat's Feast Day.

### Parent Satisfaction

Families provide overwhelmingly positive feedback to our staff team regarding their experiences as a part of the Doxa School community. There is an experience of high support, approach-ability and a positive school environment.

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 school climate, communication and student safety. 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 conversations and phone calls between staff members and parents /guardians.

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## Financial Performance

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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](http://www.acnc.gov.au).

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at [www3.doxabendigo.catholic.edu.au](http://www3.doxabendigo.catholic.edu.au)