



SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023

As part of our funding agreement with the Australian Government, we provide our 'School Performance Information' and have it publicly available to the school community. The information has been posted on our website at www.stmarks.sa.edu.au and is also available at the school office.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please direct them to the Principal, Mr James Heyne.

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

In 2023 St Mark's Lutheran School operated with a Foundation to Year 6 structure providing 2 classes in each year level. St Mark's continues to operate as a systemic Lutheran school located in the Adelaide Hills. In harmony with our Lutheran ethos, the school is centred on the gospel of Jesus Christ as described in our Purpose and Values, which we strive to bring to life each day with all our interactions within and beyond the school community.

During 2023 the School Council undertook a comprehensive strategic planning process in consultation with all stakeholders. Below are our adopted Purpose, Values and Strategic Priorities

Our Purpose

'Our purpose is to inspire each learner today to shape the world of tomorrow, encouraged and cared for in a community drawn together by shared Christian values.'

Our Values

Love - We reflect God's love for us by caring for others and treating everyone with kindness and respect.

Courage - We welcome challenges as opportunities to learn and grow, moving forward with optimism and confidence.

Curiosity – We view the world in wonder, open minded and inquiring, seeking opportunities to explore, discover and learn.

Service – We give generously of our time and talents for others.

St Mark's Lutheran Strategic Priorities

Learning and Growth

VISION

A consistent, whole school approach to contemporary teaching and learning

PRACTICE

Teaching and learning practices that:

- Challenge and support each student to grow academically to their potential.
- Develop the whole person academically, socially, spiritually, physically and emotionally.

DATA

Above average whole school academic results and growth.

IMPROVEMENT

Staff engage proactively in outward-looking inquiry and investigation to continually develop their professional skills, collaborate with colleagues and incorporate the best methodologies into their practice.

Connection and Wellbeing

COMMUNITY

Students, families and staff feel welcome, that they belong, are supported and valued and are connected to each other and the school through shared purpose, values and a commitment to helping each other to succeed.

COMMUNICATION

The quality, quantity and mode of access to information is highly effective and meets the needs of students, families and staff.

RELATIONSHIPS

The school cultivates an understanding of wellbeing and positive behaviour and how this supports positive relationships.

SERVICE

The school has a heart of service.

Future Focus

VISION

A clear vision of the school's direction for growth, relationships, structure, location.

A clear St Mark's vision for Lutheran Education in Mount Barker.

ENROLMENTS

A sustainable flow of students into Foundation.

Increased retention and growth in enrolments.

Increased brand awareness and positive perceptions of St Mark's in the wider community.

Increased percentage of parents of pre-school aged children considering St Mark's.

SUSTAINABILITY

A clear vision and plan to care for and connect with the Earth.

A clear plan for ongoing improvement of spaces and facilities, including marketability.

A sustainable long term financial and funding plan supports delivery of operational programs and capital improvements.

SCHOOL LIFE

St Mark's adopts a holistic approach to learning where individual student needs are developed through quality educational and pastoral programs.

Educationally, ongoing curriculum development and quality teaching results in a strong emphasis placed upon Literacy, Numeracy and Christian Studies. The integration of technology into the learning programs developed from the Australian Curriculum areas of English, Mathematics, Science, HASS, The Arts, Health and PE, Technologies and Languages – German, underpins quality learning experiences for our students.

In 2023 the school continued to be guided by its 6 Learning Principles.

1. We learn through concept based inquiry.
2. We are confident learners when we feel safe and respected.
3. Learning looks different for everyone.
4. Feedback helps us grow in our learning.
5. Learning excites us when we can connect it to our world.
6. We connect with new ideas, skills and others using technology as a tool.

Areas of subject specialisation in 2023 included Music, German, Physical Education and collaborative use of our Library/Resource centre.

In addition, students at St Mark's undertake a wide range of learning experiences through many events, activities and learning opportunities.

Social Justice:

Support of national and local charities through our chapel offerings i.e.

Australian Lutheran World Service Walk My Way Project, Nifty Knitters

Leadership:

Student Representative Council, House Captains, playground Peer Mentor

Program, Student Representative Council lunch clubs

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <u>Excursions:</u> | Art Gallery, Museum, Laratinga Wetlands, Parliament House, Adelaide Zoo, Hahndorf German Excursion, Year 6 Survivor Day, HILS Day, Morialta Conservation Park, Monarto Zoo, The Cedars Hahndorf, Space Discovery Centre |
| <u>Incursions:</u> | Music is Fun, Year 2 Science Day, German Day |
| <u>Outdoor Education:</u> | Year 1 – Year 5 Camps as well as Year 6 Aquatics Camp & Foundation Stay & Play Afternoon, Nature Play Day |
| <u>Music/Drama Program:</u> | Senior Choir, Band, Individual Music Tutor Programs for varied instruments, Senior School Musical and Sounds on Sunday performances |
| <u>Community Events:</u> | Parents and Friends Twilight Family Picnic, Ride & Walk to School Days, Colour Run, Parents & Friends PJ & Pizza Night, Student Representative Council Reading Fest, Parents & Friends Student Disco, Year 6 Graduation Dinner and Remembrance Day, Cyber Safety Parent Sessions |
| <u>Sport:</u> | SAPSASA Swimming, SAPSASA Netball, Barker Districts Athletics Day, Inter-Lutheran Athletics, Cross Country, Pedal Prix, Lightning Carnival, Courier Cup, House Sports, Sports Day, Swimming & Water Safety and Gymnastics programs were all highlights in 2022 |
| <u>Related Curricula:</u> | ICAS Competition, Premier’s Reading Challenge and Book Fair, National Science Week activities, International Maths Day and Maths Olympiad |
| <u>Learning Support:</u> | Targeted intervention programs for Numeracy and Literacy including MiniLit & MacqLit, Phonemic Awareness |

Pastorally, St Mark’s strives to develop caring and nurturing relationships between all members of the school community including active parent participation. Our staff, supported by our Pastoral Support Worker provided support and care for our students and families in all aspects of their lives.

In 2023 the school, through its Mission and Ministry Framework, saw members of the St Mark’s congregation, continue the mentoring of at risk students through the School’s Kids Hope Program. Members of the congregation also shared their knowledge of knitting with students forming a Nifty Knitters club and provided Bibles to Year 2 students.

In 2023 staff continued to implement the ‘You Can Do It’ and Circle Time in classrooms. This supports the school’s restorative practices for managing student behaviour.

The school held fortnightly assemblies where classes were invited to present their learning experiences. Assemblies are also an opportunity for the Student Representative Council to share initiatives i.e. lunch time clubs, fundraising foci as well as reminders of the school value/s for the term. Weekly chapels are another occasion that our students come together. Chapels were either led by the School’s Pastor or individual classes.

During 2023, St Mark’s was able to continue actions in its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) through its celebration of National Reconciliation Week.

In 2023 the school enjoyed Harmony Day. This is an important occasion as it celebrates the changing face of our community encouraging students to respect the different religions and cultures that are now part of St Mark’s.

In 2023 students from Cornerstone College (sister school) were able to support student learning through the college’s Legacy Project.

Our priority at St Mark’s is to ensure that our students have the skills and understandings to safely and effectively navigate their way around their digital environment with confidence. In 2023 our students from Year 3 – Year 6 participated in an education session on cyber safety that focused on digital citizenship, online gaming, social media do’s & don’ts, cyberbullying and online grooming. A parent online information session was also scheduled with a focus on strategies for online wellbeing and screen time management.

OUR STUDENTS

In 2023 St Mark's provided enrolment for 303 students comprised of 150 girls and 153 boys. 2% of students identified as indigenous. 8% of our students have a language background other than English.

OUR STAFF

Teacher Standards and Qualifications

All teachers have satisfied the requirements of teacher registration, including Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care Training and DHS Working With Children Check.

The following table indicates the highest qualifications of St Mark's teaching staff.

| Masters | Bachelor | Graduate Diploma |
|---------|----------|------------------|
| 3 | 23 | 1 |

The professional learning of staff is a priority at St Mark's. Teaching staff continued to receive professional learning as they developed concept based inquiry units of learning in the areas of Science and HASS.

In 2023 the school was served by 27 teaching staff and 11 administration and support staff. No staff identified as Indigenous. Together they form the cornerstone of the quality environment that St Mark's is known for.

STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTING

In 2023 the school participated in the online National Literacy and Numeracy testing. Students at St Mark's continued to achieve at high levels with the percentage of students achieving above the national percentages in the new category of 'needs additional support' above national averages.

Percentage of Students above the Needs Additional Support Benchmark

| | Reading | Writing | Spelling | Grammar and Punctuation | Numeracy | % of students absent or withdrawn |
|--------|---------|---------|----------|-------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|
| Year 3 | 95 | 98 | 95 | 91 | 91 | 2% |
| Year 5 | 100 | 90 | 92 | 90 | 98 | 2% |

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The student attendance in 2023 across the school is reported below for the two collection periods for all students in Years 1 to 6.

| Semester One | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Year level | % attendance |
| Year 1 | 95.4 |
| Year 2 | 93.0 |
| Year 3 | 94.1 |
| Year 4 | 93.5 |
| Year 5 | 93.6 |
| Year 6 | 93.8 |
| School Total | 94 |

| Term Three | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Year level | % attendance |
| Year 1 | 91.2 |
| Year 2 | 92.8 |
| Year 3 | 92.3 |
| Year 4 | 93.3 |
| Year 5 | 92.3 |
| Year 6 | 91.9 |
| School Total | 92 |

When a student is absent without explanation, a phone call is made to the parents or guardians after the morning roll has been marked. Parents and guardians are required to provide explanations for absences from school and apply for attendance exemptions for extended absences of 5 or more days. Parents used a variety of mediums to inform the school if their child was absent.

PARENT, STUDENT AND STAFF SATISFACTION WITH THE SCHOOL

At the end of the 2023 school year families were invited to provide feedback via an online survey facilitated by an independent facilitator – Commshake Media. The survey results indicated high levels of satisfaction.

Top reasons given for choosing St Mark's included:

- The school's **reputation** in the community and in parents' social circles.
- St Mark's position as a **Christian** School and its strong focus on **values**.
- High **quality education** on offer.
- Welcoming, caring, nurturing **community**.
- Supportive, committed **staff**.
- The school's **small School feel** and **manageable class sizes**.

Other feedback included:

- 87% of parents believe the school is performing in the 'Good' to 'Excellent' range.
- 84% of parents agree that staff understand children and their individual needs.
- 85% of parents believe their child feels quite or extremely safe with 15% believing their child feels somewhat safe.
- 99% of parents believe their child has quite a bit, a tremendous amount or some inclusion and connection at School.
- 100% of families rated the quality of the school's facilities as 'good' to 'excellent'.
- 92% of families say they feel welcome and encouraged to be actively involved in the school.

Comments for areas for improvement included:

- Improved communication when learning is not improving as expected.
- Increased challenge for learners achieving at year level.
- Continue to focus on wellbeing programs.

The school thanks families for their feedback which was important in shaping our 2024 – 2026 strategic priorities.

In 2023 we continued to be affirmed by our community anecdotally through the following indicators:

- ✓ Our School has again been greatly supported through the wonderful efforts of a dedicated team of Parents and Friends.
- ✓ Student Representative Council hosted numerous events to promote the school’s values. Initiatives included National Reconciliation Week, Harmony Day and a Non-perishable Food Drive for Service. Our Student Representative Council also hosted numerous lunchtime clubs which were well attended by students from Foundation to Year 6.
- ✓ A caring community - Our Religious Pastoral Support Worker oversaw our ‘Caret’ which provided valuable support and care for many families in need. She also provided programs of support for students to assist them to feel safe and respected in our School. Parents and extended family feedback consistently affirmed the care provided to families in times of difficulty.
- ✓ Graduation of students. Families with students graduating from St Mark’s in 2023 continued to express their deep gratitude and thanks to our staff for the care, nurture and education provided to their children.

SCHOOL INCOME BROKEN DOWN BY FUNDING SOURCE

Below is listed the income received by the school in 2023. We acknowledge not only the funding provided by the Commonwealth and State Governments but also the significant and substantial level of tuition fees paid by families.

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Commonwealth Funding: | \$3,103,574 - 59% |
| State Funding: | \$889,086- 17% |
| Tuition Fees: | \$1,175,394 - 23% |
| Other Income: | \$66,409 – 1% |
| <u>Total</u> | <u>\$5,234,463</u> |

Thank you for taking the time read our 2023 School Performance Report. I would welcome any questions you may have. The best way to understand the experience we provide for our community, is to visit us personally. I would welcome the opportunity to share our story with you.

Respectfully Submitted

James Heyne
Principal
St Mark’s Lutheran School.