

Annual Report to the School Community



St Joseph's College

21 Dickson Street, ECHUCA 3564 Principal: Anne Marie Cairns Web: www.sje.vic.edu.au Registration: 595, E Number: E3017

Principal's Attestation

I, Anne Marie Cairns, attest that St Joseph's 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 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 22 Mar 2024

About this report

St Joseph's 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

Vision and Mission

Our Vision

We envision an inclusive Catholic learning community where all people are valued, where all creation is sacred, where the pursuit of personal excellence is paramount, and where our core

values of wonder, courage, justice, hope, compassion, and hospitality are our hallmarks.

Our Mission - To challenge and empower students to be creative and critical thinkers who act with strength and kindliness in the Gospel tradition.

College Overview

St.Joseph's College, a Kildare Ministries Catholic Secondary School in the Brigidine tradition, is a dynamic, welcoming and hope-filled school that promotes excellence and equity, so that all students can become confident and creative learners. In 1886 a group of brave young Brigidine sisters arrived from Ireland to establish Catholic education in Echuca. Since then the College has grown and developed to meet modern academic and pastoral needs. Nonetheless, we have preserved our beautiful period architecture, including the centrepiece of our College, the exquisite 1899 Convent Chapel with its marble altar and jewel like stained-glass. The Chapel is at the heart of our daily life, providing a place of gathering in joyful times and in sadness, as well as a quiet, reflective and prayerful oasis for students and staff in the busyness of their day. Steeped in our Catholic and Brigidine heritage, we have provided quality Catholic education and a vibrant learning community for the families of Northern Victoria and Southern New South Wales for many generations. The College motto "Strength and Kindliness" derives from that of Bishop Daniel Delany of Kildare Ireland, who founded the order of St. Brigid in 1807. St. Brigid, who lived in Ireland in the fifth century, was a woman of great initiative and faith. Her sense of compassion, social justice and generosity was legendary. At St. Joseph's we hope to inspire students to live "in the footsteps of St. Brigid" with courage and conviction. Tradition and contemporary life have always mixed easily at St Joseph's College, where icons such as the ornate fountain in the forecourt foster a deep sense of stability and permanency. The massive oak tree, planted the day the school opened in 1886, reminds us that like St. Brigid's daily work for the good of others, our smallest efforts can have far-reaching effects. The Brigidine international educational reputation for high academic quality ensured that St Joseph's quickly became, and remains today, a leader in quality education. The "futures oriented" programs and pathways advance young people's gifts and talents by providing an exciting and challenging range of opportunities for them to develop spiritually, academically, physically, emotionally and socially. Close links with the local community, businesses and training providers promote an engagement with the world that is flexible and enlivening. The rich Brigidine heritage of caring for those most in need is also soundly embedded within the school's culture. Our "Justice and Democracy" group leads the school in developing a compassionate awareness of our brothers and sisters around the world with whom we can stand in solidarity such as refugees, victims of domestic violence, etc. St. Joseph's College is proud of its ongoing association with the local aboriginal Yorta Yorta community and is actively committed to the promotion of dialogue and respect between all cultures. The Koorie Education Workers encourage the school community to learn about, respect and celebrate the gifts of our local indigenous culture, as well as support our Koorie students to achieve and succeed in all areas of school life.

Principal's Report

2023 has been an incredible year for St Joseph's College. We successfully opened our new Kildare Campus and our Year 7 students and staff have transitioned to their new learning and teaching environment with joy and gratitude. This achievement is not to be underestimated. The move to a multi campus College is a significant shift in the landscape and history of the College. A dream that has finally come to fruition; a dream that began by those before me; a dream that began with Kildare Education Ministries; and a dream that began with staff who knew the expansion was necessary, despite the challenges it would bring. This achievement will allow for many opportunities for our students and staff and the wider community. But, like all new adventures, things take time. Stage 2 is well on the way, the plans for Stage 3 have been submitted and planning for our first sports oval is taking place. All of these structures are needed, but we are called to be patient as we work our way through the finances, the possibilities and the funding options. The sporting fields have brought us much success this year and there have been many accolades shared and celebrated. As a College we value a well rounded education, and events like our St Joes On Show Exhibition help us achieve that balance. Our talented students in the fields of art, drama, media, music and their various performances were fantastic. This entire evening is dedicated to acknowledging the gifts and talents of students in the Arts, something we are very proud of at our College. I would like to take this opportunity to commend our staff for their commitment and dedication to our students. Our staff, regardless of their role, are all committed to the vision and mission of working for, and with young people, whether that be our student services staff who care for students when they are unwell, or our grounds and maintenance staff who continually set up and pack up for various student celebrations. Our staff continually go the extra step, particularly our Year 12 teachers, who spend much of their time outside of work hours tutoring, teaching extra classes, marking, advising and mentoring our Year 12s. Their accessibility to students is outstanding. 2023 has been a year of courage - courage to open our new campus, courage to embark on a new way of being and doing, courage to raise our expectations and courage to send some clear messages around student behaviour. We are a community and this community of St Joseph's is courageous enough to accept and welcome all through the gates of our hearts.

God Bless.

Anne Marie Cairns

Principal

Catholic Identity and Mission

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We aspire:

- To continue to enliven and celebrate our history, our present and our hope for the future.
- To further strengthen and build greater experiences of church life and spirituality for students and staff.
- To ensure Catholic social teachings are embedded in our St Joseph's community...
- Be witnesses to the life and works of Jesus Christ in all that we do as a College community.

Achievements

Our College Theme for 2023 was Be Brave! Let the little things be stepping stones for growth. This called for us to be courageous in the way we behave at school, in developing respectful relationships, in our approach to learning, in sharing our gifts and talents and in seeking justice and peace for all. Our theme has animated our journey and been an anchor for our approach to learning for our community. Letting the little things be stepping stones for growth has enabled us to explore our faith and community through the lens of courage. Courage has underpinned all our work as we stepped bravely into reshaping our College identity and a multi campus learning community with the need to share the story of who we are in different ways. This year we have explored many different scriptures about courage.

Value Added

House Celebrations - This year our student and staff House Leaders have continued our House celebrations. Students gather in House groups, having the courage to learn about their House patrons and themselves in multi age groups. House gatherings support our connections with the Catholic faith community as students work together to share liturgy or Mass characterised by student written and led prayers and Faith and Community.

House Masses and Gatherings - Have served as a cornerstone in building connections and a sense of belonging among students, as well as awareness and connection to House patrons. One of the year's noteworthy accomplishments has included amplifying student voices within the school community. Students have had the chance to voice their ideas, concerns, and proposals regarding school initiatives through avenues such as student meetings, suggestions to leadership, and open forums. Additionally, they have shaped how our community marks significant occasions. This work has not only given students more agency but also resulted in the adoption of significant changes based on their insightful observations. Liturgies and Masses led by students, social justice campaigns, and the expansion of the student leadership group are a few instances of this. House Masses connect with each other, our parish and establishing the one community multi campus identity.

Student Voice- Allows our students to have more connection and ownership in their learning journey.

Bishop Joe Grech - This year we were blessed to have two of our students receive the Bishop Joe Grech Scholarship. This award conferred by Catholic Education Sandhurst recognises and supports students who work towards leadership in a faith setting. Cora Wilson and Kajini Karunanayake were our worthy recipients. Well done to these two students. We learnt together for our Spirituality Day about what leading and learning is when we are in a Catholic dialogue school.

Learning and Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We aspire to:

- Establish and implement a College-wide, evidence-based learning and teaching pedagogical approach, which is innovative, diverse, inclusive and relevant for contemporary learning.
- Establish and nurture a culture of high expectations where consistent improvement in teacher and student efficacy is evident.
- Oversee the collection of quality data, promote the analysis of data and make data informed decisions. Ensure teachers use data continuously, collaboratively, and effectively to improve learning and teaching across all curriculum areas.
- Promote a culture of personalised learning where students are independent learning.
- Develop and implement a culture of coaching and mentoring to build the competency and capability of teachers, to actively engage in achieving the College's strategic vision, priorities in the curriculum and learning, teaching and assessment.

Achievements

The academic year of 2023 has marked a significant chapter in our school's journey, marked by growth and the long-anticipated opening of our Kildare Campus. Even though we are now a multi-campus school, throughout 2023, we have witnessed our staff and students creating one culture, one community both within and outside our school gates. The diverse range of subjects and programs offered at St. Joseph's has facilitated connections, imaginative thinking, and creativity among our students and staff – both inside and outside the classroom. From excursions and sporting triumphs to the vibrant "St. Joe's on Show," the year 2023 has been a testament to our collective accomplishments.

The year began with a celebration of our VCE Class of 2022's accomplishments. Despite the challenges posed by the 2022 VCE Exams amidst flood disruptions, our students' resilience and the dedication of their teachers allowed 118 students to successfully complete either their VCE or VCAL.

This year introduced several significant changes. The implementation of Compass, our new school management system, has transformed how we access information about our students, curriculum, and school events, making information more accessible and user-

friendly. Moreover, we embraced the new VCE VM Program at Years 11 and 12, providing students with increased choices and flexibility to pursue their passions and develop the skills required for future education, work, and life.

In the realm of music, our Instrumental Music Program made its debut in 2023, allowing students to explore a wide range of instruments, from the flute and drums to the electric guitar. This initiative has provided a platform for budding musicians to harmonise and discover their artistic potential.

The cornerstone of our continued success lies in the quality of the relationships we foster as a community. Our young learners and dedicated educators are committed to the art of teaching and learning. Their dedication to developing knowledge, skills, and understanding is designed to empower every student with the tools needed to lead a purposeful and joy-filled life beyond our school.

Student Learning Outcomes

Please refer below link for Student Learning Outcomes.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1E97g8aqj5A1whQBx3vqgPk9uYe9UMy4D? usp=sharing

NAPLAN - Proportion of students meeting the proficient standards					
Domain	Year level	Mean Scale score	Proficient		
Grammar & Punctuation	Year 7	524	56%		
	Year 9	528	39%		
Numeracy	Year 7	536	68%		
	Year 9	541	50%		
Reading	Year 7	538	76%		
	Year 9	542	54%		
Spelling	Year 7	519	67%		
	Year 9	541	56%		
Writing	Year 7	530	58%		
	Year 9	560	54%		

*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.

Senior Secondary Outcomes		
VCE Median Score	29	
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.

Post-School Destinations as at 2023

Tertiary Study

TAFE / VET

Apprenticeship / Traineeship

Deferred

Employment

Other - The category of Other includes both students Looking for Work and those classed as Other

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Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We aspire:

• To review, adopt and articulate a school-wide positive behaviour policy that considers action research, student engagement and positive behaviours required for learning.

• To advocate and foster student voice and agency through collaborative learning, input into curriculum design and student feedback on learning and teaching to improve student engagement.

• To enable and empower students to grow and learn in a culture that promotes positive relationships, student opportunities and places students at the centre of all experiences.

Achievements

For St Josephs, 2023, allowed us to continue to fully immerse ourselves back to a learning community.

Our Pastoral Care and Wellbeing supports, programs and initiatives continued to provide a scaffold and structure for our students to grow, develop, learn and thrive regardless of the location and delivery. Information, education, resources and support were provided in a multitude of ways to enable students to best access learning opportunities and provide a basis for positive mental health and wellbeing, particularly during challenges and difficult or unexpected circumstances.

In 2023 St Josephs' staff continued to connect our School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support Framework with an education model that encourages a growth mindset and fosters resilience, stamina and emotional intelligence. Understanding how to connect positive learning behaviours, pro-social behaviour and high expectations to reach our learners potential formed the basis of our professional learning opportunities.

A sincere thank you to all who continually work collaboratively to improve and enhance the St Joseph's College community.

Value Added

Positive Acknowledgement Cards

These were introduced to recognise positive contributions, build self-esteem and support the motivation to continue excelling. Learners are acknowledged in the classroom for consistent positive contribution to the classroom environment by receiving a card. The card is then passed onto their House Leader to be acknowledged both at the time of 'handing in' and at House assemblies.

Fitwell

It was a fitness and personal development group that incorporated Resilience Project principles of gratitude, empathy and mindfulness. Each group ran for approximately six sessions that included various discussion topics and therapeutic activities before students participated in a fitness workout.

Boys to Men

This program was delivered to numerous groups of male students throughout the year.

Students connected with one another in the context of their school and local community through sharing stories, experiences and opinions. Students also had the opportunity to learn practical life skills along the way.

R U OK Day

R U OK? Is an Australian suicide prevention charity that aims to promote life changing conversations. R U OK? The Wellbeing Team raised awareness within the school community of strategies to initiate therapeutic conversations through newsletter publications and announcements during staff meetings.

Learning Mentor Program Development

College Teaching worked to devise a sequential learning plan that is age appropriate and sequential.

SchoolTV

The College continued with School TV this year as part of our resources to support parents, staff and students. It covers an extensive range of topics and is continually updated and reviewed. Please familiarise yourself with this resource. Links are available on our website and can be found at https://sje.vic.schooltv.me/

Bloum Engage Student Wellbeing

The Bloum platform allows the College to 'see' the wellbeing landscape of our learners as a year level or individually. During semester two, our Year 7 learners completed check-ins using this tool.

Student Satisfaction

Student voice and engagement has been prioritised this year as we continue to provide opportunities for students to self-refer for wellbeing support, voicing issues that directly concern them, or their peers, and have an opportunity to co-create solutions.

Of the students surveyed the overall feeling that came out of the data was that 86% of students (the highest value) felt that teaching staff were both approachable and supportive. Students were more than satisfied with the overall education, and the subject offerings with response average being greater than 4 out of 5, (5 being the highest possible score) for both.

Student Attendance

Daily Attendance Register

St. Joseph's College keeps a register of the daily attendance of all students at the College in electronic form on Compass. The register of daily attendance records the following information for each student:

- Daily attendance
- Absences
- Reason for absence

• Documentation to substantiate reason for absence.

Attendance is checked at homeroom and at the start of each lesson, at:

- Learning Mentor (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday)
- Period 1
- Period 2
- Period 3
- Period 4.

Monitoring Daily Attendance

St. Joseph's College has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to monitor the daily attendance of students and identify absences from college or class:

• Parents are responsible for ensuring they notify the College to explain the absence of their children on any particular school day. Notification on Compass should be made prior to the start of school.

• Class teachers take the class roll promptly at Learning Mentor which is the commencement of the school day and during each lesson.

• Where students are participating in courses provided by other providers, class teachers contact providers at the commencement and end of the day to ensure student attendance has been monitored by the provider.

Following Up Unexplained Student Absences

St. Joseph's College has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to follow up unexplained absences from College:

• Where an absence has not been explained on Compass prior to the start of the school day, attendance notifications will be sent out a 10:00am. This notification is made on the same day, as soon as practicable, including for post-compulsory aged students.

• Where the absence remains unexplained the matter will be reported to the House Leader and Learning Mentor for investigation and follow up.

• All information in relation to unsatisfactory attendance is recorded on students' files and information with respect to attendance is provided in each student's school report.

Notification to Parents and Guardians of Unsatisfactory Attendance

St. Joseph's College has implemented the following systems and procedures in order to notify parents and guardians of unsatisfactory attendance:

• Where parents repeatedly fail to inform the College of absences the Learning Mentor will contact them directly seeking an explanation and to remind them of their obligation to report absences.

• Where a student continues to be unsatisfactorily absent from College, House Leaders will contact them directly seeking an explanation and to remind them of their obligation to report absences.

For continuing chronic unexplained Absences

The College will make contact requesting a meeting with College Leadership – Wellbeing and Engagement during which strategies will be discussed to improve attendance rates.

Parents and carers are regularly reminded to ensure that any changes to their contact details are communicated to the College.

Records of the Register of Daily Attendance

The attendance information is stored within Compass.

It is the responsibility of Suzanne Pola, College Leader — Student Wellbeing to ensure that student daily attendance is being effectively monitored.

Years 9 - 12 Student Retention Rate		
Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	69.3%	

Average Student Attendance Rate by Year Leve	
Y07	87.6%
Y08	85.6%
Y09	84.0%
Y10	83.3%
Overall average attendance	85.1%

Leadership

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We aspire to:

• Commit to building a culture that promotes learning improvements that are promoted by our school charism built around elevated expectations, positive and caring relationships, and a deep belief that every student can make excellent learning progress.

• Grow and sustain a leadership culture that is characterised by a shared purpose and a sharp vision of excellence for all, through distributed leadership that drives and supports a culture of innovation and continuous improvement in learning and wellbeing.

• Further develop leadership dispositions, capabilities and clarity around the nature of Catholic leadership, and a high-performance team culture through promoting a coaching and mentoring culture.

Achievements

Achievements

During 2023, we focused on the beginnings of introducing a coaching culture for our senior leaders. We also began our whole school focus on the Berry Street Education Model. This focuses on building the capacity of all staff in and out of the classroom.

In 2023, St Joseph's College continued its partnership with Melbourne University in its New Metrics for Success Program, which has enabled us to continue to access academics, international industry practitioners and renowned school leaders as we work to generate new and validated assessment tools.

Our Staff also had regular access to Paul Spence, a spiritual director, to meet with throughout the year.

Expenditure And Teacher Participation in Professional Learning		
List Professional Learning undertaken in 2023		
Description of PL teachers participated in:		
Professional Learning opportunities continued to be focussed on		
Enhancing Catholic Identity through Faith Formation		
• Embedding Positive Behaviours through the Berry Street Education Model		
Differentiation within the classroom		
Using data to inform teacher practices and data storytelling		
Professional Learning Teams		
Working with our VCE teachers to examine their Year 12 results		
• Workshops - Staff PL teams to then share knowledge with others - IT, time		
management, student wellbeing (Berry Street Implementation Team)		
Building Capacity in Leaders		
Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2023	103	
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$2226.82	

Teacher Satisfaction

Staff annually participate in a mid year formal survey which allows them to indicate their intentions, preferences and requests for the coming year. This survey also provides the opportunity for staff to provide feedback and book appointments if there are any further matters to discuss regarding their positions. From 2024 staff will be embarking on the development of a Staff Workplace Wellbeing plan and as part of this process will identify a longitudinal tool to measure staff satisfaction to be introduced from 2025.

Teacher Qualifications		
Doctorate	0.7%	
Masters	10.1%	
Graduate	17.4%	
Graduate Certificate	4.0%	
Bachelor Degree	51.7%	
Advanced Diploma	3.4%	
No Qualifications Listed	12.8%	

Staff Composition	
Principal Class (Headcount)	4
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	116
Teaching Staff (FTE)	100.6
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	76
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	77.6
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	3

Community Engagement

Goals & Intended Outcomes

Goals & Intended Outcomes

- To embed sustainable accountability regarding environmental impact.
- To build industry and business partnerships within the local community.

• To acknowledge our sacred responsibility to care for our environment and enculturate an ongoing commitment to stewardship.

• To develop a 'whole school' new and revised Masterplan.

Achievements

Social Justice

Living Justice, Living Peace begins with the smallest of actions and often at times, not the most glamorous. We sometimes think about giving through monetary donations, which in varying circumstances is helpful, yet the nitty gritty and more challenging tasks require time, energy and perseverance and are left for others to complete, or not completed at all. This year we have looked at the difference between equity and equality. It is sometimes challenging trying to enact equity, particularly when siblings keep the score on equality; so many of us have heard; 'remember the time that you did this for them, you never do that for me'. The reality is, at any given time, one might require something or need more than the other, so maintaining the equilibrium is challenging. This is also a common response we often hear amongst us, as students: 'why does so and so get this and I don't' and I can understand why some might perceive this as an injustice as they are wanting things to be equal. However, in reality, their situations or backgrounds are far from it. Some students might need extra assistance, attention or time for a SAC to make them equal, and therefore it comes back to equity. It is not always going to be equal, because someone needs more assistance than

another, or needs extra assistance or help to create true equality.

Koorie Education

Our theme for NAIDOC week this year was 'For Our Elders', and Allison O'Brien and Tilly Keenan, our dedicated art teachers, taught some of our Fire Carrier students as well as some of our Koorie students to create portraits of our Elders who live and are part of our Koorie community. Sadly we lost some Elders over the past few years and their

grandchildren were proud and honoured to create their portraits. The students met our Elders who were happy and excited to be a part of this theme. We had a lovely unveiling at The Foundry Gallery and thank all the people involved in this during NAIDOC week. Thanks also to St Mary's Parish.

Vinnies Sleepout

The challenges of homelessness touches the very core of our commitment to justice and compassion. Our senior students were invited to embrace the Vinnies Sleepout, united together in shedding light on the plight of homelessness. Armed with sleeping bags, mats, swags, and a shared purpose, they braved a night of little sleep to highlight awareness of those sleeping rough. They gained a glimpse into the challenging reality faced by the unhoused within our local and broader community. Through this experience we are hoping it will ignite a sense of social responsibility, illuminating the many hurdles confronted by those without shelter or a place to call home.

Servant Leadership

Most people are unknowingly role models for others. We see it every day in schools; the Year7s looking up to their older peers, or students looking up to their teachers/mentors for guidance. If we truly think about service and our influence, what are we teaching those who look up to us? Are we teaching them that we are above them or that we are too busy for them, or are we teaching them the message of Jesus, through service and action? It would be remiss of me to not finish by thanking our Senior Student Leaders for their incredible service and dedication to our community over the past year. I, for one, am going to miss the energy and collaboration. Your tireless efforts in promoting social justice and your willingness to assist others have not gone unnoticed. Your leadership style sets an inspiring example for your peers and the future years and has enriched our school environment in countless ways. Your empathy and genuine care for others truly has made a difference. And for this I thank you. Together with respect, together we walk.

Parent Satisfaction

Communications and Engagement Survey

This survey was introduced in 2022 and is shared with families at the end of each school year. It is designed to give them the opportunity to provide feedback on existing communication and engagement activities at St Joseph's College to determine what they

value most, where improvements can be made, and how we can best serve their needs moving forward. Their input helps ensure we are communicating and engaging with them in a way that is helpful to them.

Parent Focus Groups

In 2022, 2023 and 2024 we worked with focus groups of Year 6 and Year 7 families to seek their feedback on the transition process to secondary school, how they found our information nights and the enrolment process, how effective we were in welcoming them to the school, supporting their child's transition and keeping them informed, and where the perceived gaps were.

Community Stakeholder Meet & Greets

In 2022 and 2023 we held bi-annual Community Stakeholder Meet and Greet morning tea events which were designed to open the doors of our school to the wider community, to introduce community stakeholders to our new principal, for them to learn about her leadership philosophies and the plans she has for the school moving forward, and to develop and strengthen collaborative and inclusive partnerships.

Financial Performance

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

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at www.sje.vic.edu.au