



Simonds Catholic College West Melbourne

2020 Annual Report to the School Community



Table of Contents

- Contact Details2
- Minimum Standards Attestation2
- Our College Vision.....3
- College Overview4
- Principal’s Report5
- College Board Report7
- Education in Faith8
- Learning & Teaching10
- Student Wellbeing13
- Child Safe Standards.....18
- Leadership & Management19
- College Community22

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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Peter Riordan, attest that Simonds Catholic College 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 2020 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 School.

28/04/2021

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

Our College Vision

OUR VISION is to develop confident, well-rounded young men who have hope for their future.

OUR MISSION

The Simonds Catholic College community, united in faith, inspires young men to become active, global citizens. Guided by Gospel values, we provide a safe and supportive learning environment in which each student is individually known. We challenge our students to become courageous, resilient and hope-filled.

WE VALUE

- **Catholic beliefs and teachings**, particularly those relating to justice, charity and compassion. We encourage everyone to give of themselves, allocating time and other resources to people who are in need, both within and beyond the school community
- **pastoral programs** that promote an appreciation for the whole person. We foster a spirit of mateship that strengthens through the school years, forging lifelong bonds;
- **respectful behaviour**. We strive to provide a collaborative and supportive learning culture that recognises the dignity of each person. Respect for self, others and the environment is intrinsic to school life;
- **inclusivity**, respecting people of all cultures, genders and religions who act in empathy with our values;
- **fully committed teachers** who provide contemporary and purposeful learning for all students;
- **motivated students** who actively pursue excellence and assume responsibility for their own learning.

College Overview

Simonds Catholic College is a two-campus Catholic Secondary School for boys in the heart of the city. Our size (416 boys in Years 7-12) means that each boy can be individually known, valued and have a sense of belonging. With multiple transport options and ease of access to both our central campuses, our students come from all areas of Melbourne. This adds to the diversity of community that Simonds is known for. In 2020 our Year 7s came from over 30 different primary schools.

Simonds Catholic College provides high quality programs to students within a spiritual, academic, social, sporting and cultural dimension. The school is driven by a deep belief that every student is capable of successful learning, has high expectations and promotes intellectual rigour. Strong procedures are in place to encourage a school-wide, shared responsibility for student learning and success, and to encourage the development of a culture of continuous professional improvement.

The excellent facilities mean that we are able to offer a broad and exciting curriculum within the setting of a small school. Our proximity to the beautiful St Mary's Church at West Melbourne, and St Brigid's Church in Fitzroy North, means that boys are provided with frequent opportunities to reflect, pray and celebrate the Sacraments in an inspiring and historical religious setting.

In addition to the VCE classes taught at the St Brigid's 10-12 Campus, students have access to a wide range of VET subjects through the Inner Melbourne VET cluster. VCAL was introduced as an alternative senior secondary pathway in 2013. A small number of VCE classes are shared with students from the Academy of Mary Immaculate.

Simonds Catholic College is a member of the Associate Catholic College Competition, which includes sport, music, drama, debating, chess, public speaking and student leadership. Our Year 9 Program offers students opportunities in a week long Canberra City Experience, a Community Service Placement and an Outdoor Adventure Camp.

A wide range of external facilities are utilised to provide additional learning opportunities for students. The inner city location provides easy access to many of Melbourne's excellent educational and cultural facilities. Teachers are encouraged to use these on class excursions. The Physical Education and Sport program is enhanced through the use of local facilities including the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre, North Melbourne Football Club Oval, Princess Park Ovals, Edinburgh Gardens Ovals, Carlton Baths and Flagstaff Gardens.

The staff has excellent professional qualifications and are committed to providing a high standard of education in an environment of mutual support. The teachers are very generous in their commitment of time and share a concern for the pastoral needs of the students entrusted to their care. There are a number of programs within the Pastoral Care Program that support and nurture the development of young men in our rapidly changing society.

Principal's Report

2020 will be a year that will be remembered for all sorts of reasons, in a variety of different ways, by so many people. For Simonds Catholic College it was an opportunity to recognise and celebrate our 25th Anniversary as a school since commencing in 1996. Remembering, that Simonds Catholic College began as a Year 7 - 10 Catholic Secondary Boys School in West Melbourne as an amalgamation of Cathedral College, East Melbourne and St Mary's Boys' Regional School and has now grown to a dual campus Catholic secondary boys school in the heart of Melbourne, with an excellent reputation for educating young men. A beautiful badge to mark the 25th Anniversary was given to every student to commemorate this wonderful occasion.

The 2020 school year started very similarly to that of many other school years. We held a whole School Assembly where we welcomed Year 7 students to the College and recognised outstanding achievements from the 2019 VCE class on the very first day of Term 1. The House Swimming and Athletics Carnivals were held and were highly successful. Our Year 9 students braved the elements of the Mitchell River Region on a four day hike and participated in mountain bike riding, white water rafting and hiking where they carried their essential items of food, a tent and a sleeping bag. Year 7 students enjoyed many outdoor pursuits on their camp held at Alpine Ash Retreat in Toolangi State Forest.

In late March, as a school community, we had to transition to Remote Teaching and Learning very quickly. Through the use of Microsoft Teams, and due to the adaptability and flexibility of staff we ran a highly successful trial day, which really held the College in good stead throughout Terms 2 & 3, as students continued to learn remotely. There have been many challenges that students, staff and parents have had to overcome this year, as we really have had to work through unprecedented times. To be honest, I cannot speak more highly of how our staff, students and their families have worked so well together to get through the year.

One of the biggest challenges we faced as a school was to keep boys interested, connected and engaged in their learning whilst using a laptop or other device at home, rather than being in the classroom. When I reflect on what we were able to achieve this year in regard to student learning, I am enormously proud of the work of both students and staff, and have been so impressed by the initiative, adaptability, flexibility and patience they have shown this year, as we transitioned to Remote Teaching and Learning, and back again to onsite learning to finish off the year.

Another huge challenge for everybody was the adjustment to a number of restrictions and protocols as a direct result of COVID-19. Students were required to wear masks on their return to school, strict social distancing rules were put in place, as well as the use of hand sanitiser as boys entered and departed classrooms. Boys were temperature checked with a thermometer on their arrival to school.

Unfortunately, all of our Term 2 & 3 ACC activities were cancelled due to COVID-19, as were our Year 8 Camp at Grantville and our Year 9 City Experience to Canberra, along with our Annual Art Show and musical performances. Even Simonds Day had to be postponed from May until late in Term 4 (hopefully).

Whilst students and staff were really disappointed to not be able to participate in these co-curricular activities, they responded in a very positive way through the set up and running of a number of virtual clubs and activities. A virtual exercise club was established, virtual music concerts were held during lunch times, a virtual art activity was set up, cooking classes were shared online and a virtual chess club was put in place. Two activities that were real highlights were the Superball Container Challenge and the Rockstar Challenge participated in by staff and students. A further initiative was the presentation of the Simonds@Home Lockdown Learning

Awards to two or three students from each Homeroom group from Years 7 - 12 at the end of Term 3, to acknowledge those students who had really given of their best during these adverse and challenging times.

As you would no doubt be aware, an enormous amount of work had to be done to accommodate the transition from onsite learning to remote Learning and Teaching which we named Simonds@Home in 2020. I am really indebted to Mrs Helen Koutoulogenis, Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching)/Head of St Mary's Campus and Mr Robert Anastasio, Deputy Principal/Head of St Brigid's for leading and implementing the transition from onsite learning and teaching to remote learning and teaching. They were able to initiate numerous resources and activities to assist teachers in transitioning to remote teaching very, very quickly. Their work in this regard on top of their many other duties was quite outstanding. Because every staff member was teaching with a laptop and every student was learning remotely via various devices at home, as you would appreciate, the IT Department at Simonds Catholic College was put under considerable pressure. Again, I commend and thank Mr Joshua Jennings and Mr Phill Gorini for the enormous amount of work they have done this year in keeping our IT functioning so smoothly throughout remote teaching and learning.

Mr Halyer Rayner joined Simonds Catholic College as Business Manager in April of this year, and it is very obvious to me that his impressive financial background, wide experience in the education sector and great knowledge will ensure he is a great asset to the College for many years to come.

All staff members have had to adjust and change the way they do things as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. I am very grateful to the following people who have made these adjustments so that our students can benefit even further from a Simonds Catholic College education. In particular, I thank our Religious Education Coordinator, our Innovation & Learning Leader, the Year Level Coordinators, the College Counsellor, Heads of Faculty, the Director of Sport, the Learning Diversity Coordinator, the Librarian, Subject Teachers, Homeroom Teachers and Learning Support Officer for all that they have done in challenging and at times difficult circumstances in such a positive and well-intentioned manner. My thanks are also extended to the administration and ancillary staff for the way in which they have gone about things this year, in many cases, in a very different way than what they were used to.

As the Principal of Simonds Catholic College, I am very proud of the way in which our school community has responded to so many challenges this year - a year that will be discussed for many years to come and will be remembered by all of us who lived through it. As a school community we have lived a very different year this year, but we have proved we are resilient, flexible, adaptable and very capable. I encourage you to take these attributes you now know about yourself into your future. 2020 will certainly be a year that will never be forgotten!

College Board Report

2020 was a year like no other, and for the staff and students of Simonds Catholic College there were constant challenges. Lockdown(s) meant students and staff had to quickly adapt to remote learning and for teachers, there was no end of new processes and procedures.

These challenges were met head on by both students and staff who adapted to the new way of learning with positivity, determination and resilience. At a time when staying connected with those around us was crucial, I would like to take this opportunity to commend all Simonds Catholic College staff including teachers and education support staff for their sustained commitment to ensuring a quality education for all students. Aside from the learning, there was also plenty of opportunity to participate in online challenges and activities as well as learning how to cook with Mr Di Fabrizio!

The College is certainly in a strong position to provide students with the best possible education into the future. Our outstanding 2020 VCE results attest to the fact that we are a small school 'punching well above our weight'.

Brett Bowker

Chairman

Education in Faith

Goals & Intended Outcomes

2020 was an unprecedented year for the Simonds Community. Despite the challenges and restrictions imposed upon the school community our goals as follows ensured the strength of our education in faith:

- To provide a nurturing environment with the aim of supporting the faith journeys of all students and staff
- To foster a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith
- To encourage students to uphold Christian values in their daily lives
- To engage in meaningful daily prayer and to encourage students to write and to share their prayers with others
- To understand that it is the role of every individual to contribute to the creation of a just society
- To encourage involvement in Social Justice Activities, as an expression of our Faith in action.

Achievements

A very successful delivery of the New Religious Education courses at Years 7 to 10 (online).

VALUE ADDED

- Student surveys at Years Nine and Ten indicated a very successful level of student engagement with the courses, despite the pressures of on-line learning.
- The Religious Education Staff participated in a year- long partnership with the Academy of Mary Immaculate and Caroline Chisolm. With several meetings across the year via Zoom the aim was to enhance the implementation of the new Religious Education, Years 7-10 Frameworks, and the sharing of resources and ideas
- Daily prayers on iSimonds for students uploaded by the Religious Education Coordinator. The prayers were specifically chosen to relate to the circumstances of 2020.
- Students and staff were provided with meditation links in the daily bulletin.
- Weekly staff prayer was led by the Religious Education coordinator, with a focus on the challenges and blessings of 2020
- The principles of Catholic Social Teaching permeated the daily life at Simonds Catholic College. In 2020, staff and students came together to support one another in every way possible.
- The school community raised money in support of Caritas Australia, via Project Compassion, prior to the lockdown.
- A successful and prayerful on-line tribute to Justin Simonds, on the occasion of Simonds Day

- Throughout the year students were encouraged to produce their own prayers and reflections for the world in 2020. Some of these were included in the Justinian.

The following formal liturgies were held in 2020:

- Staff Mass at the commencement of the year
- Family Mass
- The Year 12 Graduation Liturgy
- The Staff end of year Christmas Liturgy.

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To improve the Literacy skills of all our students.

- To deliver consistent teaching practices that are data and research informed.
- To use individual student data that informs teaching practice.
- To develop a feedback culture effectively within the school.

Achievements

The school is driven by a deep belief that every student is capable of successful learning, has high expectations and promotes intellectual rigour.

Strong procedures are in place to encourage a school-wide, shared responsibility for student learning and success, and to encourage the development of a culture of continuous professional improvement and to ensure that the individual learning profiles of each student are known to teachers.

Staff have developed an understanding of College performance data and how this data have changed over time. This is reflected in the introduction of the Reading Equals Power (REP) program, the academic redemption process and Approaches to Learning reporting. Teacher analysis of VCE data acts as a trigger for discussions about their teaching practices.

The learning needs of students are identified and programs to meet these needs are developed and resourced. The College supports the programs by the appointment of a Learning Diversity Coordinator, six learning support officers and the inclusion of four teachers in Simonds Program for Accelerated Reading and Knowledge (SPARK). On Demand testing occurs for Year levels 7 to 10 on a yearly basis and provides teachers and school leaders with an indication of distance travelled by students in numeracy and literacy. All students enrolling at the College in Year 7 are tested and the results of the test assist in identifying students who would benefit from additional support or extension.

In order to ensure that the individual student learning profiles are known to the relevant teachers, the Learning Diversity Department and teachers involved in the SPARK program are now using a range of assessments such as YARC (York Assessment for Reading Comprehension), SPAT (Sutherland Phonological Awareness Test), KBIT-2 (Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test), CELF-5 Screener (a standardised screener of receptive and expressive language difficulties) and the Rowe and Rowe Auditory Processing screener. These learning assessment tools are used as tools to help understanding of student strengths and areas of need.

2020 was dominated by the forced shift to online learning and a significant achievement was the relatively effective delivery of lessons using MS Teams. Teachers now use Notebooks to deliver lessons, upload resources for students and maintain a portfolio of student work. They are also using the Microsoft Forms, Poly, Kahoot and Socrative apps not just as formative assessment tools but also to survey students on the effectiveness of different teaching strategies.

The College has procedures for the collection of data compliant with the National Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD). Processes have been developed for Learning Diversity Coordinator to work collaboratively with teachers to establish Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) for students included in the NCCD. This has enhanced teacher awareness of the need to differentiate their teaching practices to address the identified learning need.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

PAT testing of new year 7 students again showed considerable variation in the reading and maths skills of students coming into the school, reinforcing the need for effective identification and remediation of learning challenges through classroom differentiation, Individual Learning Plans, and intervention programs such as SPARK and StepUp that provide targeted approaches to learning.

In 2020 there was no NAPLAN data that could enable comparison with like student cohorts at other schools, but the college continued to use OnDemand testing for year levels 7-10 as a way to monitor individual and cohort growth in the areas of Reading and Number & Algebra. Compared to fairly consistent growth over the past few years, OnDemand testing in 2020 indicated less consistent and overall muted growth in reading and Maths. It would seem likely that this is a consequence of the forced shift to online learning and the subsequent reallocation of programs such as REP for much of the year. The results may also reflect somewhat compromised testing regimes at the end of the year as the college prioritised supporting students in their return to school and preparing them for end of year exams, over best practice testing regimes.

MEDIAN NAPLAN RESULTS FOR YEAR 9

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Year 9 Grammar & Punctuation

Year 9 Numeracy

Year 9 Reading

Year 9 Spelling

Year 9 Writing

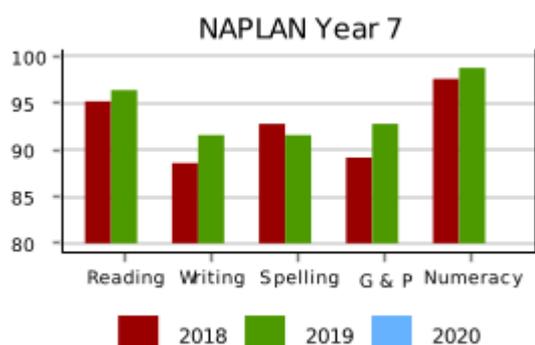
* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019	2020	2019 – 2020
	%	%	Changes	%	Changes
			%	*	*
YR 07 Grammar & Punctuation	89.2	92.8	3.6		
YR 07 Numeracy	97.6	98.8	1.2		
YR 07 Reading	95.2	96.4	1.2		
YR 07 Spelling	92.8	91.6	-1.2		
YR 07 Writing	88.6	91.6	3.0		
YR 09 Grammar & Punctuation	92.6	88.6	-4.0		
YR 09 Numeracy	97.1	100.0	2.9		
YR 09 Reading	98.6	94.0	-4.6		
YR 09 Spelling	95.6	97.1	1.5		
YR 09 Writing	86.8	82.9	-3.9		

* 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.



Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To provide a structured, orderly and safe learning environment where boys are known, supported and inspired and are able to flourish and achieve their full potential.

- That each boy grows in resilience, self-confidence, and has hope for the future.
- That each boy feels valued as a member of a community, and respects others, in a school that cares about his wellbeing.
- That positive relationships are emphasised to ensure commitment and engagement in the school environment.
- That individual strengths are recognised, encouraged and developed, whether they be academic, sporting, artistic, technological or other.

Achievements

- Maintaining teaching throughout the lockdown and making full use of the technology provided to us. Subject lessons were provided in a similar timeframe and lesson structure as 'normal' allowing a level of continued normalcy and academic rigour.
- Having a whole school approach to using OneNote where all of the resources can be accessed at any given time.
- Adjusting our curriculum to suit the lockdown environment and giving the students the chance to still excel in the subject through personal video calls and group chats.
- Extra VCE lessons were undertaken during weekends and after classes to best prepare students for SACs and the Final exams.
- Pastoral Care lessons were provided, using the Resilience Project that allowed discussion and expression of feelings regarding concerns and issues faced during COVID-19
- Improve and encourage mental and physical wellbeing throughout lockdown.
- Provision of daily homeroom lessons supporting students organisational needs and sense of community.
- Regular personal engagement with students and families during the time of remote learning.
- Recognition of student achievement through awards and certificates

Counsellor

- Access to counselling across both campuses on 2 specified days per campus by the College Counsellor, including Telehealth over the Covid period.
- Access to external agencies eg. DHHS, Child First, Headspace, Kidshelpline, Orgygen and RCH Mental Health.
- Liaison with and record of student engagement with external agencies.

- Visits to classrooms to ensure familiarity of Counsellor, knowledge of how to obtain counselling support, and discussion of current mental health and wellbeing issues as arising within the student population.
- Records of student behaviours, mental health status and parent and external professional contact.

VALUE ADDED

Check-ins were conducted by YLCs and Homeroom Teachers when we were undertaking remote learning.

- Homeroom teachers monitored student engagement, and social and emotional wellbeing during daily Homeroom sessions and weekly Pastoral Care periods. Groups chats on Microsoft Teams were used on a regular basis for students to maintain their friendships and relationships, and regular 1:1 teacher/student calls took place.
- YLCs received reports from Homeroom teachers about students at risk of disengagement or not submitting classwork. YLC calls to students and parents were made to improve student engagement and work completion.
- Virtual Year Level assemblies were held at times with guest speakers including the Wellbeing Coordinator and School Captain with the aim of maintaining engagement with the school community.
- Year 11's explored the notion of expressing feelings as men through viewing the AFL's short program series titled Last Time I Cried.

Provision of extracurricular activities through the online environment including

- live musical performances through Teams
- MasterChef lessons filmed by Mr Di Fabrizio and made available online to families.
- STRAVA running challenges: 200 athletes joined and participated within the "Simonds Running Club" throughout lockdown.
- participation in "Carmody Cup Cross Country Competition" by students through Strava.
- chess games through Teams and Chess.com during breaks
- exercise classes after school on Teams.

Counsellor

- Counselling of students offered at both campuses in a confidential, non judgemental and compassionate manner
- Solution focused counselling with strategies to assist problem solving, shared with students and teachers
- Protocols and consent forms developed for COVID telehealth
- Involvement and liaison with school staff, parents and external professionals in multi faceted approach to the student's wellbeing (within the limits of confidentiality)

- Purchase of assessment tools to flag individual student needs and learning difficulty to maximise NCCD funding to best support students with different learning needs
- Presentation to staff and newsletter articles on Wellbeing, updating of wellbeing literature for staff, familiarisation with BeYou as a valuable staff resource
- Working with YLCs to update Pastoral Care program, to include latest curriculum via Respectful Relationships and BeYou, evidenced based programs with Government backing and constant updating
- Working with students in Student Wellbeing Team to ensure relevant issues are addressed in a manner that suits students interests and needs with emphasis on student led activity
- Regular contributions to the College newsletter and webinars and programs communicated to parents.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

Students feel known, safe and respected in the school community and feel open to the counselling process.

Students voices are heard and respected, and action is taken where necessary. Student initiatives are embraced and encouraged.

Student wellbeing is a high priority and identified trending issues are addressed at an individual and class level.

Individual strengths are encouraged and celebrated to ensure sense of belonging and being valued.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Contact is made early when students are struggling with attendance.

Students are offered individual counselling and where possible parents are advised on best practice to ensure student attendance. This was particularly difficult during Covid.

A team approach to managing student attendance where YLC, Counsellor, HRT, Deputies and Principal are working together to maximise attendance.

Staff members are informed, within the limits of confidentiality, as to how to best support a student to maximise attendance.

The involvement of external professionals and agencies is sought where necessary.

During Simonds@Home (remote learning) the attendance officers checked rolls 5 minutes in to each lesson and followed up any absences with a phone call or an SMS; in many cases getting those who had slept in or were running late after a break, to log back in to active participation with their class. In non-COVID 19 times, the attendance officers will make contact with home once in the morning if a student is absent and notification from a parent has not been received.

YEARS 9 – 12 STUDENT RETENTION RATE

Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	84.9%
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AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Y07	94.5%
Y08	93.3%
Y09	91.7%
Y10	91.5%
Overall average attendance	92.7%

SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES

VCE Median Score	31.0
VCE Completion Rate	100.0%
VCAL Completion Rate	97.0%

POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS AS AT 2020	
Tertiary Study	null%
TAFE / VET	null%
Apprenticeship / Traineeship	null%
Deferred	null%
Employment	null%
Other – The category of Other includes both students Looking for Work and those classed as Other	null%

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To continue to revise and formalise our Child Safety Policy and to disseminate it amongst all relevant members of the school community to ensure that they are aware of their obligations and responsibilities, including those relating to the Child Safe Standards contained in the Victorian Education Minister's Ministerial Order 870 issued on 7 January 2016.

Achievements

- The Simonds Catholic College Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct is in place
- Compilation and distribution of Child Safety Dossier to new staff and volunteers. The Dossier contains the school's Child Safety Policy, copies of the CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety, Ministerial Order 870, the State Governments Betrayal of Trust Fact Sheets, a section on reporting obligations relating to Child Protection, and the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Child Safety Dossier is available for download by any interested party from the Policy section of our website.
- Monitored staff completion of the Department of Education and Training eLearning Module on Mandatory Reporting Obligations
- Child Safety Policy embedded into Human Resource Practices, including ensuring all staff have current VIT Registration or, for non-teaching staff, a current working with children check.
- The promotion and importance of the Child Safety Standards is recognised and approved at School Board level and continues to be disseminated at Parent and Community level.

Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To create a vibrant learning community characterised by a shared vision, a strong sense of teamwork, and focussed on improving student learning outcomes, underpinned by supportive leadership.

- That all members of the school community know, understand and are committed to enacting the school vision.
- That all decisions have a positive impact on student learning outcomes.
- That staff collaborate to improve teaching practices.

Achievements

- conducting our Whole School Staff Briefings on Monday mornings via Microsoft Teams is an initiative where the whole school staff meets as one (virtually) on a regular basis. It certainly gives us a chance to meet as a whole staff to start the week despite being 2 campuses
- virtual subject selection information sessions for parents and students
- one on one interviews to review subject selections with students via MS Teams
- parent teacher interviews transitioned to online
- Simonds@Home Lockdown Learning Awards at the end of Term 3 to acknowledge those students who had really given of their best during these adverse and challenging times
- A master plan for the redevelopment of Simonds Catholic College West Melbourne has been completed and the planning application lodged late in 2020. The Hon James Merlino MP has confirmed a \$5,000,000 capital grant. Stage 1 is planned to commence early in 2022, which will provide a Creative hub for Arts, Music, Drama and Technology, Dedicated Year 11 and 12 homeroom areas and Specialist science laboratories.

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

At Simonds we are aware that it is important to find ways to improve the reading comprehension ability of the students. Research has shown that a student's reading comprehension will improve if he is explicitly taught the meanings of words. Hence, we used our professional learning time to explore best practice in how to teach the students vocabulary. Staff had the opportunity to prepare resources, trial these strategies and evaluate the experience. Explicitly teaching vocabulary in a robust way, has become a natural part of the planning of our lessons here at Simonds.

The move to online learning meant teachers needed to find new ways to engage the students, monitor their progress and provide feedback. We surveyed teachers and students to find out which apps they thought were the most useful. Staff then undertook professional learning on these apps: Microsoft Onenote, Clickview, Edpuzzle, Flipgrid, Microsoft Forms, Polly, Socrative

and Kahoot. The professional learning was delivered by select Simonds staff who volunteered to showcase how they effectively used these apps in their online classes.

Staff also undertook professional learning in Mental Health and Wellbeing. Our school's psychologist, gave a presentation on how people can best manage their own mental health and wellbeing. We then surveyed students on their thoughts about being back face to face teaching and used this information to come up with some ideas of how we could support our students with their mental health and well being. Some staff also completed the professional learning modules available on the 'Be You' website.

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	45
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$344

TEACHER SATISFACTION

Teachers were surveyed regularly during Simonds@Home. Typical responses follow:

"Leadership has done a really good job so far. Keep being flexible and prepared to adapt to the realities of teaching as teachers are doing their best."

"We seem to be one of the few schools that has shortened the lessons and I think that this has helped our students focus and remain on task."

"I think the school and students are doing a fantastic job of educating and learning compared to many of the stories I have heard from other teachers and parents."

- 94% Somewhat agree or higher - I feel well prepared to support my students during this time.
- 74% - I am confident that I am effectively monitoring my students as they are completing their learning tasks and accessing learning resources.
- 90% - I can raise any concerns with the school leaders. Or ask for help.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	90.8%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	81.3%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	
Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	20.0%
Graduate	40.0%
Graduate Certificate	10.0%
Bachelor Degree	72.5%
Advanced Diploma	17.5%
No Qualifications Listed	20.0%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	53.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	45.5
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	25.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	20.5
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

College Community

Goals & Intended Outcomes

To build a vibrant and welcoming school community, where parents are engaged in their son's learning and connectedness to the school is increased.

- That parental engagement in their son's learning, and engagement in the life of the school, will increase.

Achievements

Melbourne was in lockdown for much of Terms 2 and 3 and learning took place online during this time.

The 2020 school year began normally enough, albeit we were somewhat shaken after a summer where the bushfires and the very visible poor air quality were making news. Term 1 was busy - from welcoming our new Year 7s, to our swimming and athletics carnivals, and the Year 7 and 9 camps. If we think back to 2019 for a moment, to a simpler time, we would have reached the end of the term thinking about how hectic it was and looking forward to the rest of the year when everything would be at a slower pace and settled so that we could concentrate on teaching and learning. In 2020 we will look back to Term 1 and say how wonderful it was that we managed to do all that.

As Term 1 went on and the invisible threat of COVID-19 emerged, social distancing was introduced and frequent handwashing became a priority. The seriousness of what we were facing hit us all when in the last week schools were abruptly shut down. We had been approaching every day with a heightened sense of care and mindfulness and had been devoting significant time and resources to ensure, as best we could, continuity of learning should we be given that directive to close. In response we had already cancelled the scheduled parent teacher interviews on Tuesday 24 March and replaced it with a trial of Simonds@Home day. Our boys left school with bags heavier than usual that Monday afternoon as lockers were emptied in preparation for lessons in a virtual classroom.

There was a lot of anxiety amongst students, parents and teachers and student attendance had started to decline towards the end of the term. That Tuesday morning our School Captain, greeted students with a video showing how he had set up at home for classes. With teachers onsite in empty classrooms, our students ready with a laptop or iPad at home, and with the coordination of and assistance from our ICT team, Simonds@Home became a reality as students and teachers logged into Microsoft Teams en masse for the very first time. The day was an overwhelming success, gave us confidence and put us in good stead for what was to come. Students came to class in more numbers than we had seen for a while, and our teachers put it all together and taught in ways we'd never asked of them before.

Little were we to know that as we bid farewell to our boys that Monday afternoon that we wouldn't see them for quite some time.

Apart from a short stint back to onsite learning at the end of Term 2 from 9 June, our St Mary's boys have been learning at home throughout Term 2 and 3. It seems like a blur as we were apart for so long, and whilst it is very easy to pass this as 'the year that wasn't', so much went on as was documented in our year book, The Justinian, and through our social media posts.

VALUE ADDED

The usual things happened with a difference and the extraordinary did too with flair; exams and NAPLAN were cancelled in Semester One, we missed celebrating Simonds' 25 year anniversary, we had new teachers who did not meet their students face to face for months, Parent Teacher Interviews and Subject Selection Interviews took place online, we had Virtual Music Concerts and Live Events, Mr Di Fabrizio showed us how to cook countless recipes as MasterChef went online, Miss Kelly produced our very own Lockdown Learning video, our boys and teachers tracked their activities and participated in challenges using the STRAVA app, there were the TikTok Rockstar, Superball Container and Simonds Dress Up Day Challenges and we had our music appreciation broadened through the Album of the Week and our study skills honed through the Study Sessions series and past students giving advice.

Our teachers provided incredible learning opportunities within the virtual classroom, our students showed adaptability, good nature and resilience. Learning as we knew it was disrupted but we survived, and, in many cases, thrived. There is no doubt that there are some aspects of our experience in 2020 that we will take forward. We were forced to find a new way of doing things, and in some cases what we did may have been better.

That first Tuesday where we trialled Simonds@Home back in Term 1 seemed like a novelty as we did things that at the start of the year we never imagined at the start of the year needed being to be done. I don't think anyone would have foreseen how normal this was to become. And as it became our norm the spotlight was thrust on schools and the incredibly important work teachers do, and for this we are grateful. A school is not a school without its students or its teachers but we have lived through a time where we were not able to be together but we still stayed connected. It showed what a wonderful community we really are.

We did return to onsite learning in Term 4, to some normality that included end of year exams, the presentation of and full day celebrations for the Class of 2020, the distribution of certificates and awards at our by invitation only, socially distanced Awards Ceremony after school at St Brigid's Hall and the distribution of those 25 year Simonds anniversary badges that we had since May. Filming of those special events took place to enable access to the wider school community, which, in so doing, serves as a permanent reminder of the year that was.

PARENT SATISFACTION

Relationships are key to a thriving school community, and Simonds actively promotes positive relationships between students, between students and staff, and between the school and families.

Parents were surveyed regularly throughout Simonds@Home. Below are some of the typical comments in response to what they were most pleased about:

"Organised classes, professionalism of teachers, support of my sons learning, dedication of school to make our family feel involved, quality of parent teacher interviews."

"Positives of online learning:

- 1. Open communication between students and staff*
- 2. Break between lessons*
- 3. Immediate notification if son not in class/online*
- 4. Success with the remote Parent/Teacher/Student Interviews."*

"Communication is always excellent - It is still structured which is important. Teachers still available to students via online chats or emails, students don't feel abandoned as such. Home schooling feels 'safer', I don't have to be concerned about others in society doing the wrong thing. The 'strava' app, weather permitting encourages exercise."