

Our Lady of Mercy College Heidelberg



2021 Annual Report



Registered School Number: 914

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Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Judith Weir, attest that Our Lady of Mercy 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 2021 school year under the *Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)* and the *Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)*
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in Schools.

25 May 2022

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 Mission

Our Lady of Mercy College Heidelberg, founded in 1910, is a Catholic Secondary Girls' College and is a ministry of Mercy Education Ltd. The College's vision and work are inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and guided by the example of Mary and the charism of Catherine McAuley.

We are a community of learners where excellence is pursued in all we do and where relationships are nurtured to enable individual growth and a sense of belonging for all. We empower our girls to be women of joy, courage and compassion who retain an enduring commitment to God's vision of mercy and justice for all.

Our Vision for OLMC Girls

They will be awakened to the life-giving traditions of the Catholic faith.
They will recognise their own and others' innate dignity and humanity.
They will be independent, active and curious learners.
They will be encouraged, supported, challenged and heard.
They will engage in respectful and authentic discernment about the scripts of their lives.

Our Values

Justice

We seek to:

- Extend hospitality to all
- Respect the dignity of each person
- Respect the sacredness of the earth and nature
- Act for justice in our school, local and global communities.

Compassion

We seek to:

- Nurture generosity of heart and a spirit of kindness
- Understand others and respond to them in times of need
- Know the power of forgiveness and offer this to others.

Courage

We seek to:

- Embrace life, recognising our strengths, limitations and possibilities
- Promote perseverance and risk-taking in learning
- Be a school community where all are encouraged to reflect and grow
- Live authentically, guided by the values taught by Jesus.

Joy

We seek to:

- Embrace moments of grace and beauty in our world
- Share and celebrate as a community
- Bring energy and enthusiasm to all that we do
- Awaken in students the awe and wonder that will lead to lifelong learning.

College Overview

Our Lady of Mercy College (OLMC) Heidelberg provides extensive learning programs for students from Bulleen, Bundoora, Doncaster, Donvale, Greensborough, Heidelberg, Ivanhoe, Kingsbury, Macleod, Mill Park, Montmorency, Templestowe and Thornbury East.

The College has the capacity for eight streams at Years 7, 8 & 9 to move through to Year 12. Our February 2021 enrolment was 1207 students.

Community life at OLMC is enriched by our Catholic faith and Mercy heritage. We draw on these traditions to help our girls find 'pockets of spirit in themselves and their world. Our social action, community engagement and outreach programs provide girls with many and varied ways of developing their social consciousness.

Our learning culture features a strong commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. The College has achieved a consistent record of good learning outcomes over many years.

Staff members contribute significantly to this learning culture. They are energetic, collegial, highly motivated educators who are passionate about learning, love teaching girls and are committed to their own professional growth. They have specialist knowledge in girls' education and draw on this expertise to provide safe, nurturing and stimulating learning environments.

At OLMC, the social and relational aspects of student growth are at the forefront of our efforts. The crucial relationship between wellbeing and learning success is well established. We therefore ensure specific programs and structures are in place to counteract the negative influences that impact on our girls. We also value our role in enabling and nurturing friendships that endure well beyond students' time together at OLMC.

Our learning environments feature technology-rich spaces and purpose-built facilities for Sport, the Performing Arts and Science Our Centenary Building provides Year 7 and 8 girls, with contemporary, colourful and engaging learning spaces, and our Nalleijerring Centre is a wonderful facility for Physical Education, Sport and lunchtime activities.



Principal's Report



Throughout the last two years, we have many times turned to Catherine McAuley for inspiration. Over the course of 2021, I shared two important quotes with our school community. *"When I think we are done, we seem to be beginning again."* and *"This is your life, joys and sorrows mingled, one succeeding the other."* In so many ways, I think that these quotes capture much of what we have felt at different times in 2021.

While we began the year hopeful that we would continue as we had started, we were inevitably faced with new challenges and then another lock down. We did, however, begin the year with exuberance; full of hope for a new year and a chance to participate in the many experiences that OLMC has to offer.

In 2021 we continued to focus on the Strategic Direction of improving parent engagement. Term One was replete with celebrations and gratitude for the chance to be together again. It was with great joy that we welcomed our Year 7 students and their parents as they began their journey with us. It was also wonderful to celebrate with our Year 12 parents and students, the beginning of their last year of secondary education.

This year was our first hosting two "Time and Space" programs for Year 7 students and a significant woman in their lives, and another for Year 8 students and a significant man in their lives. Both were very positively received. It was a wonderful opportunity for a guided conversation between adults and young people. Year 10 and 11 students were offered the opportunity to facilitate small groups and they led them so well.

The second half of the year saw us return to remote learning. As was the case in 2020, our staff and students showed great resilience and adaptability. They demonstrated our values of courage, compassion, justice and joy in so many big and small ways, whilst continuing to focus on the pursuit of excellence. It might have involved checking in on a friend, watching or participating in the student leaders' videos, getting involved in the exercise challenge to earn points for their House, or just attending every lesson and doing their very best. It was humbling to see how many ways teachers and students found to keep learning and growing together, even when to give up would have been the easier path to take.

The ongoing commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing remained at the heart of our work in 2021. The Wellbeing Team continued their excellent work of ensuring that there were opportunities for students to remain connected. Their work not only involved checking in on individual students but leading opportunities for participating in group activities. Parent resources were also made available in order that we could support them as they navigated the many challenges presented when whole families were working from home.

Mercy Day was yet again a highlight of the year, even if it was held online. It was such fun to pop into the many different sessions on offer and watch the students laugh, sing, dance or learn to do something new and amazing. The joy of the day was as present as it always is, and the ingenuity and creativity of our student leaders from all year levels were inspirational.

Our values of compassion and justice continued to live large over the course of the year. It was heartening to see our community continue their commitment to outreach through the Social Justice program. The St Pius Primary School reading program continued, albeit online. When Camp Heidi could not proceed, our students instead created hampers for the families of students who would ordinarily be part of the school holiday program. Similarly, we also provided Christmas Hampers that were distributed to families through the Marist Exodus Community. Our staff donated gifts for families to McAuley Community Services for Women.

Throughout the year, the work on completing Stage 6 of the Master Plan was completed. The new classrooms, cafeteria and canteen facilities have improved immensely the amenities for students. New suspended walkways provide much needed multiple travel paths through the College, reducing congestion and providing an openness that has also meant an increase in outdoor recreation spaces for students. OLMC is now a modern, open facility, recognising the educational requirements of the 21st Century while continuing to embrace the heritage of our red brick school.

There were days during 2021 when it felt overwhelming, but as Catherine McAuley has said, *"When I think we are done, we seem to be beginning again."* We have learnt a great deal about ourselves, our families and our community. We are looking forward to 2022 and the chance to use all that we have learnt to continue to grow, both as individuals and a community.

Judith Weir



College Advisory Council Report



The OLMC College Council provides advice to the Principal regarding the operations, governance and strategic direction of the College. The Council comprises honorary members of the College community with expertise in a range of fields including business, commerce, law, education, science, marketing, arts and management. Current members are parents of both past and present OLMC students, OLMC alumni and former OLMC Principal, Sr Eileen Ann Daffy RSM.

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to set major challenges for us and, as in 2020, there was a collective OLMC team response to these ongoing challenges. On behalf of the College Council, it has been a privilege to witness our collective College community response on the part of so many resilient staff, students and families.

Our students have once again demonstrated many key skills critical to successful lives and careers in the 21st Century globalised world, such as adaptability, flexibility, patience, resilience, cooperation, technical skill, tenacity, positivity, trust, respect and the ability to deal constructively with uncertainty. Elite sporting teams seek to embrace 'feeling comfortable being uncomfortable' in order to perform at their best under pressure. Our students are continuing to embrace this, too, with the help and support of family, friends and our amazing staff at OLMC.

Teaching and learning support staff have had to continue the radical adjustment to both online and mixed teaching methods. Many elements of their great work were made possible by our staff in enabling roles such as IT and communications, Lab Techs, Food Studies and Art Assistants, the Maintenance Team, Admin/Finance and our College Leadership Team.

Throughout 2021, monthly College Council meetings have continued on-schedule and predominantly online from our respective homes and offices. Our team now comprises two former OLMC College Captains, with the welcome return of Ms Angela Scaffidi (1988) joining current member and newly appointed Judge Jennifer Howe (1990). Angela, Jennifer, Ms Ann-Maree Keenan, Mr Paul McEvey, Mr Dane Totham, Sr Eileen, Dr Carmel Abrahams and I meet monthly with the Principal and Business Manager. In addition to standing agenda items such as the Principal's Report, Child Safety Update, Finance Report and Master Plan building update, we have also focused on important items relating to enrolment trends, government policy changes, education innovations, specific areas of the strategic plan and implementation of recommendations from the marketing review.

The forward-looking focus of College Council deliberations aims to prepare the College community for a COVID-normal environment in 2022 and beyond.

In truly exciting news, the completion of the sixth, and final, stage of our building Master Plan has seen construction works disappear, enabling our students and staff to flourish in state-of-the-art new facilities as they return to school in 2022. This is an achievement about which the entire OLMC community should feel proud and positive.

Dr Christopher Conroy
Chair, College Council

Education in Faith

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We will make explicit the treasures of the Scriptures, the Catholic tradition and the Mercy story and how this is lived out in our human experience.

We will deepen staff and students' understanding and knowledge of Catholic moral and social teaching and support students in developing personal meaning in their lives.

OLMC Strategic Plan 2020-2023, Key Commitments 1 and 2

Achievements

Scripture-based College Theme

Now I am revealing new things to you, created just now, this very moment. (Isaiah 48:6)

This text, written by the Prophet Isaiah, was addressed to the Israelites after their return from the Babylonian exile. This was a time of great uncertainty, yet filled with glimmers of hope for many who had lost faith in God. God invites them (and us today) to be open to God in their lives and their world; God speaks to them with a new message of hope and love, created especially for them.

This text challenges us as Mercy people to be people of Hope, even as we continue with long periods of remote learning and society lockdowns. We are people of Justice, Compassion, Courage and Joy, so in this very time, we commit to continuing living Mercy in our world.

Prayer and Liturgies

Most of our whole-school and year-level liturgies in 2021 were celebrated via streaming technologies during Pastoral Group and Google Meet sessions. Fortunately, the liturgies welcoming our Year 7s and a whole-school mass for the Opening of the School Year were celebrated at the College, before the lockdowns took hold. The easing of restrictions towards the end of 2021 also enabled the Year 12s to be together for their Graduation Mass, with their families joining in from their homes and other OLMC students from their classrooms.

Students continued to take an active role in leading prayer, particularly for the Ash Wednesday Liturgy, the Lenten period, Easter and the weeks of Advent.

Social Justice Initiatives

There was widespread recognition in the College community that while everyone experienced significant COVID challenges, some people and groups needed more help than others. The social justice leaders and their teams developed a broad range of strategies that provided students with varied options for outreach, some of which occurred onsite and others that could be implemented from the confines of people's homes. Some examples are reported as follows:

- Year 10 students volunteered with enthusiasm for the St Pius Reading Club on Tuesday afternoons at St Pius X Primary School. This program is coordinated by St Vincent de Paul. School lockdowns throughout Term 3 meant that the program was suspended, however Year 9 Horizon students reconnected with the St Pius children in Term 4 via online videos of our students sharing their favourite childhood story book, plus other craft activities.

- In Term 2, social justice leaders organised and hosted an inaugural 'Evening in Heidelberg' event for 21 guests from the Exodus Community of Heidelberg West. The event, held in the DAT Centre, was supported by the Year 9 Horizon students for shopping and food preparation and by Year 11 and 12 volunteers for cooking, preparing the event, piano entertainment and serving food. The event was an extension of the College's Bell Bardia program and was delivered in the true Mercy spirit of extending hospitality to people in need.
- **Refugee Week** at the end of Term 2 focused on the human rights of people seeking asylum and what this means in the Catholic Tradition. Students were encouraged in their RE classes to look at the story of the Holy Family forced into exile, and then consider the topical modern story of the Murugappan family seeking to stay in Australia.
- **Eco Justice students** held a vegan feast in Term 1, a Nude Food Day in Term 2 (this placed emphasis on the removal of all plastics), and in Term 3 shone a light on animal harm with a video bringing awareness to this important issue.
- **The Feminist Collective** led the way with various initiatives to celebrate International Women's Day and its 2021 theme, 'Choose to Challenge'. The 'Choose to Challenge' event sponsored by Mercy Links was particularly instructive and inspiring. Another key event for the Feminist Collective occurred in Term 4, when they ran the College's first 'Period Poverty Day' - a day for raising awareness of issues for women experiencing poverty and not having access to sufficient safe sanitary products. Students from every year level donated sanitary products to McAuley Community Services for Women, for subsequent distribution to those in need of these essential items.
- **FIRE Carriers** celebrated the 20th anniversary of Reconciliation Week and had a plaque made to recognise the importance of this significant anniversary. It now sits at the main entrance of the College. Students introduced more Indigenous symbols to College learning environments and events, including the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in processions for assemblies and masses.



Religious Education Curriculum

The Religious Education (RE) teaching team continued to evaluate and develop units of work to make RE classes engaging and relevant to the lives of young people. They developed a further unit of work using the 'Pedagogy of Encounter'.

Mercy Day

The strong resolve of student leaders, College leaders, musicians, choir, IT and multimedia staff were on full display in the weeks leading up to Mercy Day on 16 September, as they were on the day.

The day began with our Mercy Day Mass, streamed live through YouTube into over 900 homes of staff and students. The liturgy focused on the College's 2021 theme, inviting us to seek God here and now, even in times of great struggle.

The activities on Google Meet following the Mass were diverse. So much of a 'usual' Mercy Day at OLMC is about cutting loose from normal routines. In a year when students and staff spent extended periods meeting only for classwork, this special day was a timely, wonderful and welcomed opportunity to do just that.



VALUE ADDED

Year 10 Reflection Days. Building on the success of 2020, the theme of 'Wonderfully Made' was chosen for the Year 10 reflection days, which were conducted in Terms 1 and 4. The program enabled an exploration of the precious gift that each person is, as made in God's image, and it also examined some related issues of sexuality.

Year 12 Retreat. The Year 12 retreat invited students to explore the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) as they considered their pathways in life.

Class Masses for Years 7, 8 and 9. Many Pastoral Groups had their own class mass in the chapel, giving thanks for all our blessings and praying for the many needs of our world.

Justice groups and partnerships. As described above, significant learning and outreach programs were undertaken in collaboration with people and organisations external to the College, such as the Exodus Community, Heidelberg West, the St Vincent de Paul Society, and state-wide Fire Carriers groups and Mercy Seeds of Justice groups.

Learning & Teaching

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We will grow together by facilitating opportunities for collaboration and research-based professional learning.

We will put the student, their learning and their wellbeing at the centre of all we do.

OLMC Strategic Plan 2020-2023, Key Commitments 3 and 4

Achievements

Unit 3 & 4 Trial Exams Successfully Conducted Online

With the return of extensive lockdown conditions in August, 2021, the question of effective assessment at all year levels arose. An important lesson learnt from the extended lockdown in 2020 was that of adhering to assessment timelines, rather than delaying assessment until students returned to on-site learning. The Exam.net assessment platform allowed assessments to move to a secure online environment, whether that be for individual class assessments, whole-subject SACs in Years 11 and 12, or trial exams.

The capacity to run Year 12 trial exams online during the September break was particularly significant, as the trial exams provided an important reference point for students as they began their final preparation for VCAA examinations.

Online Conferencing

One aspect of technology that has been embraced by students and teachers in this second year of extended lockdowns was that of online conferencing. This is not the teaching of an entire class online, which has probably been the most contentious element of remote learning. Conferencing involves a small group of students working with their teacher on a specific element of learning for a short period of time. When learning onsite, this sort of conferencing is common and often takes place at recess, lunchtime and after school. The difference with online conferencing is that a broader range of students have made use of it.

Preparation for the VCAA written examinations in 2021 was distinguished by the number of students electing to join their teachers via Google Meet to fine-tune their review and revision strategies. In previous years, students would have emailed their teachers with questions or travelled to the College to meet with them – both are time-consuming approaches to revision. In 2021, teachers offered online conferencing, and many reported working with more students in the lead up to exams than in previous years.

The importance of this cannot be overstated. The weeks immediately preceding the final exams are vital in determining students' success or otherwise. For students who had been working consistently all year, this period of time allowed them to depth their understandings and achieve the strong exam results they were seeking. This time was equally significant for students who may not have worked as consistently throughout the year. Online conferencing was a boon for such students, allowing them to meet with teachers on a regular basis, with very little inconvenience.

The use of online conferencing by OLMC's teachers and VCE students has been one of the more positive opportunities created by the pandemic and, indeed, is a development from which students and teachers will benefit in the years to come.

Literacy

Debating. One of the co-curricular activities that was able to move successfully online in 2020 was Debating. Once again in 2021, the Debating Association of Victoria provided a virtual platform for school debaters. The season ran as a combination of online and on-site debates, and OLMC students from Years 7 to 12 participated eagerly in the program.

Author's Virtual Visit. During lockdown at the end of Term 3, our Year 7 cohort were fortunate to attend an online incursion with local author Ingrid Laguna. Ingrid's enthusiastic presentation highlighted how authors work, how to overcome blocks and challenges as part of the process, and some practical strategies that the students could use when working on their own creative writing pieces at school. Following the Year 7 incursion, Ingrid also ran a workshop for our Creative Writing Club participants. The students had a wonderful time at this event as they were able to ask a wide range of questions and seek feedback on their own writing pieces.

Health & Physical Education

During Term 3, HPE classes across Year 7 and Year 8 completed an assessment task that required students to use feedback to improve the performance of a chosen skill. Students chose to focus on skills such as juggling, kicking a footy, performing the splits, and a reverse lay up in basketball. Students were encouraged to choose a skill that they could practise easily at home.

While working online, students took videos of themselves performing their chosen skill. They could share this video with a classmate who may be an expert in this sport, their HPE teacher, their coach in the community, or they could receive feedback from a family member. After committing to a block of practice of this skill, students then took another video of themselves to track their progress.

When completing a number of questions on this task, students were encouraged to reflect on how the feedback they received helped guide their practice. The focus of this task was not on the performance of the skill itself, but on how we can use feedback to open up new ways to learn. This is not only a vital aspect of improvement in PE, but in all aspects of our learning.



Performing Arts

Over the last few weeks of Term 3, during the extended lockdown, the VCE Performing Arts students put their foot to the floor and steamed ahead in their exam preparation. Unlike most subjects, the Performing Art students start their exams in the first week of Term 4. They rehearsed earnestly over the Term 3 break, workshoping and preparing their monologues (a 7-minute performance of the students' own creation based on 10 structures set by the VCAA).



In Music Performance, students were unable to rehearse online with their accompanist, so have had to be incredibly flexible. They become experts in using recordings, in both audio and video formats, to receive feedback on their progress from a number of sources. They were supported in running their performances during the holidays and they also engaged in some extra rehearsals during the first week back of Term 4 (even when they needed to be held outside to comply with COVID safety). The students sat their performance exams on the first weekend of the term. After a last-minute emergency change of accompanist, the vocalists showed great poise, perseverance, courage and grace in their final performances.

Theatre Studies students were finally able to present their production of "The Unravelling". Due to the lockdowns, the date was moved three times, however, on Monday 6 September, they were able to finally rehearse, perform and record their production. For their final performance exam, students needed to then research a monologue/play, learn their lines and present this in their own unique way. Students chose to act/direct or design in two areas. In 2021, the College had 8 Actors and 4 Designers complete their assessments.

The Performing Arts staff are incredibly proud of every student and we are all in awe of the creativity, perseverance and adaptability that each student demonstrated throughout the year.

Science

In the full range of science subjects and topics, students learn Science skills and cover knowledge that is defined by the Victorian Curriculum. Included also is a focus on the standards that make up the Victorian Capabilities, that is, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Learning and Ethical Capabilities.

Ethics are a natural fit for science studies. The pace of progress at the cutting edge of science spills back into the curriculum, and students are expected to engage in discussion about important ideas and innovations, such as nuclear energy generation, filling low Earth orbit with satellites to fund the colonisation of Mars, genetic engineering of food, personalised medicine, and climate change impacts on the biosphere.

Currently we have two year levels exploring ethics in science. At Year 8, the Ethical Capability focuses on criteria for determining the importance of ethical issues, and why groups of people might have different approaches to ethical concerns depending on their context and experience. Year 8 students are looking at how ethical thinking impacts on decisions about resources, such as packaging and food, and in decisions about energy generation.

At Year 10, the Ethical Capability focuses on complex issues, including identifying ethical questions and weighing up evidence using the four frameworks used to make ethical judgements. Students are working in teams to explore a contemporary bioethical issue, including cloning pets, transgenics, DNA privacy, organ donation and de-extinction.

Humanities – Civics Incursion

As part of the Year 10 Civics Core Unit, titled Representative Democracy, students participated in an excursion with a local Federal MP for Jagajaga, Ms Kate Thwaites.

Students were keen to learn about life in Parliament, what the role of a parliamentarian is, and whether women's voices really are heard inside Parliament. Having written some questions, the online session was chaired by three students who posed a range of interesting and at times challenging questions to our guest.

Kate's passion for community and providing a voice to advocate for others was the clear message that came through in this session. It was interesting to hear how Kate had come to be in politics and some of the challenges she faced in juggling the needs of her personal and professional life. This was a great opportunity to hear first hand about life in politics and a wonderful experience to maintain our connection with our local community.

VALUE ADDED

Numeracy and Literacy Tutoring

Following the extensive 2020 lockdowns, the State Government provided many schools with funding for tutoring in the areas of Numeracy and Literacy. The aims of the tutoring program were quite broad and schools were largely able to deploy the tutors in ways that best suited the needs of the individual school.

OLMC employed tutors for both Literacy and Numeracy and they worked primarily with students from Years 7 to 9. Depending on the identified needs of the students, the tutors employed a combination of tutoring models - small groups, individual student withdrawal from class and in-class tutoring.

The tutoring program proved to be beneficial for students who had experienced difficulty in maintaining progress during periods of online learning, as well as for students seeking extension.

STEAM Extension

In Semester 1, the College introduced a new Science and Technology co-curricular program in STEAM for Years 7-8 students. 'STEAM Extension' is a flexible and highly creative after-school program that brings together high capability students with an interest in science to work on individual and team challenges. The limited duration of programs (4 - 6 weeks each term) allows students to accommodate other co-curricular commitments.

A major goal of the extension program is that students are challenged to become agents of their own skill and knowledge development. The program content is best described as 'fluid and evolving'. Importantly, it capitalises on a range of external STEAM challenges and competitions which arise across the year, such as The University of Melbourne's Solar Challenge, or the Banyule Nillumbik Technical School Investigations.

The College also introduced the national BrainSTEM Innovation Challenge for students in Year 9. Two teams of students worked for 12 weeks with mentor scientists from The University of Melbourne, exploring the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and looking at ways to bring positive change through science and technology. In addition to significantly building their knowledge of sustainability science and technologies, the projects strengthened the skill sets of team members in areas such as collaboration, public speaking, research and communication skills.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

What the NAPLAN 2021 results reported below reveal are some of the following achievements and challenges:

- A particular focus of the English Learning Area over the last three years has been on embedding Grammar and Punctuation into the curriculum. The improvement in the Year 9 Grammar and Punctuation has seen the mean rise from 597 in 2018 to 613 in 2021.
- Following the 2019 Year 9 results in Writing, there was a renewed focus on writing and ensuring that every lesson incorporated an aspect of written communication. This focus has led to growth, from a mean of 580 in 2019 to 592 in 2021.
- The Year 9 Numeracy results have provided us with cause for further exploration. While students did grow, it was the students who were high achieving in Year 7 who had the lowest growth. While the impact of remote learning may explain some of this decline, the Maths Learning Area staff have looked critically at improving and increasing the opportunities in their Year 7-9 curriculum for students to be further challenged and to take risks in their learning.

MEDIAN NAPLAN RESULTS FOR YEAR 9

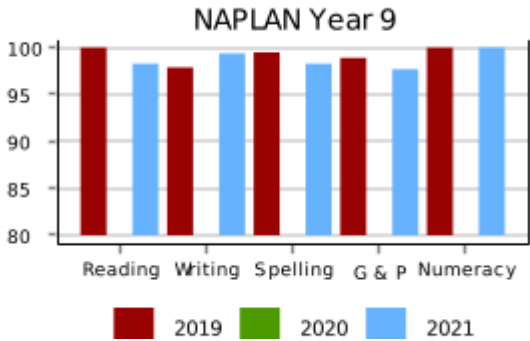
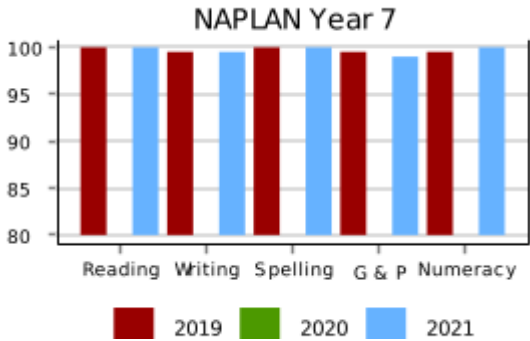
Year 9 Grammar & Punctuation	603.2
Year 9 Numeracy	586.1
Year 9 Reading	597.9
Year 9 Spelling	611.4
Year 9 Writing	597.5



PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2019	2020	2019 – 2020	2021	2020 – 2021
	%	*	Changes	%	Changes
			*		*
YR 07 Grammar & Punctuation	99.5	-	-	99.0	-
YR 07 Numeracy	99.5	-	-	100.0	-
YR 07 Reading	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 07 Spelling	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 07 Writing	99.5	-	-	99.5	-
YR 09 Grammar & Punctuation	98.9	-	-	97.7	-
YR 09 Numeracy	100.0	-	-	100.0	-
YR 09 Reading	100.0	-	-	98.3	-
YR 09 Spelling	99.5	-	-	98.3	-
YR 09 Writing	97.9	-	-	99.4	-

NOTE

- 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.



SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES	
VCE Median Score	32.0
VCE Completion Rate	100.0%
VCAL Completion Rate	81.0%

POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS AS AT 2021	
Tertiary Study	86.0%
TAFE / VET	3.0%
Apprenticeship / Traineeship	1.0%
Deferred	3.0%
Employment	6.0%
Other – The category of Other includes both students Looking for Work and those classed as Other	1.0%

Student Wellbeing

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We will put the student, their learning and their wellbeing at the centre of all we do.

OLMC Strategic Plan 2020-2023, Key Commitment 4

Achievements

Student Leadership and House Initiatives

Our senior Student Leadership Team played a highly significant role in maintaining a strong sense of community cohesion in the many weeks of lockdown and remote learning. The Team directed its initiatives to helping students and teachers stay connected, maintain motivation and have some fun.

The Year 12 student leaders at the start of 2021 described school culture as 'the beliefs, values and habits that can create a vibrant environment'. They wanted OLMC to be a place where every student could be proud of themselves, their achievement and their resilience.

Their ideas and work were supported by the theme used by the Year Level and House Coordinators in 2021 – 'We rise by lifting others'. This idea came from the sense that helping others helps life gain purpose and happiness, and a sense of achievement. These were things we felt were important in the time of change and uncertainty that came in 2020 and again in 2021.

These themes underpinned much of the formal and informal work and activities throughout the year. Students found ways to believe in themselves, push through challenges and be the best versions of themselves whether they were attending OLMC face-to-face or online. Activities they valued from Book Club, Anime Club, the Feminist Collective and sport managed to continue in one form or another. For many students, these opportunities provided places to make connection, and to grow and develop new skills.

We were privileged to run Dare2Donate again. This day of joy (for the students) and courage (from the staff) was not only an important fundraiser for McAuley Community Services for Women (\$3864) but such an important way of reconnecting our College community and emphasising our values.

The Year 12 Student Leadership Team were acutely aware of the impacts of uncertainty on young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. They created a focus on self-love. They led the way in helping our community place high importance of being a good friend to yourself and reminding ourselves that we are important, valued and strong. The College supported this initiative by inviting The Resilience Project team to speak to all students. Martin Heppell engaged all our students, despite needing to present online. He made them laugh and challenged each of them to find ways to be grateful, empathetic and kind, and mindful. The timing of this presentation was crucial, as shortly afterward we entered another period of online learning and students needed the skills and tricks he suggested to help them through. The Student Leaders even managed to run R U OK Day?

The determination and sheer commitment of the Student Leadership Team were also on full display in the weeks leading up to Mercy Day. They created a huge range of activities for students to engage with online from scavenger hunts, to book group, to aerobics workouts, self-care and cooking workshops and an online disco. There was no way that the students were letting lockdowns diminish their Mercy Day fun! And there was no way that the teachers were missing out on beating the students at Family Feud!

The success of events relied on different year levels working together, so the SRC leaders across all year levels also played a prominent role in morale-boosting activities. These leaders created our first ever Podcast 'OLMC: We need to talk'. This student-driven initiative saw the first episode focus on getting to know each other. Students across a variety of year levels talked about their favourite things, memories and advice. The laughter of cross-year level conversation brought joy to many and clearly demonstrated the sense of community that exists at OLMC.

The second episode, recorded live on Mercy Day, opened the avenues for staff and students alike to share life stories and advice to their younger selves. The reflections and growth of students involved is testament to the passionate, kind and open-minded wider OLMC community. The final podcasts were recorded to be played over the break and into the new year. They focused on students providing each other with advice about the transitions into the new year level. There was a podcast designed for each year level, providing tips and tricks on the new things that needed to be managed - whether it was learning how to work to a lock, to managing the increase in homework, or how to tackle Horizon.

The traditional House Reading Competition and House Arts Competition were reconfigured for online participation. In addition, new House events from 2020 continued, such as the:

- House Exercise Challenge (fitness goals)
- House Stepathon (more fitness goals)
- House Remote Learning Photo Competition
- House Bake-Off (with a new theme to inspire and challenge everyone each week).

House Trophy

Every year a trophy is awarded to the House with the most points accumulated via various events. It is a combination of participation numbers and success that leads to a House winning the coveted trophy.



Pastoral Leaders' Initiatives

A strong awareness of the need for students to stay connected, maintain their friendships and have some fun during the lockdown periods led to Pastoral Leaders changing many of their meeting formats. At least once a fortnight, and sometimes more frequently, morning pastoral lessons were restructured and 'themed'. Some popular themes included: 'Bring your pet to the meeting'; 'Share a favourite streaming show'; and 'Bring a childhood photo of a good memory'.

Year 7 and 8 Transition and Reset Programs

Our Year 7s experienced a very different end to primary school and start to their secondary school life, as remote learning regimes took hold. Fortunately, we were still able to offer students a taste of activities on offer at OLMC. The events included:

- A 'Clubs Expo', held over lunchtimes in the hall, with all the different co-curricular groups talking to the Year 7s about their club and signing up those interested;
- A Discover Arts@OLMC Week, led by the Arts Captains;
- A Sports and Outdoors Activities Week, led by the Sport Captains.

Their Pastoral Leaders also had a significant focus on starting the year with 'joy', one of our College values. This helped create fabulous Year 7 classroom displays and an easy conversation opener for students as they got to know each other.

As the year progressed students also had many activities, including guest speakers, to help them navigate the online world. Remote learning over the years had increased their time and connections online and we wanted to support them to navigate these well and maintain a positive online image, kind behaviours and stay safe.



Year 9

Year 9 students entered the excitement of the Horizon program and their Pastoral program was designed to support this work by helping them navigate some self-reflection – Who were they? What is that they valued? How did they find joy, courage and compassion in their own lives? How did they act for justice?

Later in the year, students looked to develop their career profiles and options and start to think about the resume and interview skills. As part of this work, they also had to reconsider their digital persona and their actions online.

Senior Students Wellbeing Programs

OLMC's Wellbeing Team was in regular search of 'circuit breakers' for the many students who were missing their friends and teachers during lockdowns and who were experiencing periodic bouts of diminished energy and motivation for learning.

One decision the Team made was to schedule a dedicated Health and Wellbeing session for senior students, with different external speakers engaged to work in a purposeful way with each year level. One important aim of such sessions was to address COVID impacts and what they were likely to experience post COVID. In addition:

- **Year 10 students** focused on Safe Partying. Sonya Karras is an experienced presenter and advocate for safe partying amongst young people. Students learnt about the effects of drug and alcohol substances, as well as how to look after themselves or others who may be affected.
- **Year 11 students** engaged in the Big Sister Experience, designed to increase their self-awareness and resilience capabilities. Topics included self-worth, friendship, trust, navigating relationships, setting boundaries and mental health awareness. It was an engaging and interactive seminar for the Year 11s, with many useful tools and strategies presented on how to make wellbeing a priority.
- **Year 12 students** participated in a forum with Dr Anna Kelly, Hurstbridge Medical Centre, about the health system, the role of a GP and some of the key terms and ideas that students might need to know to make informed decisions about their health care and how to access it.

The feedback from students across all year levels indicated that the sessions were timely and helpful 'interludes' in 'the long game' of surviving uncertainty and lockdowns.

VALUE ADDED

We found new ways to engage with families during 2020 and 2021 with some initiatives already outlined in other sections of this report.

One innovation the College successfully implemented after a trial in 2020 was the Time and Space Program at Year 7 and 8. Year 7 students took time with a key female in their life (mother, grandmother, godmother etc.) to share their feelings about their 'significant other' and what they most valued in the relationship, what they were going through during COVID, and what they needed from them as they entered and transitioned into secondary school life. It was likewise an opportunity for the women to reciprocate along similar lines.

The Year 8 evening was for students and a key male mentor or figure in their life. This was an opportunity to discuss 'growing up' and how this change might deepen and alter the dynamics of their relationship. The initial ice breakers and discussions at both evenings were facilitated by older OLMC students.

This program now means that we have established a new and early way to enable our families to be more involved and engaged in some aspects of school life that our students experience.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

In 2021, the MACSIS survey of student satisfaction showed improvement from the 2019 data despite another series of long periods of remote learning. College leadership staff were heartened by these results and remained committed to continued improvement. In particular, the areas of improvement focused on the way we demonstrate leading practices for teaching, learning and student wellbeing:

- 61% believed OLMC held rigorous expectations
- 62% viewed OLMC as a positive school climate (above the MACS average for all schools)
- 62% viewed OLMC as a safe environment
- 47% viewed positively the opportunity for student voice (above the MACS average for all schools)
- 44% recognised the Catholic identify of OLMC (above the MACS average for all schools).

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Y07	95.7%
Y08	95.8%
Y09	93.4%
Y10	94.1%
Overall average attendance	94.7%

YEARS 9–12 STUDENT RETENTION RATE

Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	97.1%
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STUDENT ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

Attendance is taken every lesson, including pastoral.

The procedures for student absences are as follows:

- If prior notification has not been received at the College by approximately 9.30 am on the day of absence, the College will send an SMS to the parent or guardian advising of their daughter's absence.
- If a parent or guardian does not contact the College to provide an explanation on the day of their daughter's unexplained absence, the College will attempt to contact the parent or guardian of the student within three days of the unexplained absence, either by telephone or email. The College will record the reason for the unexplained absence if a reasonable explanation is received.
- If after contacting the parent or guardian, no explanation is provided within 10 school days, the absence will be recorded as an unexplained absence and remain recorded as an unexplained absence in the College's attendance database.
- Parents and students are advised that an accumulation of five unexplained absences in a 12-month period could lead to a referral of the accumulated absences to MACS.

During the remote learning periods of 2021:

- Attendance was taken every lesson, including pastoral, via Google Classroom and then saved on SIMON by the class teacher as the official record. No SMS was sent to parents except if students were required to be onsite.
- Some students may not have been able to post / respond / login during the timetabled Lesson. The roll on SIMON had to be updated by 10.00am on the day following the lesson. This was to accommodate students who may not have been able to access online learning until later in the evening for reasons known to the College.
- Teachers were informed that if they recorded that a student is 'absent' for two or three consecutive lessons, they were to email their Pastoral Teacher and Year Level Coordinator / House Coordinator with that information. Further direction would then be provided as to whether or not the subject teacher should contact the student directly. (There may be extenuating circumstances for their 'absence'.)
- If students were known to be attending but not engaging in the learning, the class teacher was to inform the Year Level Coordinator/ House Coordinator.

Normal protocols continued for following up of absences, as outlined above.

Child Safe Standards

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We will develop a model of empowered leadership that operates in an environment of trust and that enhances autonomy.

Embed a child safeguarding culture which is championed by leaders and modelled at all levels of the College (5c).

OLMC Strategic Directions 2020-2023 Key Commitment 5 and 5c

Achievements

College Policies

The College has a range of policies and practices in place for keeping students safe from harm, including from all forms of abuse in our school environment, on campus, online and in other locations where College activities occur.

The key policies are:

- OLMC Child Safety Policy
- OLMC Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
- OLMC Child Protection: Reporting Obligations Policy
- OLMC Child Safety: Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy.

Other related policies that are accessible to current staff, students and families via the College website or intranet (SIMON and PAM) include:

- Counselling Services Policy
- Employment Practices Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Student Acceptable Use of Digital Technologies, Devices and Social Media Policy
- Student Anti Bullying Policy
- Student Behaviour Management Policy
- Student Wellbeing Policy
- Staff Acceptable Use of Digital Technologies Policy
- Staff Responsible Use of Social Media Policy
- Visitors on Campus Policy.

At OLMC we are committed to continuous improvement of our child safety systems and practices. These policies are dynamic documents that are regularly reviewed to ensure they are working and effective in practice. They are updated as required to accommodate changes in legislation or circumstance.

Preparing for New Child Safe Standards

In July 2021, the Victorian Government announced that new Child Safe Standards would be implemented to further strengthen child safe environments and protect children from abuse. The 12-month period from 1 July 2021 to 1 July 2022 was noted as a transition phase during which schools must continue to comply with the current Child Safe Standards (Ministerial Order No. 870) and at the same time be aware that a new Ministerial Order under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) (Ministerial Order No. 1359), would come into effect on 1 July 2022. The new Ministerial Order No. 1359 would replace Ministerial Order No. 870 at this time.

At the end of the school year, all schools were advised that guidance material, templates and the requirements of the new Child Safe Standards would be communicated to school leaders by DET, MACS and the CECV early in the 2022 school year. The College expects that Terms 1 and 2 in 2022 will be the key period for reviewing and extending OLMC's Child Safe policies, procedures and practices in order to comply with the child-safe culture and environment required by Ministerial Order No.1359.

Staff Training

Several times throughout the year, at all-staff meetings, staff were fully briefed on OLMC'S Child Safe policies and codes of conduct, along with their inherent expectations. Mercy Education Ltd ensured that all staff completed an online training program in 2021 on recognising indicators of child abuse and on reporting obligations. There were also opportunities through induction programs and in ongoing training and professional learning sessions for staff to understand their professional and legal obligations, including procedures for reporting suspicion of abuse and neglect.

Employment Practices

The College has processes for monitoring and assessing the continuing suitability of staff and volunteers to work with students. This includes regular reviews of the status of Working with Children Checks and staff professional registration requirements, such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration.



Leadership & Management

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We will develop a model of empowered leadership that operates in an environment of trust and respect that enhances both autonomy and diversity.

OLMC Strategic Plan 2020-2023, Key Commitment 5

Achievements

Leadership Team Development

The Leadership Team engaged in an exploration of their own development, including professional reading and strategic development.

In 2021, Judith Weir was granted a Menzies School Fellowship. Only 6 Principal class candidates are chosen each year. The Fellowship is designed to support school leaders to grow in their capacity to lead and develop Collective Efficacy within the school. The Fellowship will support Judith's growth and development as a leader by providing coaching and will also provide opportunities for the growth and development of the Leadership Team and Middle Leaders. Judith and OLMC value the opportunity to be part of such a cutting-edge program.

The focus on Collective Efficacy and the development of Professional Learning Teams enabled the development of Middle Leaders as they led and guided teachers in their analysis and collaboration around student learning and the associated pedagogical developments.

College Masterplan

Stage six of the College Masterplan was completed in 2021 and includes new general purpose classrooms, a new canteen and indoor seating area and suspended and ground level walkways. The amenity for students was a key focus of this stage of the plan and has provided excellent options for student movement reducing congestion and travel time between classes. The College Advisory Council, Project Management Team and Business Manager are to be congratulated for their vision and management of the process.



EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING 2021

With Term 1 (relatively) free of lockdown and online learning interruptions, the Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) convened on a number of occasions in Term 1 and the first weeks of Term 2 and worked on projects to enhance student learning. Many of the projects drew on the experience of online and remote learning in 2020. Although subsequent lockdowns and reversions to online learning interrupted the work of the PLTs, the solid foundation put in place continued to provide benefits throughout the year.

The same interruptions to face-to-face teaching in Terms 2 and 3 saw the Semester 1, Year 10 and Year 11 examinations, plus the Year 12 trial exams in September, move to an online platform known as ExamNet. This required additional staff training, but given the familiarity teachers had gained with online teaching and learning by this point, staff were very quick to adapt to ExamNet and make effective use of the flexibility and data it offered.

A feature of the two years of Covid-interrupted learning was that much Professional Learning that had been provided in face-to-face settings in the past moved to online delivery. These webinars have proven to be a real boon to professional learning as they enabled teachers to continue involvement in PL activities whilst working off-site. They also provided recorded presentations that could be accessed at a later date.

Finally, despite the challenges of 2021, it was particularly gratifying to see that a number of teachers of Unit 3 & 4 subjects extended their professional learning by marking Victorian Curriculum and Assessment (VCAA) exams in 2021. As with other professional learning provided throughout 2021, the training for the VCAA assessors was provided online and, as usual, was considered to be amongst the most useful PL undertaken by these teachers through the year.

Teacher Candidate Program

OLMC hosted a limited number of pre-service teachers throughout 2021, despite the constraints of lockdowns and online and remote learning.

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2021	108
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$414



TEACHER SATISFACTION

Despite two years of remote learning and all that COVID-19 presented, we continued to see improvements in the MACSIS data from 2019. In particular, the areas of improvement focused on the way we demonstrate leading practices for teaching, learning and student wellbeing:

- 87% of all staff view the relationship between the Leadership and staff positively
- 77% of staff felt OLMC is a safe environment
- 63% of teaching staff were positive about professional learning
- 71% of teaching staff viewed positively the collaboration for improvement
- 76% of teachers believed there was strong support for teams
- 87% off all staff viewed positively our Collective Efficacy

Anecdotally, staff have also shown a recognition of their own growth and development over the course of the year as they once again managed the switching from working with students in a classroom to engaging with them remotely.

TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	89.3%
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ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE

Staff Retention Rate	91.3%
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TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Doctorate	1.1%
Masters	23.3%
Graduate	53.3%
Graduate Certificate	5.6%
Bachelor Degree	94.4%
Advanced Diploma	14.4%
No Qualifications Listed	1.1%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	4.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	111.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	94.8
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	55.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	50.4
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0



College Community

Goals & Intended Outcomes

We will investigate and implement strategies for optimal and sustainable use of our resources to promote contemporary learning and community development.

We will establish new and strengthened approaches to building parent engagement in and understanding of their daughter's learning and in the life of the College.

OLMC Strategic Plan 2020-2023, Key Commitments 6 and 7

Achievements

Mothers' Day Inspiration

The OLMC Parents' Association again held our annual Mothers' Day Event in 2021. It was attended by nearly 200 people and included students and significant women in their lives. Some families had three generations of women there on the night. A photo booth allowed everyone to capture the moment and dress up for photos. The night was a great success and we are looking forward to 2022.

This and other initiatives of the Parents' Association were warmly and gratefully received.

Outreach to OLMC's 2021 Year 7s

Lockdown restrictions meant that almost all of the traditional 'pre-transitioning' activities for the soon-to-be Year 7 Class of 2022 had to be cancelled. Alternative ways of connecting with the Year 6s in their respective schools and homes were enacted, albeit in some unique and fun ways.

McAuley Community Services for Women Fundraiser

Each year the College hosts a 'High Tea in Heidelberg' to raise funds for McAuley Community Services for Women (MCSW), an organisation that helps women and children confronting family violence to rebuild their lives. Again this year, the restrictions meant that we had to continue to find an alternative way to support MCSW. The raffle was again held online, with prizes generously donated by several College parents, current community members, our past pupils and attendees from previous High Tea events. People 'bought up big!' The response was overwhelming.



VALUE ADDED

Parent Engagement

Earlier sections of this Annual Report account for various activities and events that helped to build strengthened partnerships with our parent community in 2021. The activities/events included:

- The Year 7 Welcome Mass - see Education in Faith
- The Year 7 and Year 8 Time and Space Program (online) – see Student Wellbeing

Facilities Development

As reported under Leadership and Management (above), construction continued throughout 2021 on Stage 6 of the College Master Plan. There were some delays caused by a range of issues, including COVID-19, but it was finally completed at the end of the year, ready for students in 2022.

Alongside the DAT Centre, the College now has a new café and food court, a senior classroom block and some landscaped outdoor areas. These are connected via a raised walkway that significantly improves campus circulation and there is a large undercover area that greatly enhances student amenity.

PARENT SATISFACTION

In 2021 the MACS annual school survey of parent satisfaction was conducted. In light of the previous two years of remote learning and COVID-19 restrictions, it was pleasing to see an improvement from 2019 in the areas of Family Engagement and Catholic Identity. Evidence of improved family engagement includes the attendance rates at the inaugural Time and Space evenings and the Parents Association Mother's Day event.

As part of our work to further develop our communications and understandings, the Marketing and Development Leader conducted a survey of parents to understand what they valued about OLMC. The strengths identified by parents included:

- Whole person education
- Energy and enthusiasm of students
- Learning support
- Sports program
- Camps

The keywords used by parents to describe OLMC included:

- Strong academic program
- Community
- Supportive/Student Wellbeing
- Values
- Opportunities

Over 2021, the Principal and members of staff continued to receive many email messages of support and commendation for OLMC's remote learning program and the management of COVID-19 restrictions and processes. In so many ways, the lockdown periods continued to forge stronger school-parent collaboration and partnerships. It is the College's intention to build on and consolidate these gains in 2022 and beyond.

Future Directions

The College has this year focused on the development of Professional Learning Teams to focus on the learning growth of students and the development of Collective Efficacy. This is a key focus of our work in 2022 and beyond. The Menzies Fellowship, awarded to the Principal, will provide the College with invaluable opportunities to grow and develop our understandings of student learning needs and the ways in which we can best address them.

The implementation of CANVAS, a learning management system, will be a priority in 2022. CANVAS will allow us to seamlessly share with students and teachers, learning resources, teacher feedback and learning activities. It will also enhance the learning data available to teachers to help them further understand the learners with whom they work.

In 2022, we will open the new facilities that have formed part of the building program of the last three years. The new facilities include a canteen and cafeteria style seating area for students, new classrooms and walkways that enable easy travel across the campus.

