

# Ave Maria College Aberfeldie

2020

## Annual Report to the School Community

*True power is Love*  
Helene de Chappotin



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## Contact Details

ADDRESS	14-22 Vida Street Aberfeldie VIC 3040
PRINCIPAL	Tanya Hutton
PARISH PRIEST	Rev. Tony Feeney
SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR	Ms. Anne Sargent
TELEPHONE	03 9331 9300
EMAIL	principal@avemaria.vic.edu.au
WEBSITE	www.avemaria.vic.edu.au
E NUMBER	E1231

## Minimum Standards Attestation

I, Tanya Hutton, attest that Ave Maria 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.

20/05/2021

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

## Our College Vision

We follow Mary's model for life. Mary invites us to trust in the truth of God's love and the truth within ourselves. In our teaching, learning and relationships, we are seekers of Truth and people of Love. Mary teaches us humility and strength; leading the way to a relationship with God.

We are inspired by a Franciscan way of knowing Jesus. St Francis of Assisi invites us to imitate Jesus who took the side of the vulnerable and drew all into a shared humanity through inclusion and peace. Francis teaches us to delight in God's gifts to us; shared, grown and sustained for all. Created in God's image, we are called to see the face of God in others. Drawn from the Gospels, we profess the Franciscan values of peace, justice, simplicity and compassion, such that "All may be One" (John 17:21).

We value Helene de Chappotin's vision for education; that learning is for fullness of life for all. Learning excellence at Ave Maria is contemporary and collaborative, rigorous and relevant. Every member of our community contributes to a learning culture of endeavour and excellence. Together, we develop a love for learning and a readiness to contribute to the world.

We are strengthened by St Clare of Assisi, a woman of firm faith, commitment and sisterly love. The women of Ave Maria are educated to develop a strong sense of self, sisterly love for others and generous action in the world. We come to know ourselves in our relationships with each other. This is central to our understanding of wellbeing, resilience and growth.

Together, we strive for Ave Maria College to be a learning community of Truth and Love.

## College Overview

Since 1963, Ave Maria College has been an intrinsic part of its local community, providing a welcoming and nurturing environment for young women, guided by the Franciscan values of Truth, Love, Peace and Compassion. Our College motto - *Striving for Truth through Love* - inspires us to learn about ourselves, our relationships with others and the world around us, so we can belong, grow and thrive.

Established by a number of visionary sisters of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary in 1963, Ave Maria College has committed itself to the care of each student's physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual wellbeing and growth. With the 827 enrolled at Ave Maria College in 2020, students are known and nurtured so they can thrive. Unique skills are recognised, developed and celebrated, imparting students with the courage to excel in whatever career pathway they choose.

At Ave Maria College, we foster a culture of rigorous academic achievement, underpinned by self-confidence and a deep relationship with God. It is through these principles and the pillars of learning, growth, community and faith, that our students leave the College thriving - both personally and professionally - empowered to shape their own future.

Ave Maria College is a high performing Catholic secondary school. We challenge our students to strive for excellence from Year 7, ensuring they are prepared for their senior studies in VCE and VET along with their future pathways. Our success is ultimately measured by the accomplishments of our students - with no less than 15.5 % of Year 12 students achieving an ATAR score greater than 90 in 2020.

The heart of the College is - and always will be - the enrichment of faith and the wellbeing and growth of our students. We are committed to building a safe, open and supportive community where our students feel a strong sense of belonging and connectedness. This creates collaborative and compassionate young women who are prepared to be the positive change they want to see in the world.

We work closely with families and students to address specific interests, needs and capabilities by developing bespoke learning programs that may include off-campus VET and university subjects.

Educating young women involves a community approach that commences with a robust transition program in the first week of Year 7. We embrace positive relationships with our wider community, including families and local businesses, to develop a strong network for our students and alumnae to connect with, for future study opportunities, employment or mentorship. The Ave Maria College community becomes the foundation of belonging for our students beyond the school years.

We are rich in tradition and we are future-focused. We provide contemporary learning environments that spark curiosity and encourage students to seek new knowledge and skills with the view of opening pathways to new and emerging professions. With an emphasis on design thinking, STEM and enterprise skills, our innovative and challenging curriculum prepares our students with the dispositions for their chosen career and workforce of the future.

Educating young women of the future requires the infrastructure to match. The College boasts state-of-the-art facilities including contemporary learning spaces, which work to maximise the learning potential in all students and enable them to thrive.

Above all, Ave Maria College seeks to empower our students, providing a foundation of belonging and giving them the curiosity to explore, courage to excel, confidence to thrive, compassion to love and community to grow.

## Principal's Report

2020 was both an unexpected and unprecedented year for many if not all the Ave Maria Community. It has presented our community with challenges and called us to do things very differently. The dedication of our staff, the resilience and adaptability of the students, the random acts of kindness and how we came together to support each other in a time of need are all examples of the positive influence of our community. I believe that this is a strength of our community and one that we can be proud of, now and into the future.

2020 has exemplified our College motto of 'Striving for truth through love'. For our students it taught them so much about themselves, their relationships and the world in which they live, particularly, given how often and quickly things changed through this year. Our students embraced this with a positive attitude, willingness to give things a go, adaptability, resilience and courage. Their endeavours and achievements throughout the year were commendable. For College staff it was a time when they were committed to safety and care; continued provision of high-quality learning programs; innovation as they navigated a new way of learning; and opportunities for community.

I would also like to acknowledge the following groups within the College;

To our Year 12 Student Leaders who throughout 2020 found new and creative ways to lead their peers and develop student led initiatives and events often streamed online. Under the leadership of Claudia Fox and Danielle Reed, College Co-Captains who led their team and peers aptly leaving their own positive and unique imprint on the Ave community and our history.

To the College Learning Management Team led by Michelle Robertson, Deputy Principal who led online learning and the extension of IT delivery, well done!

The Ave Student Wellbeing and Counselling Teams are to be applauded for how they continued to provide high-quality pastoral and wellbeing support for our students.

To our families, thank-you for your ongoing support and trust. 2020 reshaped the look and feel of the parent-school partnership. Your role as the first and primary educators of your daughters evolved throughout remote online learning as you worked to support your daughter's while they were learning from home. As a community we were most grateful.

Thank-you to the College Executive for your vision and ongoing commitment to the College. This team and how they have worked to respond to COVID-19 is a wonderful example of agile leadership at its best. In many ways they exemplified the call of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary to serve, to respect, to accompany, to have a heart full of goodness and to love truth.

Thank-you must also be extended to all members of the Board of Governance - President of the Delegated Canonical Administrators Rev. Tony Feeney, Delegated Canonical Administrators Peter Devery, Ward Italiano and Sr. Heather Weedon, Board Chair/parent representative, Anne Sargent, Deputy Chair/parent representative Victor Carreto, Secretary/parent representative Robert De Fazio, parent representatives Michael Ewing and Kim Fenton. Thank-you for their support, commitment, expertise, guidance and insights provided during their tenure as board members and delegated canonical administrators.

In conclusion, even though 2020 presented our community with challenges it was a delight to see the living spirit of the Ave Maria community throughout this year.

God bless and as a community may we continue to strive for truth through love.

Tanya Hutton

Principal

## Education in Faith

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To enhance a faith community that lives the Gospel and models Franciscan values

### Achievements

Our annual theme for 2020, 'True power is love', guided our faith formation opportunities this year. Each Domain enacted the theme within their context and at each Whole School gathering it was further reflected upon by speakers and student leaders. The theme is a quote by Helene de Chappotin and emerged from consultation with staff and students.

Our House patrons are recognisably Catholic and Franciscan: Mary, Francis, Clare and Helene (de Chappotin - foundress of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary who founded Ave Maria College). These names and the cultural and sporting activities done in houses provide a regular focus for Catholic culture and Franciscan tradition. Our Catholic and Franciscan heritage has been enhanced by the progressive roll-out of signage which claims areas of the College for each House patron as well as explaining the heritage we receive from each House patron. The finalised building program of the Helene Province is an example.

A wide range of students were engaged in planning liturgical celebrations and social justice activities. Franciscan Captains worked successfully with the Director of Faith and Religious Education to continue our practice of a Catholic social justice focus for each year level, implementing a number of awareness raising and fundraising initiatives. The Senior Student Leaders took an active role in promoting a focus on sustainability throughout the College as well as student wellbeing through the lockdowns.

The College continued to support teachers in attaining Accreditation to teach in a Catholic School. All staff attended three faith formation sessions during the year. Staff are also kept informed of a variety of external PL opportunities.

The Staff Faith Formation Day in August continued to explore the Franciscan charism, while also being tailored to an online format. There was also staff and student consultation in the formulation of the 2021 College theme, 'God is our guiding light', which is from the writings of St Clare of Assisi.

We continued our tradition of presenting new staff and Year 7 girls with a House badge and a Tau cross, a symbol of St Francis of Assisi.

### VALUE ADDED

COVID restrictions made it challenging to run many of our usual activities.

A remote version of our Mission Action Day (MAD) occurred. MAD helps us to meet our Lenten obligation, continuing to build our sister school relationship with St Maria Mazzarello School in Venilale, Timor-Leste.

Franciscan leaders helped to support the social justice foci at each year level, as well as a College focus on sustainability. This included a submission as part of the Rerum Novarum Awards.

## Learning & Teaching

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

In 2021, Ave Maria College launched our new Ave Charter for Education. Our Charter consists of Franciscan beliefs, learner attributes and wellbeing skills bound by a learning environment which interconnects each element and where there are opportunities for each student to belong, engage and thrive. Learning excellence at Ave Maria College is contemporary and collaborative, rigorous and relevant. Every member of our community contributes to a learning culture of endeavour and excellence. In 2021, a working party has been established to implement a whole school approach to reading and disciplinary literacy. The aim is to develop key strategies and approaches to reading that will enhance and value add to learning across the curriculum, as part of our Strategic Plan 2019-2022. A 7-10 Curriculum Review is also a key goal in our Annual Action Plan for 2021. This review is designed to explore our subject offerings at 7-10 and implement recommendations for 2022. Our learning and teaching program continues to promote the use and range of differentiation strategies to support and extend student learning outcomes.

### Achievements

#### Achievements

The 2020 VCE results for Ave Maria College showed that students were able to maintain their pursuit of excellence, despite the challenges faced by the COVID-19 pandemic. The median study score was 32, with 9.1% of scores being 40 or above. 67.4% of scores achieved were 30 or above, highlighting that our students performed comparatively well in comparison to their peers across the state. The highest achieved result was 49 for English Language. In relation to ATAR statistics, the College median was 75.78, with 8.6% of students achieving an ATAR above 95 and 15.5% of students achieving an ATAR above 90. The highest ATAR achieved was 98.65.

VCE RESULTS	2020
% of students who received an ATAR over 95	8.6%
% of students who received an ATAR over 90	15.5%
% of students who received an ATAR over 80	38.8%
Median ATAR score	75.78
Median study score	32
% of individual study scores 40 or above	9.1%

In 2020, the Year 12 cohort comprised of 125 students. Of these 125, 119 completed tertiary applications through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) and 97% (115 students) received offers through the January Round 1 offer period and a further 15 offers were received in following rounds. 75% of these January Round 1 offers were the students' first preference. 14 students received multiple offers. Sciences remain a popular post-secondary discipline for our students with 27% of students choosing courses in this area. Performing & Visual Arts and Health are a close second and third choice for post secondary disciplines.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

During 2020, most assessment for years 7-12 was conducted online via Microsoft Teams and our Learning Management System — SIMON. Students continued to be assessed on formative and summative tasks, with timely feedback provided for students and parents/carers via Ave Learning (SIMON). The College also introduced ACER PAT Testing for incoming Year 7 students and Years 8-10 students in PAT Reading and PAT Maths. This data has been useful to inform the placement of students into Year 7 Mentor/learning groups for 2021. It has also provided valuable data to identify students in Years 7-10 who may require intensive or classroom support due to the challenges of remote learning in 2020. These students have been identified and will receive support as part of the Victorian Government Tutor Learning Program.

MEDIAN NAPLAN RESULTS FOR YEAR 9		*
Year 9 Grammar & Punctuation		
Year 9 Numeracy		
Year 9 Reading		
Year 9 Spelling		
Year 9 Writing		

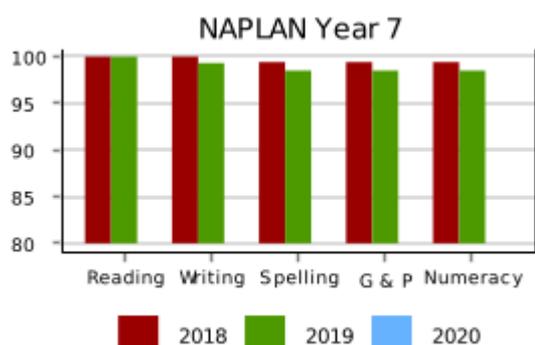
\* There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as the Australian Government decided that due to the COVID-19 pandemic NAPLAN Assessments would not take place.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS MEETING THE MINIMUM STANDARDS					
NAPLAN TESTS	2018	2019	2018 – 2019	2020	2019 – 2020
	%	%	Changes	%	Changes
			%	*	*
YR 07 Grammar & Punctuation	99.4	98.5	-0.9		
YR 07 Numeracy	99.4	98.5	-0.9		
YR 07 Reading	100.0	100.0	0.0		
YR 07 Spelling	99.4	98.5	-0.9		
YR 07 Writing	100.0	99.3	-0.7		
YR 09 Grammar & Punctuation	97.5	98.4	0.9		
YR 09 Numeracy	97.4	100.0	2.6		
YR 09 Reading	98.3	99.2	0.9		
YR 09 Spelling	98.3	96.9	-1.4		
YR 09 Writing	98.3	94.4	-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 enhance the learning architecture that supports the growth and wholeness of all.

### Achievements

The College demonstrated agility in its response to the evolving wellbeing needs of students throughout 2020. Through the Mentor Program students were supported to maintain connection and engagement throughout both on site and online learning experiences. The Mentor Period was modified in response to changing conditions. This meant more focus on active tasks, discussions and mindful practices to help students to manage their mental health, particularly during online learning. A benefit of this was the increased connection with Mentor Teachers and the Mentor Group. Students were able to share aspects of their lives, such as their pets or home projects, which meant that we could highlight the positive aspects of online learning. Supporting a positive mindset was a key focus of the Mentor Program throughout the year. This was emphasized during Mentor Time, when Mentor Teachers met with their Mentor Groups three times a week for check ins and short activities. This allowed us another avenue to monitor and support students, while also providing them with opportunities for connection and belonging.

There was significant emphasis and investment in student wellbeing intervention in 2020. In order to identify those in need of support and to monitor the effectiveness of interventions the Student Wellbeing Team (SWT) made some adjustments in practice. While traditional sources of data, such as attendance and work submissions, continued to be useful as indicators of student wellbeing the team adjusted to the online environment with an emphasis on a broad range of indicators. This meant frequent contact with teachers and parents or carers for feedback on individual student wellbeing. Students were able to access counselling support remotely and wellbeing team members used Teams to meet with students for regular support.

The College trialled the PULSE program with our Year 7 to 9 students. The program asks students to check in once a week with a rating of their overall wellbeing, as well as responding to questions about safety, belonging and health. Students could reach out and ask a member of SWT for help and they could also give teachers or other students gratitude. The use of PULSE helps to create a habit of help-seeking and provided the college with valuable data to track the wellbeing of students individually, in Mentor Groups and as Year Level cohorts. The self-reporting mechanism is another way that the College is able to provide the students with the opportunity to use their voices.

A significant increase in the scale and intensity of student wellbeing needs has been responded to with an increase in the counselling service provided by the College. In the latter part of the year the College added another counsellor in order to provide students with choice and a range of skill sets. Our new College Psychologist was also able to conduct cognitive testing, supporting the College to investigate learning issues and find avenues to best meet the learning needs of our students. The success of the service has seen greater collaboration with external agencies, ensuring a wrap-around approach to mental health interventions.

Throughout 2020 the Student Wellbeing Team and some staff volunteers investigated Student Wellbeing frameworks. While the College has invested in social emotional learning programs and continues to support the Respectful Relationships program, the team found that it was important for the College to share a consistent approach that reflected our charism and the unique context of Ave Maria College. In exploring a range of frameworks it was found that Visible Wellbeing best

met the needs of the College. With a focus on positive education, this strengths based approach provides activities and language that support learning in the classroom, a positive mindset and a proactive approach. Implementation began in 2020 with integration in the Ave Charter for Education. This meant that we could develop a wholistic approach to our students that incorporated their faith, learning and mental health fitness.

**VALUE ADDED**

- Peer Support Leaders
- Lab Rats
- Creative Spaces
- Lunchtime activities
- Language competitions
- Book Corner
- Chess Club
- Absolute Maximums
- Student Leadership
- Vocal Ensemble
- College Band
- School Assemblies
- Liturgies
- Parent Consultations

**STUDENT SATISFACTION**

Although the College was unable to conduct the CEMSI survey, we actively sought feedback from students during the Mentor Program and in classes. As part of the investigation into Student Wellbeing frameworks, students and parents were consulted about their experience and expectations. Overwhelmingly, parents reported that they felt connected to the College. It was frequently mentioned that staff were available and actively engaged in the learning and growth of the students. Parents commented on the high level of support offered by wellbeing staff, in addition to the support offered by classroom teachers. Parents and students reflected on the wide range of activities that are offered by the College, allowing for students to explore their talents in a range of areas. Students also commented on the strength of their relationships with teachers, demonstrating the strong relationships in the College.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student attendance was monitored frequently throughout 2020. There were also intervention plans introduced to support the return to onsite learning after periods of online learning. These plans were individually crafted to suit the needs of each individual. In this way we were able to put the right supports in place for students to return to onsite learning. This strategy also enabled us to identify attendance issues early and work in collaboration with parents and carers.

Absences were closely monitored, with Mentor Teachers making first contact with parents after 3 days of absence. Any extended absences were managed by the Sub-School Leader or Director of Student Wellbeing. Where necessary, interventions, such as modified attendance plans, were put in place to support any student experiencing school avoidance. Early intervention and collaboration with parents or carers was an important factor in helping students manage their anxiety around the return to onsite learning.

## YEARS 9 – 12 STUDENT RETENTION RATE

Years 9 to 12 Student Retention Rate	91.9%
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## AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE BY YEAR LEVEL

Y07	95.7%
Y08	95.2%
Y09	93.7%
Y10	92.3%
Overall average attendance	94.2%

## SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES

VCE Median Score	32.0
VCE Completion Rate	100.0%
VCAL Completion Rate	0.0%

POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS AS AT 2020	
Tertiary Study	77.0%
TAFE / VET	2.0%
Apprenticeship / Traineeship	7.0%
Deferred	9.0%
Employment	2.0%
Other – The category of Other includes both students Looking for Work and those classed as Other	0.0%

## Child Safe Standards

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

Ave Maria College holds the care, safety and wellbeing of our children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our College. Our commitment to Child Safety is foundational, emanating from our Franciscan charism that highlights protecting the vulnerable. Additionally, we are inspired by the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each individual at the heart of the gospel (*CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety*). In 2020, Ave Maria College continued to implement Child Safety Protocols and Practices, in line with the Ministerial Order 870, including the seven Child Safety Standards and drawing upon the resources and support of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV).

Ave Maria College is committed to the continuous improvement of our child safety systems and practices. Our Child Safety Policy and the related protocols are dynamic documents that are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are working in practice and are updated to accommodate changes in legislation or circumstance.

### Achievements

Child Safety protocols and practices were paramount considerations when making any adjustments to meet the needs of 2020. The Child Safety Standards were frequently discussed when considering practices for online learning. This meant ensuring detailed guidance for staff and students around home study spaces, use of cameras, recording of sessions, etc. Child Safety was discussed with staff and students to ensure that all were aware of the implications of policies and the reasons for particular guidelines.

The College maintained thorough and rigorous screening processes in the recruitment of employees, contractors and volunteers. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements were included in all advertisements for such employee, contractor and volunteer positions, and all applicants were provided with copies of the college Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Child Safety Policy.

The PROTECT Protocol guides the College's response to disclosures. Child Protection Officer posters are displayed in all classrooms. Ongoing professional discussions support members of the Student Wellbeing Team to understand the implications of mandatory reporting and how to respond to student disclosures.

Child Safety continues to be embedded into the culture and fabric of the College through ongoing conversations with students, seeking student voice via student leadership and student consultation, and an explicit focus on safety of all young people in the college.

## Leadership & Management

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

The College will continue to develop the instructional practice and capacity of staff in the areas of learning, wellbeing and operations to ensure a smooth transition into the remote online working space. The College will also ensure that the delivery of high quality education programs will continue in the online learning environment.

### Achievements

The unexpected nature of COVID-19 meant throughout 2020 the College focus centred guiding the Ave Maria College community through this unprecedented situation. During this period, the priority in leading our community was:

- To support the community in faith through this time.
- Our ongoing commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of both students and staff.
- The continued provision of a high-quality education for students.
- Continued monitoring and support of student who are at risk.
- Using existing platforms for the delivery of the remote online learning environment to minimise the impact of this new way of learning and teaching on students and staff.
- Provision of resources and professional learning for staff to support them during remote online learning.

As a College a critical incident team was established to manage and lead the College response to COVID-19. As such, the College developed several documents to both guide and support our leadership throughout this unprecedented situation:

- COVID Safe Plan
- Pandemic Plan
- Agile Working Guide
- Education Continuity Plan (contained within the Pandemic Plan)
- Staff and Student Wellbeing Support Plan (contained within the Pandemic Plan)
- Staff Guides - Pandemic Overview & Online Learning Environment
- Student & Parent Guide - Online Learning Environment & Quick Guide
- Onsite protocols for students and staff

During 2020 the College Leadership Team participated in the Collective Impact Program offered by the Northern Region of Catholic Education Melbourne. The purpose of this was to strength and develop news ways for the leadership team to work and learn together by building evidence-informed improvement capability to increase our educational impact. An important aspect of the program was to establish a clear link between impact thinking, rapid action plans and responsive implementation as applicable to school improvement and change management within the Ave Maria College context. This program provided the team with useful skills and tools to develop both as a team but also agile leaders. This was particularly important given the agile nature of leading a school community throughout COVID-19.

The College continued to implement the Supporting Teacher's Enhanced Practice Program (STEP) throughout the year. In 2020 this program was extended to include the participation of non-teaching staff. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, worked towards a goal related to remote online learning or remote operations. Three STEP conversations occurred throughout the year with individual staff regarding how they tracked toward attainment of this goal. Conversations with individual staff highlighted their commitment and adaptability to this new way of working and learning.

**EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Description of Professional Learning undertaken in 2020

Throughout 2020 many staff members were able to complete online professional learning both within the College community and with external providers including the VCAA and various subject associations. Several staff continued with VCAA assessing in subjects including Psychology, Outdoor Education and Environments, English Language, Studio Arts, Italian, Health and Human Development, Further Mathematics, Religion and Society and English.

Four staff members completed the Growth Coaching International Introduction to growth coaching, and three staff completed a Data literacy PL with Dr Selena Fisk. A staff member completed the 8 week PL on PAT testing data analysis and one staff member completed the HALT assessor training and VIT mentor professional learning program.

Activities within the College Professional Learning program in 2020 included

- Microsoft Teams induction and navigation
- Staff wellbeing - coping and positive wellbeing
- Weekly Ave News publication
- Faith Formation
- Anaphylaxis refresher
- Data analysis
- First Aid, including CPR

Number of teachers who participated in PL in 2020	72
Average expenditure per teacher for PL	\$3784

**TEACHER SATISFACTION**

In the Community Feedback Survey distributed in Term 2, 47 staff completed the survey of which 37 were teaching staff; this represents a little over half of all teaching staff. The survey asks staff questions about communication, resources, support, accessibility and technical elements of the online learning environment. Overwhelming staff responses were very positive with almost all responses being in the agree / strongly agree categories. Further to this all staff were invited to attend several online staff wellbeing workshops with Dr Aimee Maxwell during the online period. These were attended by most staff members, including many teaching

staff. This opportunity was greatly appreciated and there were several informal comments after the events.

The STEP program, that was introduced in 2019 continued in 2020, with modifications in light of online learning / work. With a general goal for all staff to focus on — how they are building their capacity in the online environment, this was a great opportunity for teaching staff to share their achievements and successes. The opportunity to be acknowledged for their growth and development in a rapidly changing environment was appreciated.

Teaching staff continued to have professional learning opportunities throughout 2020, with an added element of creating a digital pedagogy library where they could share some of their newly acquired or refined technological skills. Whilst initially daunting, the opportunity for staff to showcase the diversity in technology tools and activities was celebrated. This created new opportunities for staff to collaborate informally which was also successful and well-received.

**TEACHING STAFF ATTENDANCE RATE**

Teaching Staff Attendance Rate	82.3%
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**ALL STAFF RETENTION RATE**

Staff Retention Rate	84.6%
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**TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Doctorate	0.0%
Masters	21.3%
Graduate	47.5%
Graduate Certificate	9.8%
Bachelor Degree	85.2%
Advanced Diploma	19.7%
No Qualifications Listed	1.6%

STAFF COMPOSITION	
Principal Class (Headcount)	3.0
Teaching Staff (Headcount)	72.0
Teaching Staff (FTE)	67.5
Non-Teaching Staff (Headcount)	39.0
Non-Teaching Staff (FTE)	30.6
Indigenous Teaching Staff (Headcount)	0.0

## College Community

### Goals & Intended Outcomes

To continue to act as co-creators and stewards of God's gifts

### Achievements

In 2020, the College began the year with the usual whole school events such as the Opening Mass and Whole School Assembly. Shortly after this we welcomed back the high achievers from the class of 2019 at the VCE awards assembly. In mid-February, we celebrated our Inter-house Swimming Carnival at Queen's park. Shortly thereafter we moved into an online learning environment which required a shift in how our community events would be celebrated. The College adapted well to becoming an online community, and we successfully staged our Parent Information Nights online.

Whilst several of our usual events could not take place, we were able to substitute for online alternatives. Examples of this include the essential Subject Selection Night, the inter-house athletics carnival and Ave Day celebrations, complete with an online liturgy. Parent / Teacher / Student interviews were also conducted online, via Microsoft Teams, and these proved to be both very successful and had a higher participation rate than previous onsite interviews. In Term 4, whilst we were able to return to onsite learning, community events were still restricted. Again, we adapted to create a wonderful graduation celebration, and end of year masses for each year level.

As we were unable to hold onsite enrolment tours, we generated an informative and engaging virtual tour of the College. Similarly, our Year 7 orientation event was held online, which afforded us the opportunity to create a student-led orientation of the school. And not to forget the great work of our students, our Annual Arts festival also moved online, with the work of VCE Visual and Performing Arts students being showcased in a virtual gallery.

In light of the environment of 2020, an additional achievement was in the creation and development of an online community with our *College Community* and *House Teams* becoming vital portals for communication and celebration. Likewise, we increased our social media presence as a way to showcase our community more broadly.

#### VALUE ADDED

Parent Information Evenings (online)

Subject Selection Evening (online)

Women of Ave Network / Ave Connect

Arts and Technology Festival

Community Mass

The provision of online learning guides for students, parents and staff

The creation of the [community@avemaria.vic.edu.au](mailto:community@avemaria.vic.edu.au) mailbox specifically for use during the online learning periods.

## PARENT SATISFACTION

Throughout 2020, two online surveys were distributed to Parents to gauge their satisfaction with the online learning environment. The first in mid Term 2 and the second in mid Term 3. The survey was conducted via a Microsoft Form that was distributed to parents via email, the College newsletters and the parent portal. The first survey had 253 parent responses, the second 185; this represents approximately 36% and 26% of our parents respectively. Both surveys were also open to staff and students.

The surveys focused on the online learning experience, communication, resources and, in term 3, sought feedback on online events that had occurred as well. Overwhelming the parent responses were positive. There was clear evidence that parents who completed the survey were happy with the structures and resources put in place for online learning. The greater majority of responses regarding resources such as the online learning guides, parent / student support and the experience were all in the agree / strongly agree category.

With respect to online events such as the Subject Selection evening and Parent/Teacher/Student interviews, this was overwhelmingly positive. There was consistently good feedback in the good / very good range concerning accessibility, communication, navigation, quality, and so on.

Some highlights from open comments from parents include:

- *The college has been brilliant in its support to the students and parents. I feel the classes are being so well run and my daughter is really loving her time to learn online. We couldn't be happier with our choice of schools which has only been underlined by your capacity to support the learning during this difficult time.*
- *We appreciate the difficulty for teachers in this environment and very happy with how our daughter is going. Whilst she misses her peers and can't wait to return to school, she is more focussed and less distracted.*
- *No concerns. Emails from teachers have been received regarding particular assistance provided to our daughter. Teachers have all been very clear with instruction and support.*
- *I do not have concerns. My daughter has been regularly contacted to offer support to her.*
- *I think Ave has created excellent learning provisions for the students under the circumstances.*
- *I have been very satisfied with the way that Ave has continued to provide excellent education to my daughter. Thank you for all your hard work 😊*

## Future Directions

A key priority for our curriculum offerings at Ave Maria College is the development of knowledge, skills and learner attributes that will best prepare our students for life and work in the 21st century. The College prides itself in continuing curriculum breadth to ensure the subjects offered meet the needs of our students. New subjects that were offered in 2020 for implementation for 2021 include:

- Year 9 Humanities structure (Business and Civics, History, Geography)
- Textiles (Year 10)
- Religion and Society Unit 1 (Year 10 RE)
- Texts and Traditions Unit 2
- Texts and Traditions Units 3 and 4
- Geography Unit 1 and 2 Software Development Units 3 and 4

Working in conjunction with the Digital Learning Leader and the IT Manger the Director of Staff Professional Learning and Pedagogy completed work on the College's 2021+ data strategy. The data strategy will provide a framework for the collection, analysis and use of data across the College. It will bring together various data sources and data sets to ensure a streamlined approach to the use of data.

In 2021, the College will implement Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) into our Professional Learning program for teaching staff. PLTs are designed to investigate Principles of Effective Teaching Practice that reliably increase student learning and teaching success. The purpose of this approach is to provide opportunities for staff to work collaboratively, across Domains, to investigate, trial, analyse, evaluate and implement changes to our pedagogical direction and practice going forward.

Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) will be formed based on staff choices and each teacher was allocated a team consisting of no more than four members to investigate one Learning Principle. Throughout the year, dedicated time for Professional Learning will be provided for staff to work together, sharing ideas and actions.

A new feature of our Learning Management Systems (LMS) 'Ave Learning' that will be introduced in 2021 is the use of Ave Learning lesson plans. The Ave Learning lesson Plan allows for dynamic collaborative lesson planning to occur across subject teams that can then be modified to suit individual classes and students. This ensures students have a clear record as to what was taught within a lesson - which will have added benefits if they are absent.

By having a lesson plan which outlines the Learning Intention and Success criteria, as well as an overview of the lesson structure, more time can be spent on explicit teaching and learning activities. This also creates opportunities to build on students' independent learning skills with tasks and expectations documented for each class. Through meetings held with staff, CEMSIS data and market research feedback emerging trends indicated that innovation in learning through staff development, the introduction of enterprise skills, expansion of our career's education program, student engagement and community engagement are key areas of future focus and growth for the College. To support these very important area of focus the Senior Leadership Team will consist of the following members in 2021:

- Principal
- Deputy Principal (Learning, Staff & Operations)

- Assistant Principal (Community & Growth)
- Assistant Principal (Students & Engagement)
- Director of Faith & Religious Education
- Director of Learning & Pathways
- Director of Student Wellbeing
- Business Manager
- Human Resources & Compliance Manager

Finally, the College commenced the process of transferring governance and employment to the Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools (MACS). The finalisation of this process will continue throughout 2021, with a School Advisory Council to be established in the new year.