19 November 2024

Mel Maria Catholic Primary School

Annual Community Meeting 2024

Mel Maria Catholic Primary School

Principal Report

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have now reached our cruising altitude, and I'm pleased to turn off the seatbelt sign. You're welcome to move around as you wish, though please remain on board until we reach our destination. It's a bit chilly outside, and walking on the wings might disrupt our flight path. As we encounter some potentially bumpy patches ahead, I encourage you to buckle up and have faith in our dedicated and experienced flight crew, committed to ensuring your safe arrival."

When I came across this "In-Flight Announcement," it resonated with me. The last four years have been quite a journey and learning experience. As members of this school community, we embarked together on a path where our destination was, at first, unclear to everyone involved.

I share this analogy because it reflects the journey Mel Maria Catholic Primary School has undertaken over the past few years. Fortunately, thanks to everyone's resilience, we've stayed "inside the cabin," reaching our destination safely and on time.

Each of us may have experienced this journey in unique ways. For some, the pace felt like a rapid ascent; others may have wished it would speed up. Some felt the thrill of approaching new horizons, while others found reassurance in the familiar scenery along the way. Yet, no matter our individual outlooks, one thing is certain: we all began in the same departure lounge, ready to embark together. Whether as parents, students, or staff, we all awaited our boarding call, unified in our trust in the flight crew to guide us forward.

Our Vision for Mel Maria Catholic Primary School

At Mel Maria Catholic Primary School, we believe each child is a precious gift from God, created as an individual with unique gifts, talents, and abilities. Our mission is to nurture each child and provide an environment that allows them to experience the joy and wonder of our world and to achieve success.

The primary years are transformative not only for children but also for their families. Our vision for Mel Maria is that our school is a place where:

- Children receive a quality Catholic education.
- Children develop an awareness and appreciation of God's love for them as individuals.
- Children are inspired and challenged by a comprehensive and engaging curriculum.
- Children foster a desire to learn and strive for their best.
- Children's individual needs are supported.
- Children thrive in an atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation.
- Positive, collaborative interactions are witnessed among parents, teachers, and students.
- Children gain an appreciation for culture in all its forms.
- Children are encouraged to embrace an active, healthy lifestyle.

We recognize the critical role parents play in the life of the school and in their children's learning. Education today thrives when parents are active partners, supporting children to reach their full potential. When parish, home, and school share a common vision, success is more likely.

Our Catholic identity is central to everything we do, with Jesus as our model. Our mission is to proclaim and live the Gospel within a Catholic environment, integrating Gospel values into our curriculum and school life. Thus, it is essential that staff, students, and parents work together in a spirit of Christian cooperation.

Our learning program aims to provide broad educational experiences, enabling every child to experience achievement and success. As a staff, we strive to remain at the forefront of educational developments while honouring traditional educational values.

Reflections on 2024

Reflecting on this remarkable year at Mel Maria Catholic Primary School, I am filled with gratitude and pride for all we have achieved together. Each child is a precious gift from God, created with unique talents and boundless potential. Grounded in our Catholic values, we aim to nurture these qualities and foster a love for learning in a supportive, faith-filled environment. This commitment drives us daily to provide a vibrant educational experience for every student.

This year, we celebrated many achievements, including:

- Two teams reaching the State Finals in the Tournament of the Minds (TOMs).
- Winning the Language and Literature section in TOMs, leading to a team's invitation to the Tournament of Minds International Final in Sydney.
- Finishing fourth in the Catholic Primary Schools Sports Association 'A' Division swimming carnival.
- Earning second and two third places in the State RoboCup Competition.
- Winning "Best Researched Speech" in the Annual Speak-Up Awards.
- An "Outstanding" rating for our Primary School Choir at the Catholic School Performing Arts Festival.

- One student as a top three finalist in the Craig Silvey Writing Award.
- First place in the Catholic Schools Cross Country Championship A Division.
- Received third place in the "A Division Interschool athletic Carnival"
- One Year 5 team received the prestigious Panellist Award for their outstanding work in the CEWA MAD STEM Showcase.

Looking Ahead to 2025: A New Dual-Campus Model

In 2025, we are excited to begin a new chapter with our Early Childhood Campus and Primary Campus. This restructured model brings new opportunities to support and enhance the educational experiences of our students, staff, and community. Creating two distinct campuses allows for a more tailored approach to learning, and we are confident these changes will enrich the lives of all at Mel Maria.

Key features of each campus include:

Early Childhood Campus (Pre-Kindergarten to Year Two):

- A dedicated early childhood setting designed to meet the developmental needs of young learners.
- Potential for four streams per year level, fostering collaboration and cohesive learning.
- Tailored approaches accommodating diverse student needs.
- A unique model within Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA), establishing Mel Maria as a distinctive choice.
- Developing leadership opportunities for our younger students.
- Strong growth potential, providing smooth progression into middle and upper primary.

Primary Campus (Years Three to Six):

- A focused campus for older students, encouraging staff collaboration and teaching continuity.
- A cohesive curriculum developed for middle and upper primary year levels, as all classes will be on the one campus, providing teachers greater opportunity to work collaboratively.
- A new multifunctional learning facility for teaching and learning, school-wide events and community engagement.
- A redesigned administration office at St Joseph Pignatelli, fostering a stronger sense of community.

The transition to our dual-campus model will enhance the student experience and position Mel Maria as a leader within the CEWA system, setting a benchmark for future innovations in Catholic education in Western Australia.

New School Colours and Uniforms for 2025

Our new uniform and renamed factions symbolize our journey forward, enhancing our identity. We look forward to seeing our students wear their new uniforms with pride.

School Crest

Our crest reflects our Catholic identity through the Omega symbol, representing God's eternity as the Alpha and Omega. The 'M' symbolizes our school's name and represents the two campuses, brought together by the motto "Unity is Strength."

Symbolism of School Colours:

- Navy Blue represents peace, intelligence, strength, and stability.
- White signifies purity and a new beginning.
- Red symbolizes life, vitality, and connection to our Mercy Sisters founding order.

School Factions for 2025

We are excited to introduce new faction names, colours, and values aligned with each faction, further reinforcing our community's shared values.

Faction Name	Faction Colour	Meaning	Value
McAuley	**Green**	The Venerable Catherine McAuley, from Ireland was the founder of the Mercy Sisters who were responsible for establishing Mel Maria Catholic Primary School.	Respect Embracing a foundation of dignity and appreciation for every individual.
Mercy	**Purple**	Sister's of Mercy The Mercy heritage and history goes back to the arrival of Sisters of Mercy in Perth in 1846. They were led by Mother Ursula Frayne and proved themselves to be resourceful, resilient and strong women.	Service Encouraging active engagement in our communities and making a positive difference in the lives of others.
Frayne	**Royal Blue**	Seven sisters of Mercy arrived in the Swan River Colony on 8 January 1846. They were led by Mother Ursula Frayne.	Compassion Acting with kindness, empathy, and support. Reaching out to others.
Corpus	**Gold**	Pater Noster Parish was called Corpus Christi and so was the primary school.	Justice Being concerned about achieving fairness for and promoting the dignity of all people.

Strategic Plan: Key Focus Areas 2025-2029

As we look forward to 2025, our commitment to providing an all-inclusive, values-driven education remains at the forefront of our mission at Mel Maria Catholic Primary School. In an ever-evolving world, it is essential that we continue to foster an environment that nurtures both the spiritual and intellectual growth of our students.

Our focus for the coming years will revolve around several key areas, as reflected in our Strategic Plan 2025–2029, that are vital to ensuring the ongoing success and development of our school. These priorities will guide us in maintaining our 'Catholic Identity', embracing innovative teaching practices, and supporting the individual needs of every student as we strive to provide a well-rounded education that prepares them for the future.

Priority Areas 2025 - 2029

- Catholic Identity – We remain dedicated to strengthening our Catholic values and mission, ensuring that Jesus Christ is at the centre of all we do.
- Innovation in Education – We will continue to embrace innovative, forward-thinking approaches to teaching and learning while empowering every child to thrive in an ever-evolving world.
- Student Support – Our commitment to providing individualised support to meet the diverse needs of every student will remain a priority.

- Staff Development and Leadership – We believe that strong, inspired leadership is essential, and we will continue to invest in the professional growth of our staff.

- Inquiry Learning – We will cultivate a love of learning through inquiry-based education, encouraging curiosity, exploration, and critical thinking.

- Expanding Extra-Curricular Activities – Providing a rich array of extra-curricular opportunities will help our students develop new skills and interests outside of the classroom.

- Increasing Student Enrolments – By promoting growth and welcoming new families into our community, we ensure that our school remains vibrant and financially stable.

- Performing and Creative Arts – The Arts are essential to fostering creativity and self-expression, and we are committed to enhancing this focus in 2025.

- Physical Health and Wellbeing – We recognise the importance of supporting both the physical and mental health of our students through active lifestyles and well-being initiatives.

- Capital Development – We will continue to work through our Capital Development Plan with the aim to be completed on-time and with as little disruption to the students and staff as possible.

In 2025 and beyond, these key focus areas will continue to shape our vision for Mel Maria Catholic Primary School, ensuring that we provide a nurturing and inspiring environment for every child. Through our shared dedication to our school vision, "Excellence in Catholic Primary Education," Mel Maria will remain a vibrant, supportive school that prepares our students to succeed in an ever-changing world. Together, we will continue to grow, learn, and #MakeADifferenceEveryday, having a positive impact on the lives of our children and the wider community.

School Community

Throughout this year, we have worked closely with you in partnership, sharing a common commitment to your child's education and growth. Your involvement has been integral to the success of our shared goals. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude for your unwavering support and cooperation throughout 2024. Your engagement—whether through feedback, participation in school events, or simply being there for your child's learning journey—has made a significant impact.

We deeply value the insights and contributions you bring, and together, we look forward to continuing this strong, collaborative relationship in the future. Thank you once again for being such an essential part of our school community.

To our Year 6 students, as you prepare to embark on the next stage of your educational journey, I wish you all the best. You have been outstanding leaders, and I have been continually impressed by your maturity and the positive impact you have had on our school. May God's guidance be with you as you step forward with confidence and grace.

School Staff

No school year can be successful without the dedication and hard work of an incredible team. I am truly blessed to work with an exceptional group of leaders and staff at Mel Maria Catholic Primary School.

Leadership Team

- Mrs Ros Nichols (Head of Campus, St. Joseph Pignatelli) and Mrs Joanne Scouler (Head of Campus, Pater Noster) have provided exemplary leadership, working tirelessly to ensure the smooth running of their campuses. Their commitment to the students, staff, and families is deeply appreciated, and I am sincerely grateful for the trust they have placed in me. Their efforts, often unseen, are a key part of the school's ongoing success. We take this opportunity to wish Joanne all the very best as she takes up the Acting Principal role at Star of the Sea School in Rockingham for a fifteen-week period.
- Mr Roman Popadynec, your unwavering support and contributions are invaluable, and I thank you for your dedication to our community and all the extra work you do for our school and the community.
- Mrs Cathleen Massimi (Assistant Head of Campus, St. Joseph Pignatelli) and Mrs Tia Horsley (Assistant Head of Campus, Pater Noster) also deserve special recognition for their incredible efforts, working behind the scenes to ensure the seamless operation of our school. Their passion and commitment are second to none, and I am deeply appreciative of their hard work.

Administration Staff

- A sincere thank you also goes to Mrs Cathy Cowcher, Mrs Mardi Dodgson, Mrs Sylvia Tamigi, and Mrs Lynette Dowie. Their dedication to our students and tireless work behind the scenes may often go unnoticed, yet it is their professionalism and genuine care that lie at the heart of what makes Mel Maria such a unique and special place.

Staff

- I would also like to acknowledge Miss Stephanie Figueira, who stepped into the role of managing policy, marketing, and the school audit with great skill and an eye for detail this year. Her efforts have made a significant impact, and we are grateful for her contributions.
- Mr Aaron Gale, our school's groundsman, deserves recognition for doing the work of two as he looks after the grounds and maintenance needs of both campuses.

I am incredibly proud of our exceptional teaching staff and educational assistants, whose passion, dedication, and unwavering commitment have consistently brought our vision to life. Their ability to inspire, guide, and nurture our students is truly remarkable, and it is through their collective efforts that we continue to thrive as a school community. As we look to the future, I am filled with excitement and optimism for the wonderful things we will achieve together, confident that, with such an extraordinary team, the years ahead will be filled with continued growth, innovation, and success.

Whether in the classroom or through one-on-one support, they have worked tirelessly to create a positive, enriching learning environment where every student feels valued and empowered to reach their full potential. Their professionalism, creativity, and care are at the heart of what makes our school such a special place, and I sincerely thank them for the vital role they have played in the success of our students and the wider school community.

Parish Priests

I am deeply grateful to Fr. Don Kettle, Fr. Joseph Lee, and Deacon John Keily for their dedicated support of our students, staff, and parent community on their faith journeys. Their guidance and commitment to nurturing our community's spiritual growth, along with their leadership in the Parish Sacramental Program, have been invaluable throughout the year. I also extend heartfelt thanks to the respective Parish Catechetical Team for their dedication and unwavering assistance, which has greatly enriched our shared

faith experience. Together, they have provided a strong spiritual foundation for all of us at Mel Maria Catholic Primary School

School Advisory Council and P&F Executive

The unwavering support of our School Advisory Council and the P&F Executive is truly invaluable, and I am deeply grateful for the dedication and hard work of each member. Their passion for our school and their tireless commitment to ensuring that Mel Maria continues to flourish have made a lasting impact on our community.

Many thanks to Mr Anthony Chillino (School Advisory Council Chairperson) and Mrs Emma-Lee Oliver (P&F President) and their respective teams. Their leadership and collaboration have helped shape the successes we've achieved, and their support continues to assist us toward an even brighter future. I look forward to building on this strong partnership in 2025 as we work together to enhance the experience for all our students and families.

As we bring this year to a close, I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the parents and families of our students. Your trust, active involvement, and unwavering support play a pivotal role in shaping your children's success, and we are profoundly thankful for your ongoing partnership. Together, we are more than a school community; we are a family, united by our shared commitment to providing a nurturing, faith-filled, and enriching Catholic education that empowers every child to flourish. Your contributions have been essential in bringing our schools vision to life, and we look forward to continuing this meaningful journey with you.

Mel Maria Catholic Primary School is more than just a place of learning — It is a community where relationships, dedication, and faith make a lasting impact.

STAFF FAREWELLS

To the staff who are leaving at the end of the year, thank you for your contributions, hard work, and presence. You have 'value-added' to the uniqueness of our school. I wish you every happiness for the future.

Mrs Joanne Ciccarelli

Mrs Rosanna Basso Betancourt

Mr Andrew Carr

Miss Bree Spencer

Mrs Melissa Giancola

May you all enjoy a joyful, peaceful Christmas and a relaxing summer holiday. I look forward to welcoming you back in the New Year as we embark on this exciting new chapter for Mel Maria Catholic Primary School.

Kind Regards

Principal

Mel Maria Catholic Primary School

#**M**ake**AD**ifference**E**veryday

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

As a Christ-Centred, student focused Catholic School Community, Mel Maria is called and challenged to be the lived expression of our Church's Vision and Mission within our community and society.

Mel Maria is a place of "becoming" for each child to grow into the person God has gifted them to be.

Our school's foundress, Catherine McAuley continues to inform and guide our charism. As the founder of the Mercy Order of Sisters, Catherine McAuley, has a significant place of the life of our school and her teachings inform our culture of welcome and acceptance for all. The Mercy tradition of welcome and belonging is evident in our interaction within and between all parish and school community members.

Our school values of Service, Respect, Justice, and Compassion are integrated and embedded throughout daily actions and interactions. Our values inform our daily prayers and are highlighted in our Catholic doctrine taught in daily Religious Education lessons. These values serve to enhance our commitment to welcome and acceptance of all community members and to acknowledge how their gifts contribute to community life.

All schools develop their own soul or character.
At Mel Maria, we are striving to develop a communal living spirit based on the teachings of Christ and informed by our Mercy values.

Daily prayers and weekly masses, foster and encourage a deep relationship with the Holy Spirit who guides each individual and empowers them to play their part within our Church's mission.

Our school spirit of unity is a visible sign of values lived and practiced with each encounter. amongst students, teachers, parents, and community members.

The celebration of Sacraments is an important focus for our Mel Maria School community.

Each Year level has a focus on the integrated nature of living Sacramentally, from the time of Baptism into our Faith Community. Parents as first educators are the essential linchpin for how each family lives family and community life sacramentally.

Christian Service is lived and given expression through regular participation in fundraising for Catholic Charities and Organizations.

Practical projects and fundraising provide for those less fortunate in the wider community and opportunities to learn how we can respond with co-responsibility to make a collective difference through action. Below are some of the organisations that benefit from our collective efforts and community generosity.

Deeper learning was a major focus for service projects throughout 2024 at Mel Maria. Year Four students led by their teachers, focused on Visiting Saint Mary's Cathedral as the home of Perth Diocese. Our connection to our wider Catholic family is a central focus of this visit in preparation for expanding students thinking on the co-responsibility of being a member of our Catholic Community.

Year 5 students were invested as YOUNG VINNIES as part of their service-learning focus for 2024 and in preparation for 2025.

Learning the history of this Catholic Charity and about its founders, has given clarity and focus to their co-ordination of winter appeals and food drives.

- Life link Charities of Archdiocese of Perth
- Caritas
- St Vincent De Paul
- St Patrick's Care Centre Fremantle
- St Jude's School.
- Mercy Care Women's Shelters
- Mercy Care

At Mel Maria, parents are assisted as first educators of their children in faith, as we work with our families and parishes to provide formation experiences that foster and form a lived experience of Christian conscience and virtue. Preparation and regular experiences through the word, worship, prayer and religious retreats, support parents and students to participate fully in parish sacramental celebrations and parish life.

- Year level Masses are celebrated each term.
- Father Don and Deacon John visit classrooms to talk and to guide our students.
- Pre-Primary students attend Mass with Grandparents and Parents
- Students in Year Three to Year Six celebrate the Sacrament of Penance
- Parish students are encouraged to be Altar Servers at Mass
- Religious Education letters to parents about current guidelines being taught.

Mel Maria students participate in daily prayer and Religious Education lessons. Religious Education is assessed, graded, and reported on to parents. Our students participate in the Bishops Religious Literacy Assessment each year, in Years Three and Year Five. Mel Maria students are well prepared and consistently perform above the average for schools in Western Australia.

Each classroom provides opportunities for the creation of sacred spaces, where symbols and icons have meaning and reverence within a shared space. Children learn to lead and participate in traditional forms of Catholic prayers and rituals which enhance Catholic life and culture.

At Mel Maria, we want our students to see beyond the ordinary and awaken the human heart to its own potential.

All relationships within our school community are guided and informed by the Catholic Social Teaching Principals. Our commitment to transparency and accountability is evident in our protocols and procedures at all levels of community life. We want our students to witness the best practices that community life has to offer and model.

All members of our Mel Maria community contribute to our unique spirit as we grow and show our students how to be in the world.

Our students witness an agile and responsive Catholic community ready to respond to and to participate with confidence in a changing world.

Our student's participation in parish life and fostering a close relationship with our parishioners at weekly school Masses, is a central focus in creating and growing our community in prayer. Our parish elders leading and teaching our students. The rosary and the opportunity for students to participate, is a celebration of a rich tradition within our Faith.

As our school looks to the future of Community building. Our Parish Communities are supporting families to facilitate a strong connection to Parish Community life.

Our parishes provides the experience of belonging to a worshipping community where children can participate in the stories, celebrations, ministries, prayers and rituals – and especially the celebration of the Eucharist – that enables them to enter into a personal relationship with Jesus. It is the most important place in which the Christian community is formed and expressed.

EDUCATION

Early Childhood Education

Our Early Childhood environment has undergone a significant transformation in 2024. The development and construction of our specialised learning spaces have been both exciting and rewarding. The outdoor nature playground was designed to provide a variety of play opportunities that nurture curiosity and create moments of wonder as children engage with the natural world. The Innovation Room includes a range of intentional experiences, such as tumble play, loose parts, STEM walls, a green screen, and Lego building. Our staff offer children invitations to play, encouraging their sense of wonder and fostering knowledge through actions that provoke thinking, ideas, and creativity.

This year, our Early Childhood educators also had the opportunity to engage in professional learning to deepen their understanding of evidence-based pedagogy and practice. Rebecca Galliven, Kindergarten Teacher, was awarded a scholarship to the National Early Childhood Conference in Queensland. Several staff members attended the Early Childhood Conference and participated in inquiry learning professional development with Kath Murdoch, Trevor Mackenzie and Jessica Vance.

In addition, we achieved our goal of implementing a whole-school spelling program. As part of our balanced approach to early childhood education, teachers from Kindy to Year 4 were trained in the Sounds Write program. Sounds Write is a highly structured, systematic synthetic phonics program that teaches students how the alphabetic code works. It equips them with the essential skills required to become effective readers and spellers.

Primary Charter

The Primary Committee has developed the Mel Maria Primary Position Statement to reflect our Catholic school's core values and educational philosophy. This statement outlines our commitment to an engaging, evidence-based curriculum that fosters critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity. We aim to integrate Catholic faith into all aspects of learning, ensuring that students grow intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally. The position statement serves as the foundation for creating a nurturing environment where every child can succeed.

At Mel Maria, we are committed to using inquiry to drive student learning and agency, supported by explicit instruction and evidence-based practices. Staff are trained in effective, research-backed programs, including Sounds Write, to enhance literacy development and promote active learning.

Ongoing Practices Between Campuses

- Our transition programs have encouraged students to familiarize themselves with their new campus and build friendships
- Guidance and support through “Mentoring Model”
- Collaboration completing the Primary Position Statement
- Improving the use of Programming and Daily Work Pad templates
- Assessment folders displaying rubrics with student’s tasks
- Extended use of Oxford Maths and Mathletics
- Upholding the integrity of Sounds Write

Innovation and Technology

- OneNote, Teams, and Seesaw as digital platforms from Year 3 to Year 6.
- STEM program featuring Robotics, Animations, Green Screens, iMovies, Spheros, and Drones.

- Multi-media presentations using tools like PowerPoint, Infographics, Word, Pages, Keynote, Canva and PicCollage.
- QR codes to display students' work on Open Night, allowing for interactive presentations and speech recordings.
- Apple Classroom used by staff to monitor iPad usage during lessons.

Learning Enhancement Program

Mrs Joanne Ciccarelli and Mrs Michelle Fanowrios

Our Learning Enhancement and Support Programs focus on developing essential literacy skills through evidence-based interventions. Currently, we use the MiniLit program in Years 1 and 2 to strengthen early reading, and we trialled the Language Lift oral language intervention in Pre-Primary in 2024. In 2025, we will expand these programs across the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Campus and introduce MacqLit for Years 3 to 6.

We prioritize early intervention, starting in Pre-Primary with phonological awareness and high-frequency word development, followed by the Sounds Write program. In Years 1 and 2, students continue with MiniLit, and in Years 3 to 5, we use Repeated Reading to enhance fluency. Student progress is tracked through standardized testing, including NAPLAN, to monitor growth in reading, spelling, and mathematics.

These initiatives ensure that every student receives the literacy support they need to succeed.

SEEDS

Ms Teresa Marra

SEEDS,

Students Exceeding and Excelling in Developmental Skills is our academic extension program catering to our gifted and talented children from yr2-6. We have approximately 120 students in the program.

It offers multi-aged groups, of like-minded students, across both campuses the opportunities to engage in programs that challenge: FUTURE PROBLEM SOLVING, MAG SEEDS, SEEDLINGS, PHILOSOPHY, TOURNAMENT OF THE MINDS, YOUNG INNOVATORS, WOW SEEDS, MATHS OLYMPIAD and many State and National Competitions.

MASTERMINDS – program is a 'new' initiative introduced to year 5/6.

Master mind sessions will focus on discovery learning. Provocations will be used to stimulate students' curiosity, allowing collaborative inquiry to inform their learning. The environment will allow students to ask thought- provoking questions, experiment with design models and work to provide a range of possible solutions/ products depending on their project. Teachers are there as guides and mentors to help students further their inquiry.

MATHS IMMERSION introduced last year into year 3-6. The program caters to deepening the mathematical learning of our top end students by differentiating the pace, depth of content and process of their mathematical instruction in line with their classroom curriculum.

TOM SEEDS

STATE FINALS TITLES: A FIRST PLACE WIN AND HONOURS and a trip to SYDNEY for the TOM International finals (TIF)

Congratulations! Both of our TOM (Tournament of Mind) teams competed at the WA State Finals on Saturday 14th September! The States involves a three-hour lock in problem received on the day. Students need to work together as a team to script write, answer the criteria and creatively present their solutions to a panel of judges.

Our SJP team won their category Language Literature and have been invited to attend the TIF (TOM international finals). Our PN team received State Honours. We are super proud of their achievements.

Our SJP team flew to Sydney to compete in the Tournaments of Mind International finals against the other seven State teams and several other countries including Hong Kong, United Arab Emirates, New Zealand at the. They are an amazing group of students with a plethora of talents and did exceptionally well.

SCIENCE

Mrs Lisa Lombardi

This year, students expanded their understanding of the world through hands-on investigations across several areas:

Chemical Sciences

Students explored the three states of matter—solid, liquid, and gas—classifying materials through experiments. They studied how heat affects materials, noting changes in state and properties. By examining natural and processed materials, students learned how characteristics like flexibility and durability determine their uses.

Physical Sciences

Students investigated forces such as pushes, pulls, and gravity, observing their effects on objects and motion. They explored heat sources, learned about heat transfer through friction and conduction, and used thermometers to measure temperature changes. The unit also introduced light concepts, such as reflection, refraction, and shadow formation.

Biological Sciences

Students examined the features and adaptations of living things that support survival and growth, observing plant and animal life cycles. This included growing a bean plant from seed to maturity. They also learned to classify living and non-living things based on observable characteristics.

Earth Sciences

In Earth Sciences, students explored the Earth-Sun-Moon relationship, learning how rotation causes day, night, and seasons. They studied natural processes like erosion and human impacts on Earth's surface and discussed the importance of conservation for sustainability.

Through these studies, students engaged in inquiry, building a foundation in scientific thinking and environmental awareness.

HEALTH

Miss Briana Ryan

Students from years 3 to 6 at Mel Maria gained essential skills and knowledge in Health as a specialist subject, learning to lead healthy, safe, and active lives. The curriculum covered key areas such as healthy

eating, physical activity, emotional well-being, and respectful relationships, addressing topics like friendships, bullying, and puberty through age-appropriate lessons delivered from a Catholic perspective. Students actively participated in discussions about conflict resolution and positive thinking, fostering a deeper understanding of the importance of mental and physical health. Overall, the program has significantly enriched students' awareness and commitment to well-being.

JAPANESE

Miss Cate Cooper

All students from Years 2 – 6 at Mel Maria are learning Japanese. With a primary focus on oral language, our students can follow classroom instructions and everyday requests in Japanese. They confidentially communicate in simple conversations and deliver self-introduction speeches in Japanese. Our students have also been engaged in reading and writing the Japanese symbols. The Year 5 and 6 students can now confidently read and write ALL the Hiragana alphabet and many Kanji characters. This is a tremendous feat for such young learners!

Art / Culture:

Our younger students have used simulated food, dress up kimonos and authentic Japanese toys to further their understanding of the Japanese culture through play-based activities. The older students have been developing their intercultural understanding through a variety of different art projects this year. By creating Japanese art works, students can notice, compare and reflect on their own linguistic, social and cultural practices, as well as those associated with Japan. They develop knowledge and values that are articulated through the Japanese culture. This year our students have created Daruma Dolls, Kendama Toys, Koi Fish and Japanese Scrolls.

Incursions & Excursions:

In addition to our language and art, students are also engaged in a variety of incursions, such as Calligraphy, Ink Painting and Origami interactive sessions. A highlight for everyone was the annual visit from Sanny Ang who is an origami master and experienced storyteller. Students made a variety of different origami models such as planes, dominoes, swans, rabbit, never ending ice-creams and much more! Incursions are a great way to bring alive the Japanese culture in a meaningful way for our students and positively enhances our Japanese language program.

MUSIC

Mr Luke Murphy

What an incredible year it's been at Mel Maria! We've danced, sung, composed, and enjoyed an amazing variety of music together!

Our program showcased soloists, bands, choirs, guitars, pianos, drums, and electronic sounds, crafting a vibrant musical landscape. We created class bands that brought melodies and rhythms from around the globe to life.

The Year 4 classes collaborated to form colourful music ensembles, students learned classical and folk tunes like 'La Donna', 'Trumpet Voluntary, 'The Wellerman Sea Shanty,' and 'The Rattlin' Bog.' They showcased their musical talents at the 'Catholic Performing Arts Festival' and again at Mel Maria's 'Open Night,' they received 'Certificates of Excellence' from the Performing Arts Committee in the 'Instrumental Ensemble Section' of the festival.

On June 10, all Year 3 students enjoyed an unforgettable experience at the Perth Concert Hall, attending 'The Music of Hans Zimmer, Art of The Score.' The West Australian Symphony Orchestra, led by conductor Nicholas Buc, paid tribute to one of the most influential film composers. From the stunning soundscapes of

Interstellar and Inception to the beloved themes from Pirates of the Caribbean and The Lion King, we were swept away by Zimmer's iconic scores.

A highlight of the Year 5 and Year 6 program was the exploration of the 'GarageBand' app. Students crafted their own songs and put their spin on popular tracks using real instruments.

Liturgical singing held a special place in our musical journey at Mel Maria. We practise a repertoire that reflects the liturgical seasons, enriching our Masses and making them more meaningful for everyone.

We're grateful for our talented musical tutors who visit the school, offering lessons in piano, guitar, singing, and percussion. Their dedication and guidance are truly appreciated.

The Mel Maria Choir once again earned Outstanding Awards at the Catholic Performing Arts Festival. They rehearsed every Wednesday morning, even during the coldest winter days, and led the congregation in all the sacraments throughout the year. Their performances at school Masses, assemblies, the Year 6 Graduation, and Carols Night were a testament to the skill and passion of Mrs Genevieve Sumich, Mrs Trish Spencer, and the unwavering support of parents.

DRAMA

Miss Tonya Blair

At Mel Maria, the Drama curriculum is designed to engage students creatively and culturally throughout the different terms.

In Term 1, students explore various drama games that help build confidence, creativity and collaboration. Through these games, students learn to express themselves and enhance their social skills, whilst having fun and developing a sense of teamwork.

During Term 2, students delved into Aboriginal Dreamtime Stories, which are integral to Indigenous Australian culture. Students engaged in storytelling, creating their own interpretations, and performed adaptations of these stories, fostering a deeper appreciation for cultural heritage.

Term 3, the focus shifted to the popular children's author, Julia Donaldson. Through drama activities, they acted out scenes, created character studies and improvised their own stories inspired by her work. This term emphasised literary appreciation while enhancing imaginative play and performance skills.

In Term 4, the children were involved in acting out classic fairy tales. This engaging activity promoted storytelling, teamwork, and self-expression, wrapping up the drama program with a celebration of creativity!

SPORTS

Mr Dave John and Mr Damian Williams

The 2024 Faction Carnivals saw some outstanding performances across various events. Green Faction took first place in both Swimming and Cross Country, while Blue Faction triumphed in both Junior Sports Day and Senior Athletics, showcasing their strong team spirit and athleticism.

In the Interschool Carnivals, our students continued to excel. In Swimming, the girls finished 5th, the boys 3rd, and the overall result was 4th. The Cross-Country event was a highlight, with the boys finishing 1st, the girls 3rd, and the overall team taking 1st place. At the Athletics Carnival, the girls secured 2nd place, the boys finished 4th, and the overall result was third.

These achievements reflect the dedication, hard work, and teamwork of all our students, and we look forward to building on this success in future years.

Library

Mrs Irene Winsor

Wanju Nidja Noongar Wadjuk Boodja and Bibool-miya.

Welcome here to Noongar Wadjuk country and the library.

This year in the library has been nothing short of magical! We kicked off with 'Library Lovers Day' on 14 February, introducing our 'Reading is Magic' theme for the year. National Simultaneous Storytime featured Bowerbird Blues, where we gathered blue items for a vibrant display. We welcomed author James Foley, who shared his journey as a writer and illustrator, celebrating titles like Stellarphant, In the Lion, and Gastronauts. The magic continued during Book Week, as children upcycled materials to create costumes that showcased their love for reading and diverse genres. We cherished our community by honouring the Wadjuk Noongar people through stories, songs, bush tucker, and artifacts. Our commitment to being waste-wise shone through as we collected items for Bottle Top Hill, crafting stunning art installations inspired by Rainbow Serpents. Each event fostered a love for reading and learning, making our library a vibrant hub of creativity and connection!

NAPLAN

This year the Year Three and Five students completed the NAPLAN assessment. Most of the assessments were completed online, except for the Year Three Writing, which was entered on paper.

Students' results will show how they performed in each of the NAPLAN assessment areas against 4 new proficiency levels:

- Exceeding: The student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- Strong: The student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- Developing: The student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- Needs additional support: The student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

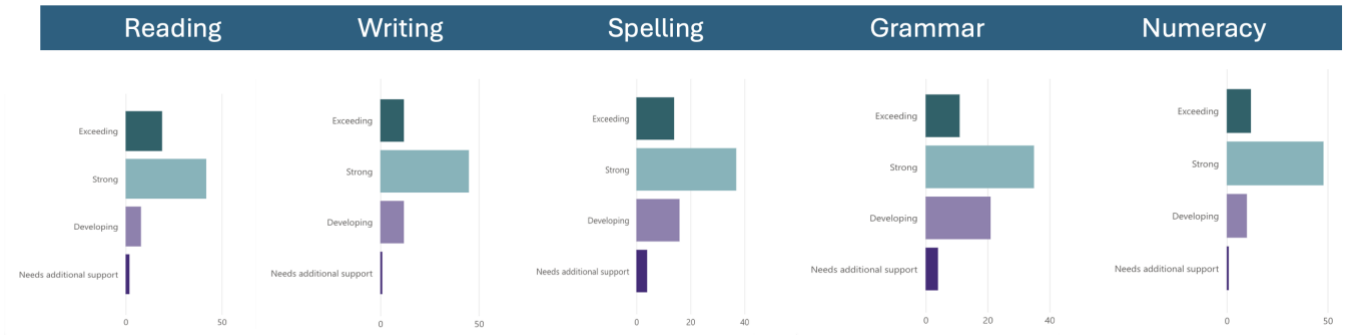
Year 3 Results

Year 3 Mean Scaled Score Comparison

Area	School	CEWA	State	National
Reading	440	403	392	404
Writing	441	419	409	416

Spelling	422	401	395	401
Grammar	426	404	399	409
Numeracy	416	400	396	407

Year 5 Results



Year 5 Mean Scaled Score Comparison

Area	School	CEWA	State	National
Reading	521	492	484	492
Writing	508	484	478	485
Spelling	494	489	485	486
Grammar	517	490	491	497
Numeracy	513	486	485	489

COMMUNITY

Coffee Cart Conversations

Over the past year, we successfully fostered strong relationships between parents, teachers, and the school community by organising regular coffee cart conversations. These informal gatherings created a welcoming environment where parents connected, shared ideas, and discussed the upcoming transition to the 2025 school year. Our sessions were well-attended, allowing diverse voices to be heard and enabling the generation of new ideas and transition procedures that benefit the entire community.

Transition Days and Twilight Tours

We ensured a seamless transition for our students to the new school environment in 2025 through engaging Transition Days. These events allowed children to explore their new surroundings and build stronger connections with teachers and peers across all campuses. Our Twilight Tours were particularly successful in inviting both existing and new families into the school, providing insights into campus upgrades and extracurricular opportunities, fostering a profound sense of community ownership.

Communication and Community Events

Throughout the year, we maintained consistent and effective communication with parents via regular social media posts, newsletters, and direct liaisons with the P&F executive team. This was further supported by the addition of our new Policy and Public Relations Coordinator, Miss Stephanie Figuiera. This proactive

approach kept parents informed and engaged in discussions surrounding school events and developments. Our collaboration with the P&F ensured that all community events were well-promoted, encouraging maximum participation while promoting both education and family involvement.

Establishment of the Uniform Committee

This year, the school established a Uniform Committee comprised of both parents and staff members. This collaborative effort marks a pivotal achievement as we transition to our new school colours of blue, red, and white symbolising a fresh start and a vibrant new era for our community. The committee focused on designing a more contemporary unisex uniform that reflects our commitment to inclusivity. By involving parents and staff in this process, we aimed to create a uniform that not only enhances school spirit but also fosters a sense of pride and belonging among all students.

Together, these achievements not only spread the Good News of Mel Maria into our wider community but also ensured that every parent felt valued and engaged in our shared mission.

Excellence in Catholic Primary Education

STEWARDSHIP

Professional Development

Faith development for staff has been prioritized through dedicated professional learning days and sessions aimed at deepening their knowledge, faith, and understanding of Catholicism. To ensure ongoing growth, all staff have completed the required Religious Education Accreditation, including the necessary renewal process.

A minimum of eighty hours of professional development has been achieved this year, with sessions held on pupil-free days, during school holidays, and after school—demonstrating the staff's commitment, as they have voluntarily contributed their personal time.

All professional learning opportunities are aligned with the requirements set by the Teacher Registration Board of WA for teacher registration.

Collection of School Fees

Payment of school fees can be made by direct debit, in person, credit card or BPAY. Parents have been encouraged to pay fees by a payment plan and spread their payments over instalments throughout the year as follows:

Currently 85% of families utilise the payment plan option. This is a 5% drop from last year. The goal is to have all families on one of the payment plans.

Work Health and Safety

Work Health and Safety (WHS) is a top priority at Mel Maria Catholic Primary School. Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) has established a dedicated WHS team to support schools in achieving compliance with the required standards. With their guidance, we have been reviewing and aligning our

procedures to ensure they meet these standards. A special thanks to Mr. Aaron Gale, and Mr. Michael Corrie for their valuable contributions in this area.

PRIORITIES FOR 2025

Catholic Identity

Objective: To nurture and enhance the school's Catholic ethos and values, ensuring the faith development of all students and staff.

Strategies:

- Faith Development: Implement more regular liturgical celebrations and reflections for both students and staff, with a focus on understanding the relevance of faith in modern life.
- Sacramental Programs: Strengthen partnerships with the two local parishes to ensure consistent engagement and preparation for sacraments and other celebrations.
- Catholic Social Teaching: Integrate teachings of social justice, care for creation, and outreach programs across the curriculum.
- Staff Formation: Develop staff capacity to embed Catholic identity in all aspects of school life through regular professional learning focused on Catholic education principles and general catechesis

Education

Objective: To deliver high-quality and innovative education that caters to the diverse learning needs of all students.

Strategies:

- Academic Excellence: Continue to build on strong academic performance, with targeted interventions for students at both ends of the learning continuum.
- Inquiry Learning: Foster inquiry-based learning methodologies, promoting curiosity and critical thinking across all year levels.
- Innovation in Learning: Invest in digital technologies and learning spaces that support a flexible, collaborative, and creative learning environment, especially in the new capital developments at the Primary Campus.
- Learning Support: Enhance support structures for students with additional needs, including the provision of specialists and differentiated learning programs.

- Student Agency: Encourage student voice in learning decisions, fostering leadership and ownership of their educational journey.

Community

Objective: To strengthen connections within the school community and foster a sense of belonging among students, parents, staff, and the broader community.

Strategies:

- Parent Engagement: Develop new communication platforms and regular engagement opportunities for parents to contribute to the school's vision and activities.
- Partnerships with Parishes and Local Groups: Enhance collaborations with local parish groups, ensuring alignment between school and community values.
- Celebrating Diversity: Host cultural and community events that celebrate diversity, inclusion, and the unique gifts of each student and family within the school.
- Community Outreach: Promote the school's mission and vision through social initiatives and programs that position Mel Maria as a leader in community engagement.
- Allied Health Services – Provision of Speech, OT, Physio for our students through a wrap-around service on-site. Set this up at my previous school and was very effective and valuable.

Stewardship

Objective: To manage resources responsibly and strategically, ensuring the financial and operational sustainability of the school.

Strategies:

- Capital Development: Execute the three-stage capital development plan for the Primary Campus, ensuring state-of-the-art learning facilities while prioritizing eco-friendly and future-proof infrastructure.
- Financial Stability: Drive financial stability through increased enrolment numbers and careful budgetary planning, with projections aligned to growth targets.

- **Sustainability Initiatives:** Introduce energy-efficient systems, reduce the school's carbon footprint, and involve students in sustainability projects as part of stewardship education.

- **Leadership Structure:** Implement a new leadership model that empowers staff and promotes shared responsibility, professional growth, and succession planning.

UNITY IS STRENGTH

MEL MARIA

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL