



EDMUND RICE EDUCATION  
AUSTRALIA

# EREA SCHOOL RENEWAL REPORT

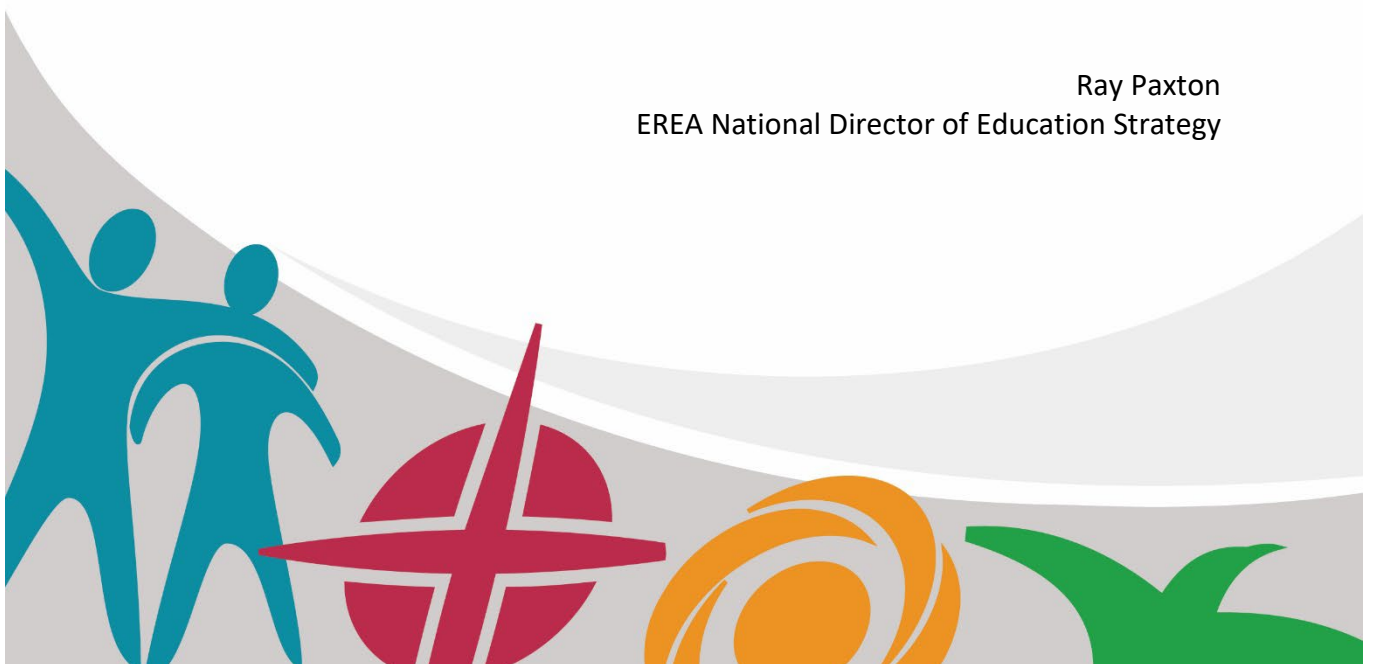
St Mary's College, St Kilda East

Diocese: Archdiocese of Melbourne

30 April – 02 May 2025



Ray Paxton  
EREA National Director of Education Strategy



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# 1 RATIONALE

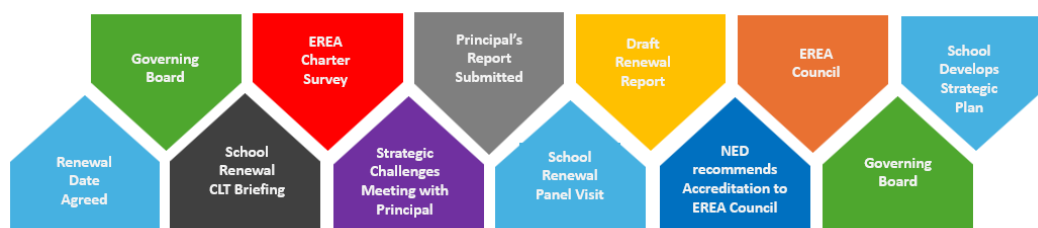
School Renewal provides an opportunity for schools to reflect on how the Charter and its Touchstones are evident within the life of the school. The Charter is central to the identity of Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice tradition.

- Primarily, School Renewal presents a structure for accountability to the Church, the Christian Brothers and EREA about the Catholicity and the expression of the charism in the schools. It is a comprehensive process leading to continuous improvement in key areas of the school life related to the EREA Charter and Touchstones. Renewal also presents a secondary accountability within the Mission Strategy of EREA, as a reporting methodology to the EREA Council, relevant Governing Board and, in relevant jurisdictions, an accountability methodology to National, State, Territory and Diocesan Catholic Education system processes. Thirdly, School Renewal offers a strategic opportunity for each EREA School to capture meaningful information which may contribute to future planning and improvement.
- School Renewal recognises the interdependence of Catholic schools in the Edmund Rice tradition with each other, within the Church, EREA Council, Board, State and Catholic Education systems.

## 1.1 School Renewal Policy

All schools and entities under the canonical governance of the Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) Council are required to undertake School Renewal over an agreed cycle (within 5-6 years) to reflect on their authenticity as a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition as evidenced by the lived reality of the EREA Charter in the school. The School Renewal process involves self-reflection by the school, validation by the School Renewal Team and incorporation of commendations and strategic recommendations for ongoing planning and review.

### THE EREA CHARTER AND SCHOOL RENEWAL



## 2 SCHOOL CONTEXT

**School:** St Mary's College, St Kilda  
**Diocese:** Archdiocese of Melbourne  
**Panel Visit Dates:** 30 April – 02 May 2025  
**Principal:** Darren Atkinson

**Panel:**  
Ray Paxton EREA National Director of Educational Strategy (Chair)  
Andy Kuppe CEO EREA Victorian Schools Ltd  
Stephen Gough Principal, Edmund Rice College, Wollongong  
Laura Ruddick Senior Manager School Leadership, Melb Archdiocesan Catholic Schools  
Rebecca Kirwan EREA Director of Professional Practice

### 2.1 STATEMENT ON THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The School Renewal Process and Report will provide significant evidence and information for the co-design of the next St Mary's College Strategic Plan.

### 2.2 CONTEXT STATEMENT

Established in 1878, CBC was the oldest Catholic boys' school continuing on the same site in Melbourne. Br Roger Cripps was the last Christian Brother Principal. Gerald Bain-King, the first lay principal, commenced in 2005. In 2019, Edmund Rice Education Australia sought permission from the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority to operate St Mary's Melbourne as a co-educational school in 2020 and opened in 2021. CBC St Kilda had offered education for boys on the site since 1878 and partnered in sharing senior classes with Presentation College Windsor (PCW) since 1991. The decision to close PCW in 2020 provided an impetus for CBC to move to co-education, which was already a recommendation in the Renewal Report of 2019 due to decline in enrolment.

In its short history, St Mary's has undergone significant and often disruptive change that has created uncertainty for stakeholders. For a short time, St Mary's College Melbourne operated on two campuses, divided by Dandenong Road and connected by an overhead footbridge: the Presentation Campus (Windsor) and Edmund Rice Campus (St Kilda East). In mid 2023, it was decided that dual campuses were not only unnecessary based on demographic projections, but a financial and organisational burden that could no longer be sustained. A decision was made to consolidate on the Westbury St (former CBC St Kilda) site, the property owned by TERE. To do so would require refurbishment of the Edmund Rice Campus and this was completed in 2024.

In becoming co-educational, thought needed to go into creating an inclusive environment. A significant refurbishment of the McCartney Wing was a response to both Disability Discrimination Act and contemporary learning issues, as well as providing Food Technology resources. St Mary's partnered with Latrobe University in conducting research into role of unconscious bias in moving from all boys to co-education. An example of a response is the replacement of the CBC Honour Boards and Headmaster portraits by student artwork.

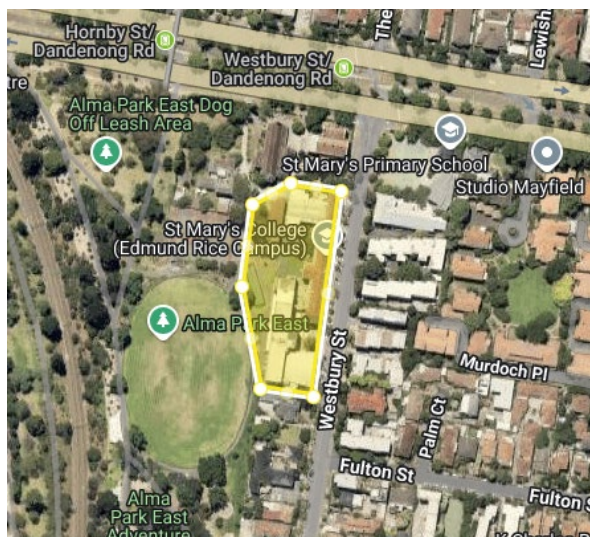
There are 437 students currently enrolled at the College in the following breakdown:

Year Level	Girls	Boys	Other	Total
7	19	50		69
8	17	34	1	52
9	18	48		66
10	17	68		85
11	34	53		87
12	22	56		78

The staff is comprised of 45 teaching and 29 non-teaching.

St Mary's College has had three Principals: Mr Terry Blizzard, Mr Michael Lee (Acting 2023) and Mr Darren Atkinson (from January 2024)

## 2.3 ST MARY'S COLLEGE, ST KILDA LOCATION



## 3 CURRENT REGISTRATION STATUS and ANNUAL REPORTS

As of 6 May 2025, St Mary's College has current registration with the Victorian Registration Qualifications Authority (VRQA) – see [link](#). The College is registered under the following categories:

- Years 7-12
- Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and Victorian Pathways Certificate

St Mary's College has completed its 2023 Annual Report to the community as mandated by the Australian Education Act and Regulations 2013 and has lodged this as a public-facing document on its website as required. It can be viewed on this [link](#).

## 4 STRATEGIC ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE THE PREVIOUS SCHOOL RENEWAL

### 4.1 LIBERATING EDUCATION

Since the last renewal, St Mary's College has made significant strides in providing a Liberating Education that promotes excellence, equity, and student agency. At the heart of this transformation is the introduction of an instructional model, RAISE, which explicitly frames the learning experience around student engagement, clarity, and evidence-informed practice. This model places learners at the centre, with an emphasis on metacognition, critical thinking, and high expectations. The RAISE model is supported by a strategic commitment to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), which now operate across all year levels. These PLCs focus on co-constructing clear learning goals and evaluating the impact of teaching through data and formative assessment.

Literacy and numeracy are key strategic pillars, with whole-school targets guiding collaborative planning and intervention that assures equitable learning outcomes. The College has also invested in professional development that will allow for the implementation high-impact teaching strategies, ensuring that each learner is challenged, supported, and prepared for a complex and changing world. Our approach reflects the Strategic Plan's vision for rigorous, relevant, and relational learning, with a liberating Catholic ethos that inspires students to grow in confidence and competence.

### 4.2 GOSPEL SPIRITUALITY

Gospel Spirituality is expressed through personal and communal prayer, liturgy, retreats, contemplation, social action and advocacy. Daily prayer is conducted in pastoral classes and weekly prayer at staff gatherings. Classes attend the parish weekday Liturgy where Fr Jerome Santamaria (Chaplain) specially prepares his homily for the students.

Annual retreats are conducted at each year level. The retreats follow a plan that connects the six years that build on the formation of students as people who act from the heart. The school uses the “Three worlds of the Text” method to bring the Gospels alive for students. This is a framework for understanding and interpreting texts, particularly scripture, by considering the world behind the text, the world of the text, and the world in front of the text. The College uses the see, judge, act, reflect method to guide our social justice initiatives.

The college is connected to the Yalukit Willam clan as the indigenous people of the area, exploring the bay, Albert Park and the Yarra River to hear the truth, both historical and now. We seek the truth, evident in the land. The College is developing inter faith relationships with the local Jewish community and the Sikh community under the banner of its Global Education Plan

### 4.3 INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

St Mary’s College takes pride in fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment where students of all religions, genders and cultures feel valued and supported. its commitment to the EREA touchstone of Inclusive Community is reflected in the many ways it brings people together to create a strong sense of belonging. Engagement with parents is strong, with a vibrant Parents & Friends group playing a key role in building community spirit and supporting College initiatives. Connections with alumni are being built, providing meaningful opportunities for past students, from both CBC St Kilda and Presentation College Windsor, to remain involved.

Beyond the school, partnerships have been expanded with local primary schools, sporting associations, and social organisations, offering enriching experiences that enhance student learning and personal development. At St Mary’s College remains committed to ensuring that every student, family, and member of its wider community feels welcome, connected, and empowered to make a difference.

### 4.4 JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY

St Mary’s College demonstrates a commitment to local and global justice through a program of action and advocacy, leading students to a deeper understanding of their power to be a voice for the powerless, through such activities as:

- ERA for Change participation
- Circle of Silence – action of solidarity with asylum seekers
- Service Learning – cooking meals for local charity ‘Reaching Out in the Inner West’
- Annual Social Justice Walkathon – annual fundraiser for local charities and schools in India.

The principles of Catholic Social Teaching are embedded within all year levels of the Religious Education curriculum. ‘Subsidiarity and participation’ is central to its student leadership model, and ‘the common good’ to its arts, sport and other co-curricular offerings. In addition, ‘Care for our Common Home’, with its basis in Pope Francis’ Laudato Si encyclical, is featured throughout the RE, Science, English and Health curriculums as the basis for studying global and local issues.

The College in the formative stages of establishing a Narragunnawali Reconciliation Action Plan, recognising the benefit of planned activities throughout the year that represent high value first nations engagement. The College have had immersion opportunities to Lake Mungo, annual reconciliation day/week assemblies and advocacy activities, and deeply values the impact of these activities on learning and school culture.

The College is currently re-positioning its domestic and international travel options, for students looking to embrace immersion opportunities through global engagement.

## 5 KEY EREA POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

Following consideration of the data obtained through this process, the panel is satisfied that the school is adequately addressing / taking steps to address each of these key EREA Policies and Initiatives:

- EREA Strategic Directions 2020-2024
- The EREA Learning Statement: Implementing Liberating Practice
- EREA Formation Framework and Program Participation
- Reconciliation Action Plan (Narragunnawali RAP)

- EREA Principals' Ecological Sustainability Statement
- Student Voice and Agency
- EREA Apology to Victims and Survivors of Sexual Abuse
- Child Safety
- Gender and Diversity
- Safe and Inclusive Communities
- Affordability

## 6 CORE FORMATION COURSE ATTENDANCE

The participation of St Mary's College in EREA formation courses over the past 5 years:

Program	A Call to Participation - Induction (Regional)					
Year	2020****	2021	2022	2023	2024	5 Year Total
St Mary's College	4	5	4	2	6	21
All Schools (55)	182	184	231	239	266	1102

Program	A Vision for Liberation/Corroboree: A Vision for Reconciliation - Senior/Strategic Leadership (National)					
Year	2020****	2021	2022	2023	2024	5 Year Total
St Mary's College	N/A	0	1	0	1	2
All Schools (55)	N/A	0	31	31	43	105

Program	A Call to Leadership - Middle/Operational leadership (Regional)					
Year	2020****	2021	2022	2023	2024	5 Year Total
St Mary's College	0	0	1	0	N/A	1
All Schools (55)	12	61	54	27	N/A	154

Program	A Call to Transformation - Renewal (Regional)					
Year	2020****	2021	2022	2023	2024	5 Year Total
St Mary's College	N/A	N/A	2	0	0	2
All Schools (55)	N/A	N/A	34	42	0	76

Program	Forming the Facilitator - Leadership (National)					
Year	2020****	2021	2022**	2023	2024	5 Year Total
St Mary's College	N/A	N/A	0	0	1	1
All Schools (55)	N/A	N/A	9	7	10	26

Program	Let's Talk EREA Aboriginal Immersion Program (National)					
Year	2020****	2021	2022***	2023	2024	5 Year Total
St Mary's College	N/A	N/A	1	0	0	1
All Schools (55)	N/A	N/A	16	8	11	35

Program	EREA Pilgrimage/Partnership and Solidarity Program (International)					
Year	2020****	2021	2022	2023	2024	5 Year Total
St Mary's College	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0
All Schools (55)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8	8

\*\*\*\* 2020 St Mary's College did not exist - It was previously CBC St Kilda - Data for CBC St Kilda has been included

N/A = program did not run due to COVID

\* only one of two programs was conducted due to COVID

\*\* program commenced in 2022

\*\*\* two programs ran due to previous year's cancellation due to COVID

## 6 SCHOOL RENEWAL SITE VISIT

STRUCTURE OF SCHOOL RENEWAL TEAM VISIT: ST MARY'S COLLEGE ST KILDA EAST		
DAY 1: April 30	DAY 2: May 1	DAY 3: May 2
<b>DATA GATHERING</b>	<b>DATA GATHERING</b>	<b>ANALYSIS</b>
Tour of School with particular focus on Pedagogy and Student Engagement	Parent Group	Chair of Panel briefs Principal
<b>CONTEXT</b>	<b>DATA GATHERING</b>	<b>DATA GATHERING</b>
Principal   Reflection on Report	Non-teaching Group A (Maintenance, Librarian, Music, EA to Principal) Non-teaching Group B (Food Tech, Lab Tech, Librarian, Sports Assistant)	Past Students   Student Leaders
<b>ANALYSIS</b>	<b>DATA GATHERING</b>	<b>DATA GATHERING</b>
Leadership Team Key achievements and challenges	Administration   Learning Support Team	School Chaplain
<b>ANALYSIS</b>	<b>ANALYSIS</b>	<b>EVALUATION</b>
Identity Team Key achievements and challenges	Middle School Leaders Group A and B	Finalisation of Commendations and Recommendations
<b>DATA GATHERING</b>	<b>DATA GATHERING</b>	<b>EVALUATION</b>
Students Group A (Year 7-9) Students Group B (Year 10-12)	Marketing/Development/Events   Counsellors/Psychologists	Presentation of Commendations and Recommendations to CLT
<b>DATA GATHERING</b>	<b>REFLECTION / EVALUATION</b>	
Teachers Group A   Teachers Group B	Refinement of Commendations & Recommendations	
<b>EVALUATION</b>		
Development of Commendations		

## 7 TOUCHSTONE COMMENDATIONS

Commendations are refined over the three-day process and represent a positive consensus from interviewees about what people appreciate about the school and where the school makes a difference. Commendations have emerged from quantitative data (EREA Charter Survey) and qualitative data gleaned from the interview process which sought the reflections of support staff, teachers, students, counsellors, professional staff, the College Leadership Team, and the Principal.

The EREA Renewal Charter surveys were conducted at St Mary's College over the following time periods:

- Students – 18 March - 31 March
  - Teachers – 14 Feb - 31 March
  - Responses were received from 322 students, 11 teachers, including 1 Religious Education teacher.
- The survey response rates were:
- Students – 75%
  - Staff – 25%

Survey data are included as commendations if they reach the following thresholds:

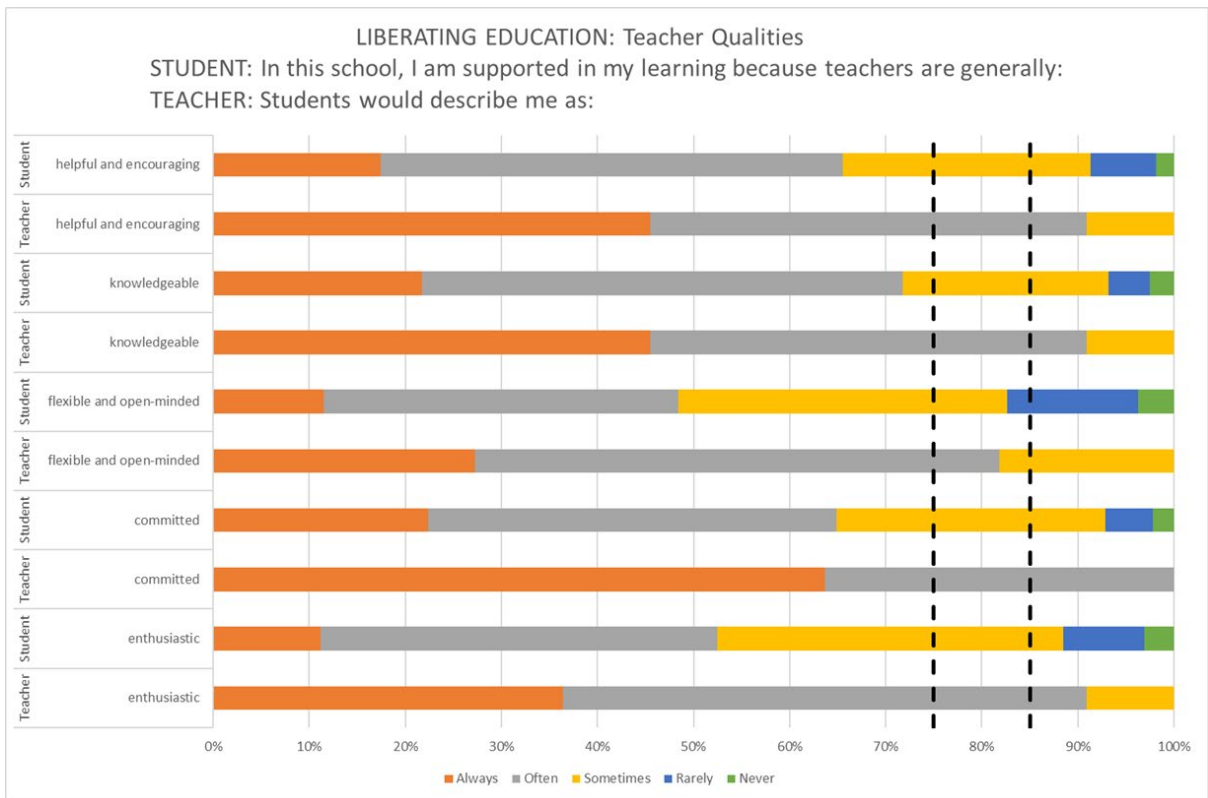
- Statements acknowledge 85% + in sometimes/often/always.
- Statements acknowledge 75%+ in often/always.

### 7.1 LIBERATING EDUCATION

*We open hearts and minds, through quality teaching and learning experiences, so that through critical reflection and engagement each person is hope-filled and free to build a better world for all.*

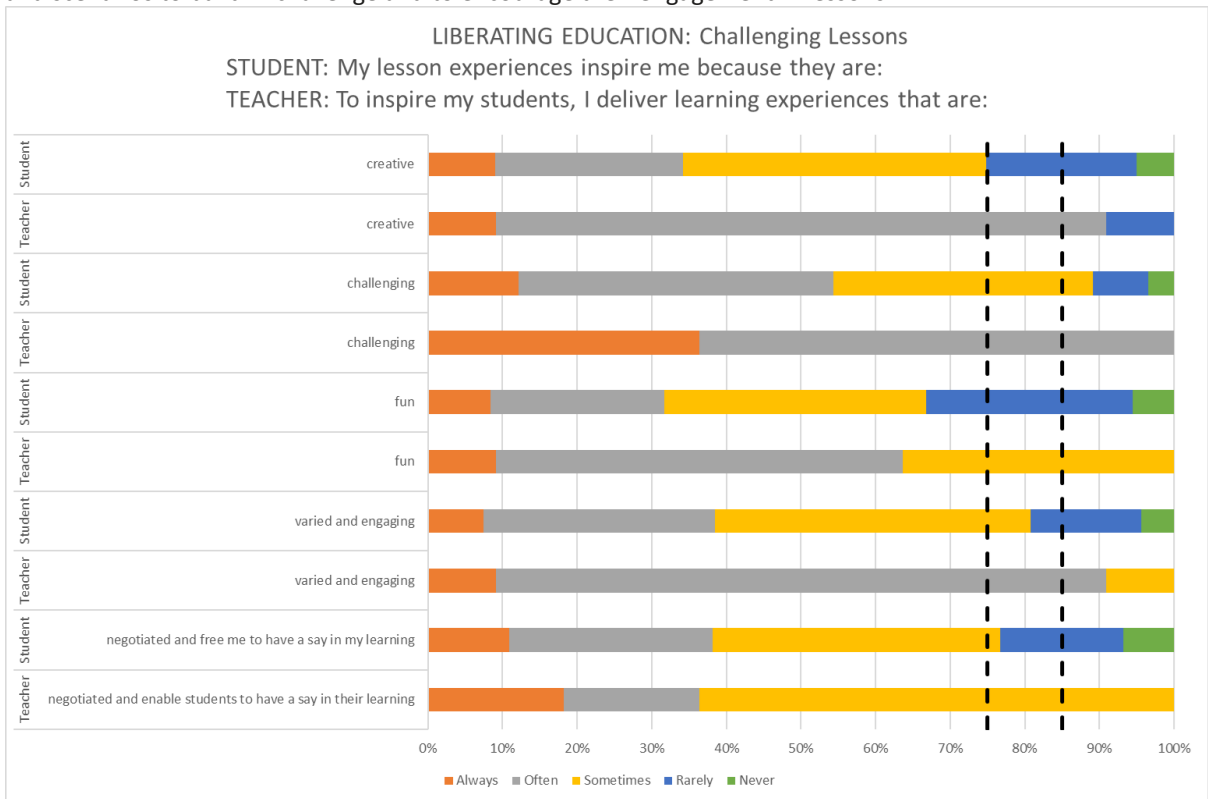
#### 7.1.1 Teacher Qualities

Students surveyed described their teachers as helpful and encouraging (91% always/often/sometimes), knowledgeable (93% always/often/sometimes), enthusiastic (88% always/often/sometimes) and committed (92% always/often/sometimes). Teachers surveyed indicated overwhelmingly (90%+ always/often) that they think students would describe them as helpful, encouraging, knowledgeable, committed and enthusiastic. Teachers found they were flexible & open-minded 81% always/often. Focus groups confirmed that students referred to their teachers positively and valued their helpful and encouraging support which was offered consistently during their educational journey.



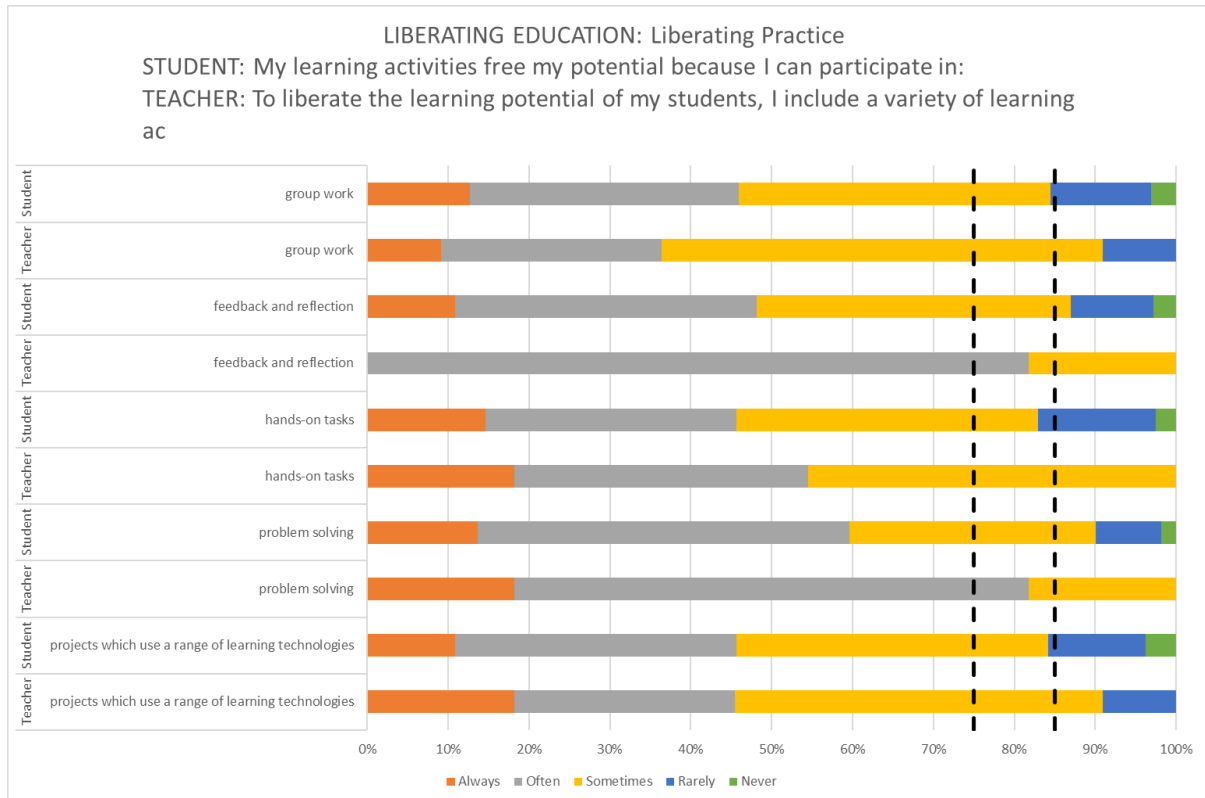
### 7.1.2 Challenging Lessons

Students indicated their teachers provided lessons which were challenging (89% Always/Often/Sometimes). Teacher survey results showed a strong belief that the learning experiences provided were challenging (100% always/often) and varied and engaging (91% always/often) and creative (91% always/often). Teacher survey results further indicated their lessons were fun (100% always/often/sometimes) and negotiated with students (100% always/often/sometimes). Focus groups confirmed that students felt they participated in a variety of lesson types which provided challenge during their studies. Students felt that teachers included questioning and scenarios to build in challenge and to encourage their engagement in lessons.



### 7.1.3 Liberating Practice

Students surveyed report that lesson tasks regularly involve feedback and reflection (86% always / often/sometimes) and problem solving (90% always/often/sometimes). Teachers agreed that problem solving was a key part of teaching and learning (81% always/often) as well as allowing feedback and reflection (81% always/often). Teachers also recognised group work (91% always/often/sometimes), hands-on tasks (100% always/often/sometimes) and use of learning technologies (91% always/often/sometimes) as important classroom strategies. Focus groups confirmed that students described problem solving and project work within lessons and valued group work and the use of technologies. Teachers described their student focused approach and efforts to link learning to authentic life skills and situations.



### 7.1.4 Learning Spaces

The College demonstrates a commitment to the relationship between physical space and student learning through intentional design and development of its facilities. Recent upgrades reflect a harmonious blend of the existing heritage with contemporary environments, including the creation of accessible new food technology classrooms. These provide students with well-resourced spaces that support creative and practical learning. The design complements the existing footprint, with transitions into council-shared spaces fostering connection between school and community. Flexible layouts and varied learning zones encourage collaboration, independence, and student agency.

### 7.1.5 Learning Pathways

The school excels in supporting students to create engaging and relevant learning pathways, offering both Vocational Major and VCE Major options. Despite limited resources and size constraints, the breadth of offerings is encouraging. The pathways thoughtfully acknowledge and incorporate the co-educational journey of the school, ensuring subjects cater to all genders. The Learning Diversity team skilfully supports students in their learning journey through the College and implements intentional and targeted programs to address student needs which have a positive impact on student outcomes.

### 7.1.6 School Improvement Plan

The College is to be commended for the strategic development and implementation of a clear and well-structured School Improvement Plan, demonstrating strong leadership and a focused commitment to continuous improvement and endeavouring to raise standards across all areas of the school. This plan addresses excellence in learning, celebrating the College's Catholic identity, high expectations, the implementation of a co-curricular program and respectful relationships, all of which will continue to move the school in a positive direction.

### 7.1.7 Learning Relationships

On its small footprint and with carefully managed resources, St Mary's provides a learning environment focussed on building relationships through the learning process. There is an intent that classroom pedagogy is focussed on personalised learning, inclusion and achievement no matter how large or small the learning gain may be. Currently, smaller class sizes facilitate this approach. The learner - teacher relationship is viewed as key to the achievement of outcomes. Teachers demonstrate compassion and care as they consistently check-in on wellbeing and progress. Practical lessons with clear instructions and guidance are highly valued.

### 7.1.8 Strategic Use of Funding

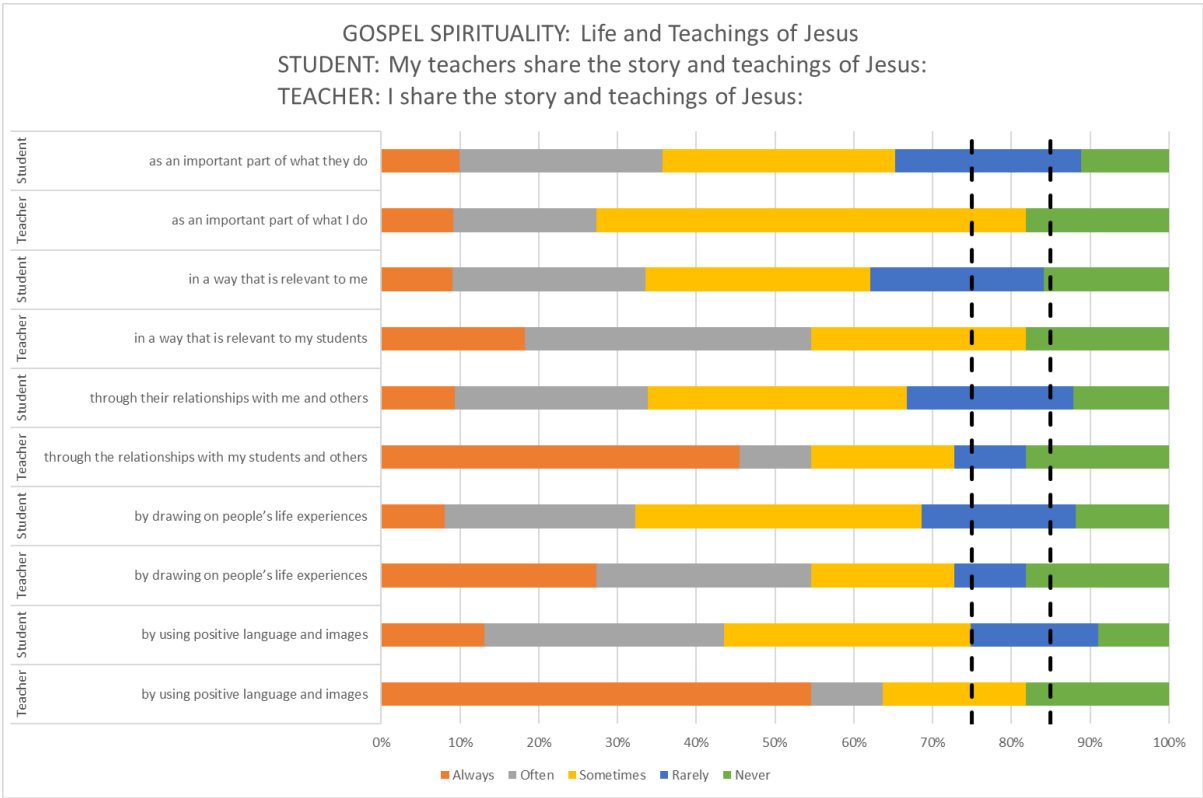
The College demonstrates strategic leadership in its transition to a co-educational model. Practical updates include uniform redesign, refreshing the colour scheme and updating the Honour Roll to better reflect student contributions. The construction of food technology classrooms and the encouragement of female participation in sport further reflect the College's dedication to providing equitable opportunities. The establishment of female student leadership positions ensures that all students see themselves reflected in the life and leadership of the College. These initiatives strengthen a learning environment where every student feels a strong sense of belonging, representation, and opportunity.

## GOSPEL SPIRITUALITY

*We invite people into the story of Jesus and strive to make his message of compassion, justice and peace a living reality within our community.*

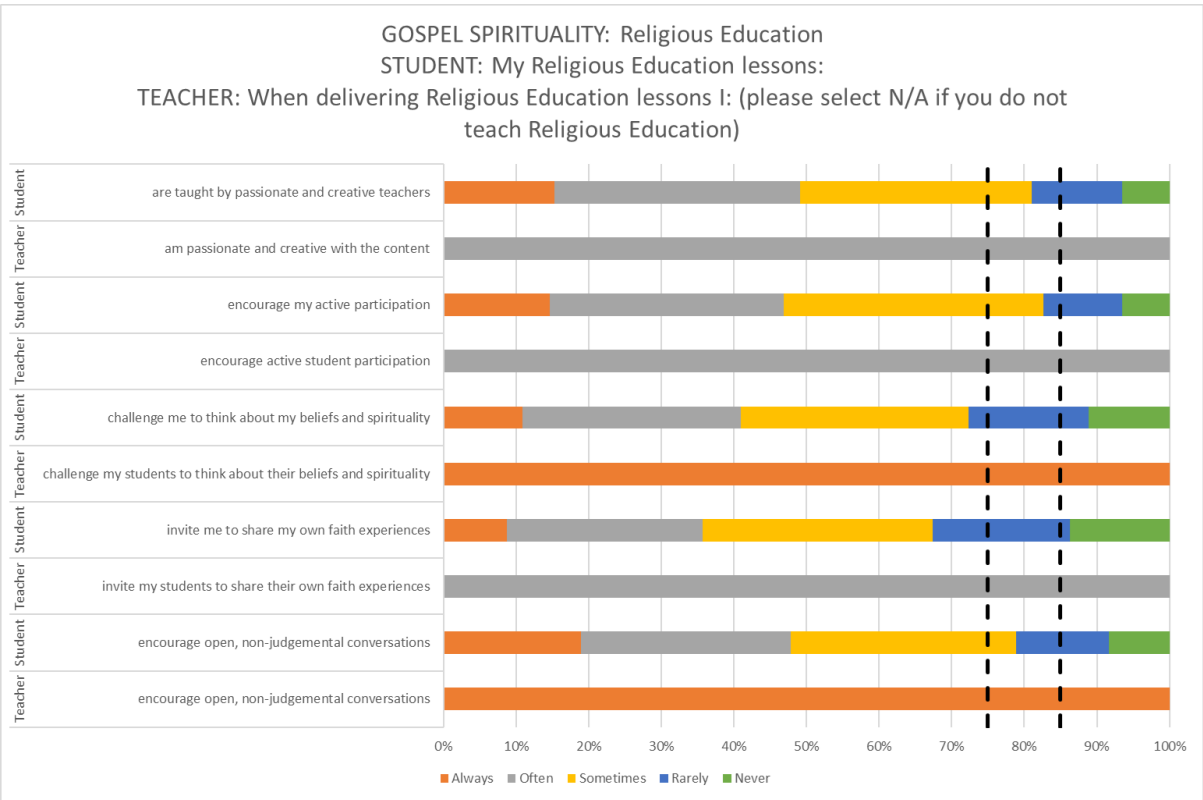
### 7.2.1 Life and Teachings of Jesus

Students identified use of positive language and images by their teachers (75% always/often/sometimes). Teachers noted they share the story and teachings of Jesus as an important part of what they do (82% always/often/sometimes) in a way that is relevant to their students (82% always/often/sometimes), and through use of positive language and images (82% always/often/sometimes). Focus groups confirmed that teachers felt they shared the teaching of Jesus in a positive way and students recognised the teachings of Jesus, particularly values, were evident in interactions across the school.



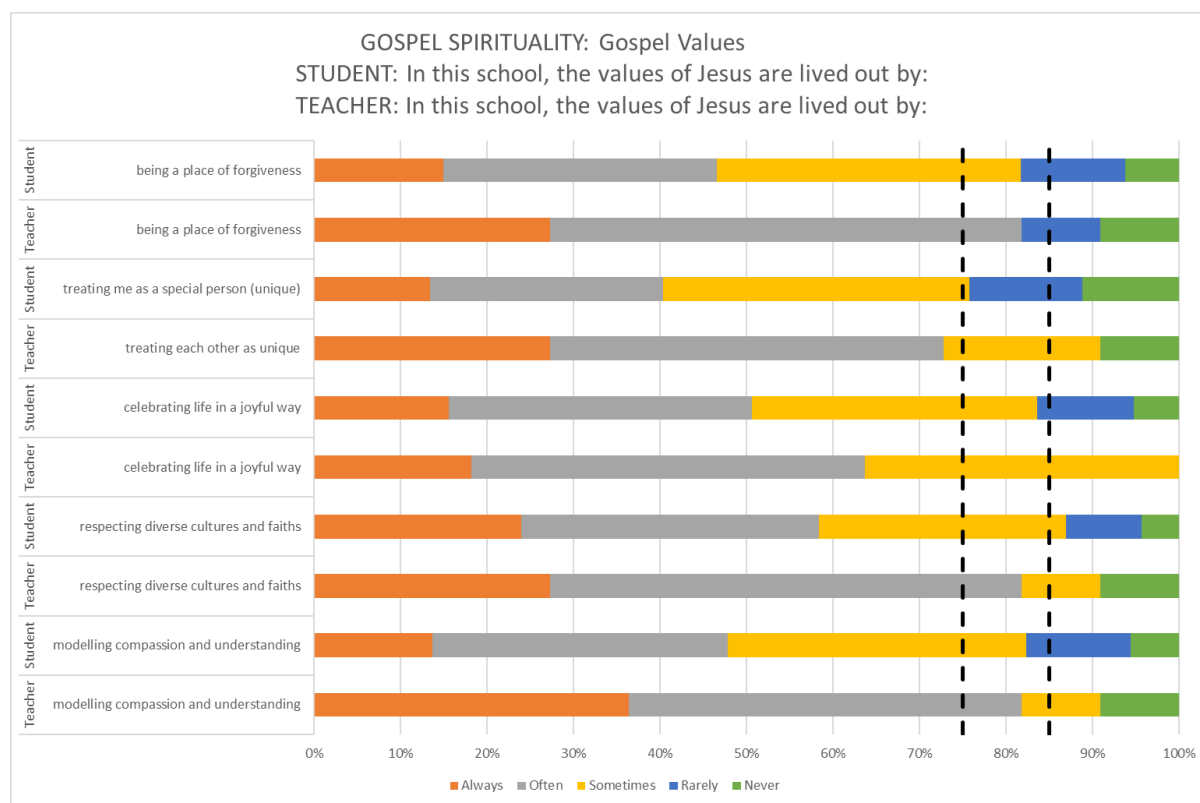
**7.2.2 Religious Education**

Students recognized they are taught by passionate and creative religious teachers (81% always/often/sometimes) who encourage their active participation (83% always/often/sometimes). Focus groups confirmed that some students found that their Religious Education teachers were passionate and that students were engaged in most lessons, particularly in the junior years.



### 7.2.3 Gospel Values

Students affirmed that their school respects diverse cultures and faiths (86% always/often/sometimes). Teachers strongly recognised that the values of Jesus are lived out at the school through forgiveness (81% always/often) and respect (81% always/often), as well as compassion and understanding (81% always/often). Treating students as individuals (91% always/often/sometimes) and joyful celebration (100% always/often/sometimes) were also rated highly. Focus groups confirmed that staff and students felt that students were seen as individuals and that the Gospel values were evident across the community, particularly in relation to respect and understanding.



### 7.2.4 Relationship with Parish

Built on a strong tradition of Catholic education in the St Kilda precinct, St Mary’s College maintains and contributes to the life, ritual and outreach of St Mary’s Parish. With its origins in the CBC St Kilda (1879) and Presentation College Windsor (1873) stories, and more recently as a co-educational college, participation in masses, sacraments, rites of passage and community engagement is an integral part of college life. Father Jerome Santamaria, the Parish Priest provides support and encouragement to staff, students and families and is involved in key decisions relating to the future of education in the parish. St Mary’s has a positive, collaborative relationship with St Mary’s Primary School.

### 7.2.5 Ritual

The College demonstrates a strong commitment to embedding Gospel spirituality into the daily life of the school through meaningful ritual. Prayer is a regular and authentic part of the school’s rhythm, woven into homegroup gatherings, liturgical celebrations, and key community events. Importantly, the College also prioritises the explicit teaching of Catholic ritual and symbolism, ensuring that students not only participate in these sacred moments but develop a deeper understanding of their significance. This intentional approach nurtures a reverence for tradition while fostering a personal connection to faith, allowing students to encounter the sacred in ways that are both accessible and transformative.

### 7.2.6 Retreat Day Program

Students in Year 7-12 are provided with the opportunity to participate in a reflection day each year as part of the faith offerings at the College. These days provide opportunities for reflection on students' own spiritual journey, the connection to local lands and guide students in their engagement and understanding of the

Gospels. These days provide an entry point for students to engage with the Catholic faith in a respectful way as part of their own personal faith journey.

### 7.2.7 Religious Iconography

The College is to be commended for the thoughtful and meaningful use of a range of religious iconography throughout the campus, which thoughtfully reflects its identity as a school in the Edmund Rice tradition. This visible expression of faith supports the liturgical life of the College while fostering a strong sense of Catholic tradition, spiritual reflection, and connection to the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice.

### 7.2.8 Building a Faith Community

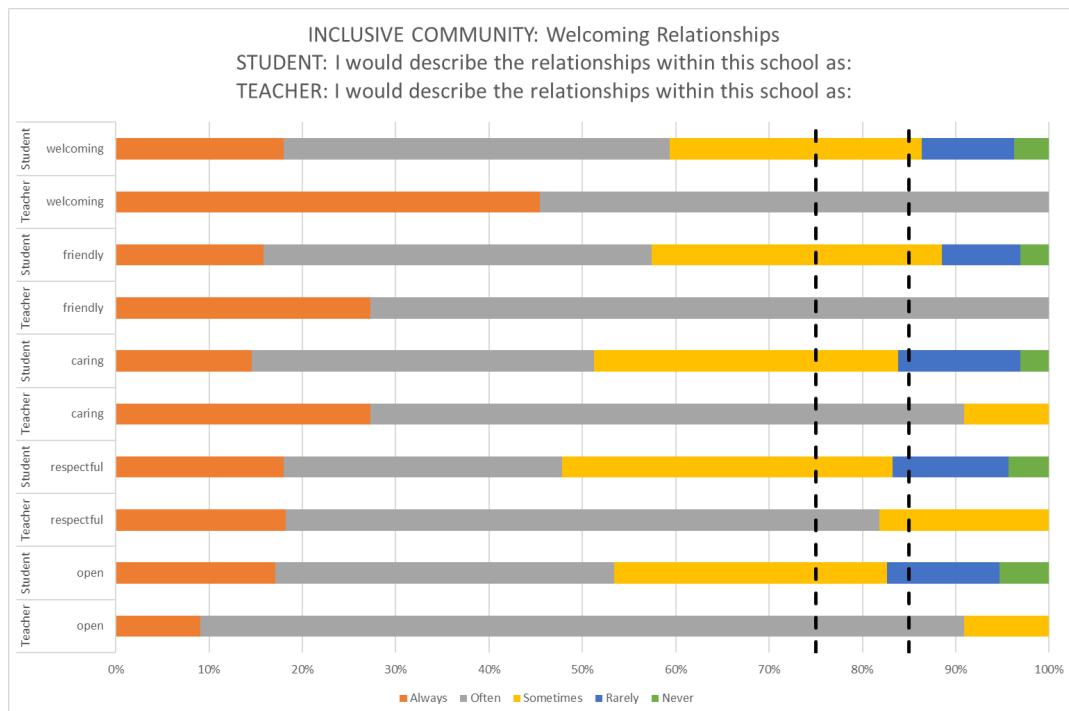
As a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition, St Mary’s is a community of diverse expressions of faith and practice, engaging in ritual, prayer, outreach and formation, building positive, life-giving relationships, and assisting young people who seek involvement and shared understandings. The school is a place where they can share and question their views and beliefs. The staff are role models of compassion, inclusion and forgiveness. Anchored in Catholic traditions and practice, the school is enriched by the presence of young people, staff and families of other faith traditions.

## 7.3 INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

*Our community is accepting and welcoming, fostering right relationships and committed to the common good.*

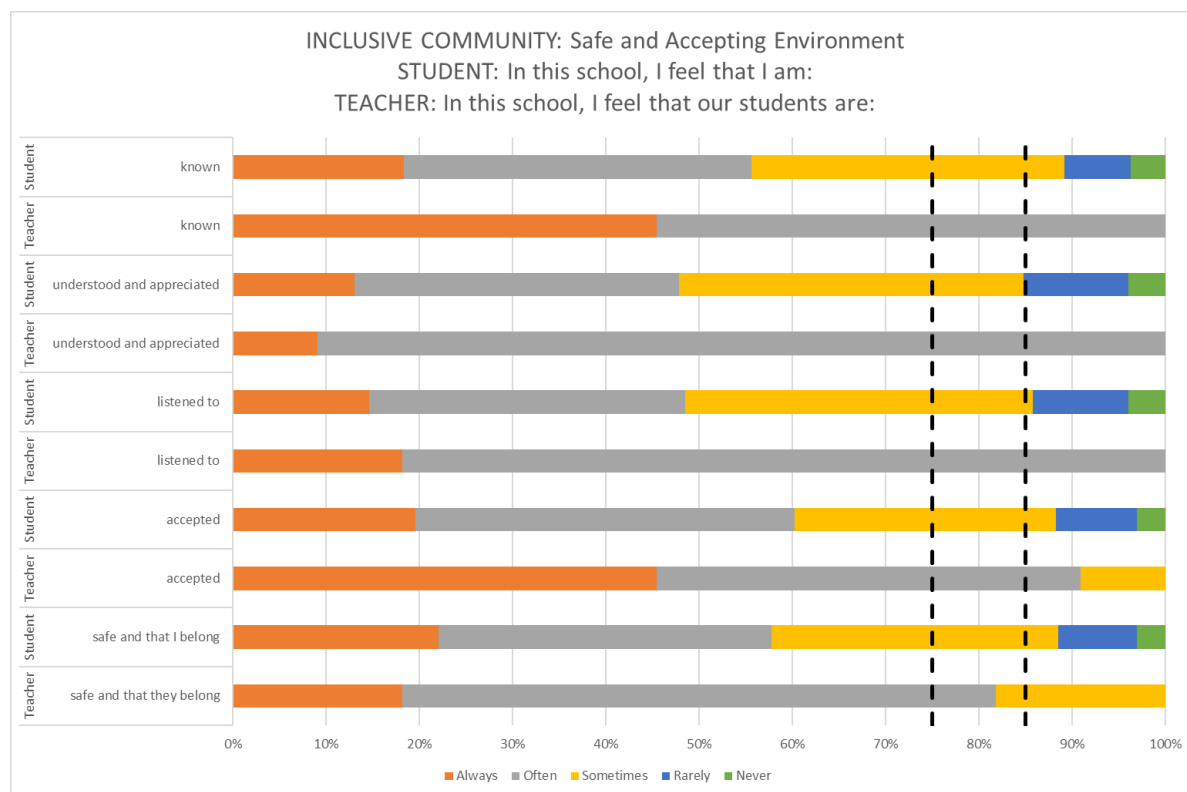
### 7.3.1 Welcoming Relationships

Students acknowledged that relationships at their school are welcoming (86% always/often/sometimes), friendly (88% always/often/sometimes). Teachers feel the relationships in the school are welcoming and friendly (100% always/often) and caring (91% always/often). Respectful (82% always/often) and open relationships (91% always/often) were also commended. Focus groups confirmed a culture of respect and welcome across the College. Students noted that people were respectful of one another’s differences and that the small size of the school allows opportunities for supportive processes, such as pairing up students who are transitioning into the new environment.



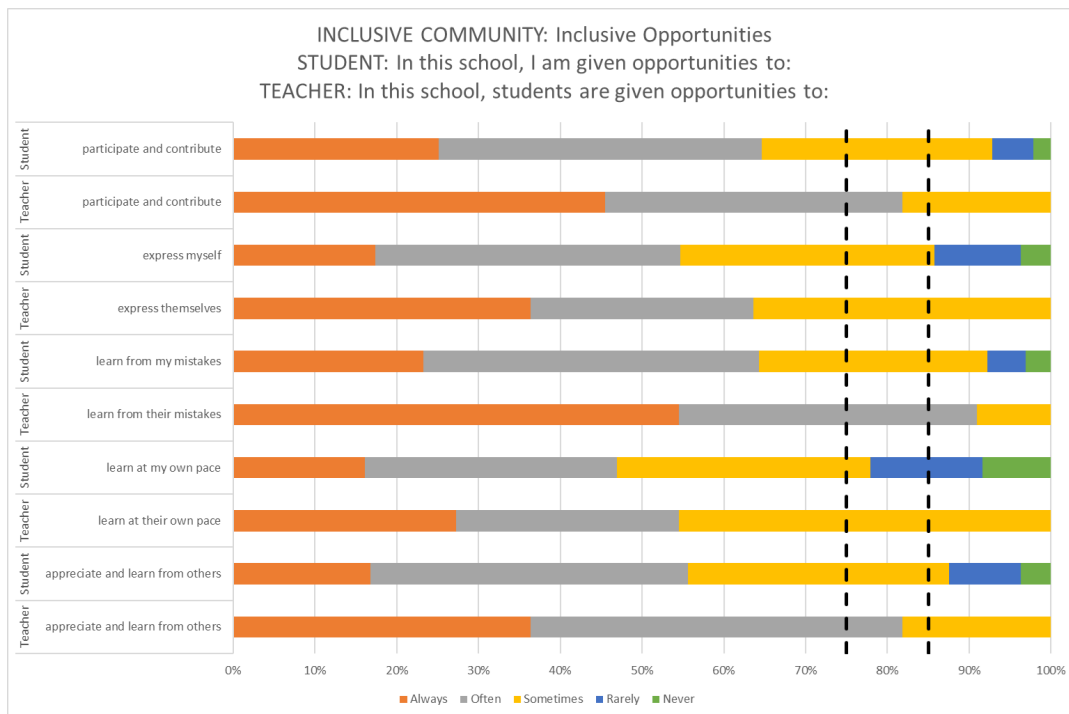
### 7.3.2 Safe and Accepting Environment

Students reported that they feel known (89% always/often/sometimes) and safe (88% always/often/sometimes) and accepted (88% always/often/sometimes) at school. They also recognise that they are listened to (86% always/often/sometimes). Teachers' responses indicate that the majority think that students are safe and belong (82% always/often), understood and appreciated (100% always/often), accepted (91% always/often), known (100% always/often) and listened to (100% always/often). Focus groups confirmed that students have a strong sense of belonging and that acceptance is a shared value. Staff and students believe that student voice is valued and evident as part of College life.



### 7.3.3 Inclusive Opportunities

Students (92% always/often/sometimes) acknowledged they can participate and contribute to activities and learn from their mistakes. Students are encouraged to appreciate and learn from others (87% always/often/sometimes) and express themselves (85% always/often/sometimes). There was positive teacher acknowledgement of the support given to students. Students are supported to participate & contribute (82% always/often), appreciate and learn from others (82% always/often), allowing them to learn from their mistakes (91% always/often). Focus groups confirmed that there are opportunities in different groups (sport, academic clubs and creative arts). Student felt supported to contribute to events and that inclusivity was an overall strength of the community.



### 7.3.4 Inter-Faith Dialogue

St Mary’s College encourages interfaith dialogue and builds relationships with other religious communities in a number of ways. Year 10 students engage with the Islamic Museum of Australia, exploring the similarities with the Christian faith tradition and the role played by Muslims in the story of Australia. Given its proximity to Jewish Schools and the rich expressions of Jewish cultural life in the St Kilda / Balaclava area, the school is committed to a building understanding through engagement with the Jewish Community Council of Victoria based in Balaclava.

### 7.3.5 Valuing Story

The College staff as a collective are to be commended for fostering an inclusive community. This dimension honours a 142-year Catholic tradition, thoughtfully weaving its story as a shared foundation in reshaping a renewed and forward-looking school vision. The College responds to the needs and aspirations of contemporary society, preparing students to navigate and contribute meaningfully to a rapidly changing world.

### 7.3.6 Kindness

The College actively fosters a culture of kindness and empathy, which is evident in the relationships between students and staff. Students feel safe and supported, experiencing kindness not only in their interactions with teachers but also with one another. This sense of care and connection extends beyond the classroom, contributing to a sense of belonging and emotional safety across the school. The respectful and compassionate environment nurtured by the College plays a vital role in promoting student wellbeing and upholding the dignity of every individual.

### 7.3.7 Rites of Passage

The school acknowledges and celebrates significant rites of passage, including the transition into Year 7 and the milestone of Year 12 Graduation. These events are marked with meaningful symbolism and foster the involvement of parents, students, staff, and the wider school community, ensuring a deeply inclusive experience for all. Through these cherished traditions, the school reinforces a sense of belonging and continuity, guiding students through key stages of their educational journey with support and recognition.

### 7.3.8 Strategic Intent

The College Leadership Team is to be commended for its clear strategic intent to foster a small, connected community, demonstrated through its recent transition from a multi-campus model to a single campus. This deliberate consolidation of resources supports a more unified and welcoming school identity and continues to

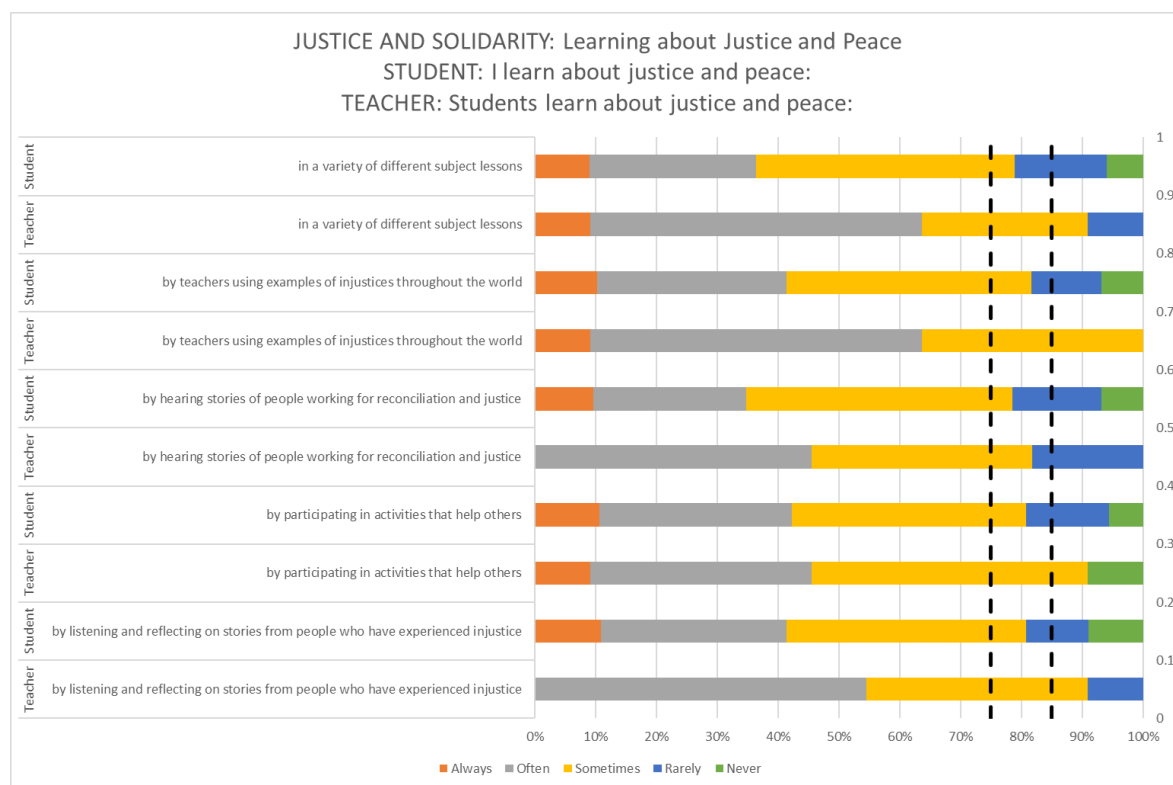
strengthen relationships across the community, in keeping with its Catholic values and the Edmund Rice Charter and Touchstones.

## 7.4 JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY

*We are committed to justice and peace for all, grounded in a spirituality of action and reflection that calls us to stand in solidarity with those who are marginalised and the earth itself.*

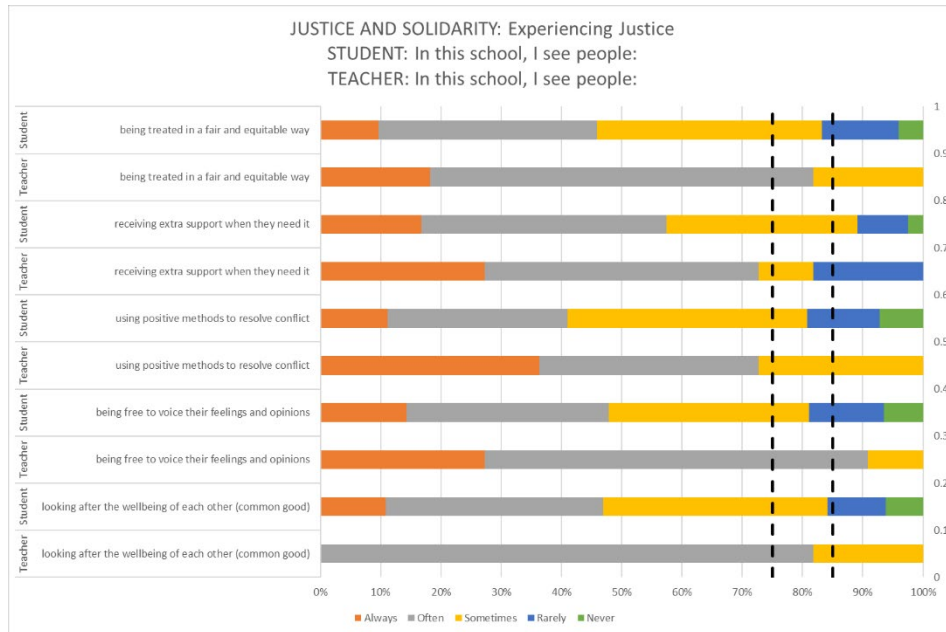
### 7.4.1 Learning about Justice and Peace

Teachers identify that students learn about justice and peace through examples of injustice (100% always/often/sometimes) and by listening and reflecting on stories from people who have experienced injustice (91% always/often/sometimes). Teachers use examples of injustices throughout the world (100% always/often/sometimes) and participate in activities that help others (91% always/often/sometimes). Focus groups confirmed that students learn about examples of injustice in some subject areas at the College. Students noted the collaboration between Religious Education and Food Technology departments to facilitate their participation in lessons where cooking for an Inner West charity is undertaken.



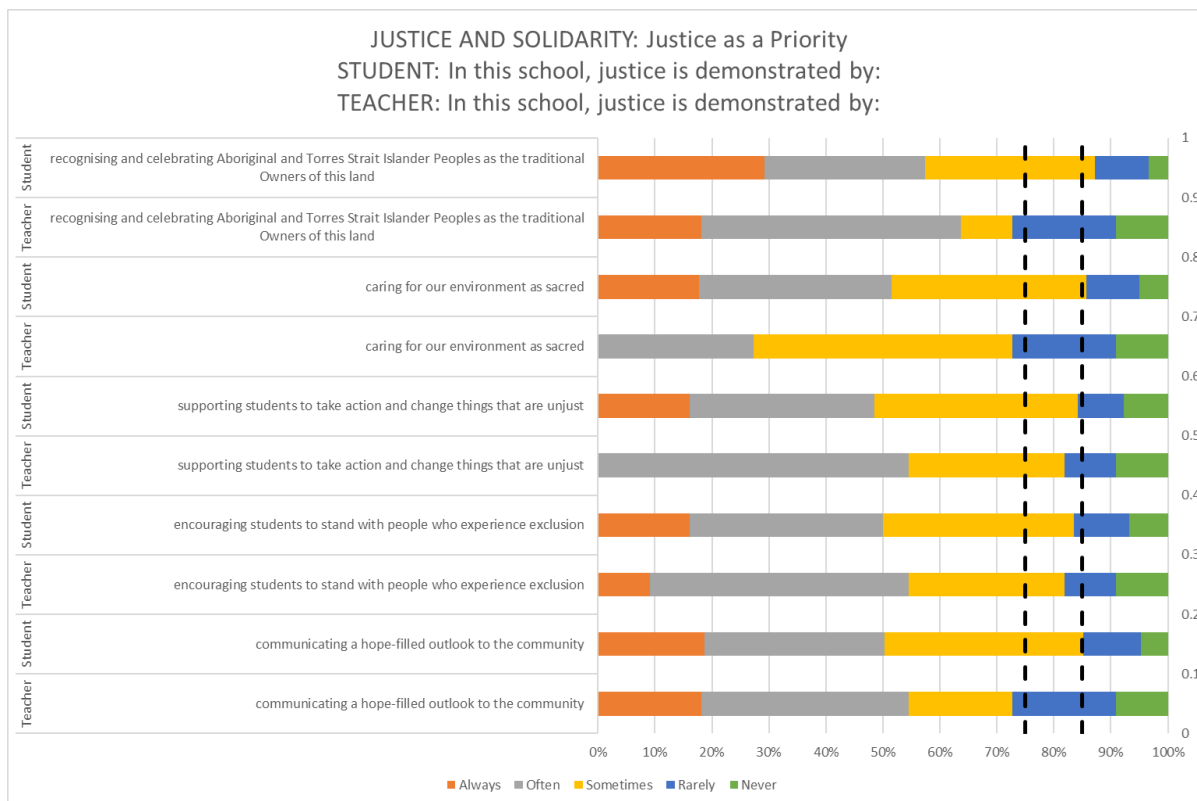
### 7.4.2 Experiencing Justice

Students note extra support being available when it is needed (89% always/often/sometimes). Teachers reported that they saw justice expressed in actions around the school, namely treating students in a fair and equitable way (82% always/often), looking after the wellbeing of each other (82% always/often) and encouraging their students to voice their feelings and opinions. Focus groups confirmed that students felt they were treated fairly, heard and that there was a general sense of justice. Students also confirmed that they felt really listened to and acknowledged the generous time that staff take to sit with students to ensure this occurs.



### 7.4.3 Justice as a Priority

Students named the recognition and celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (87% always/often/sometimes) as a strong indicator of the importance of justice in this school. Furthermore, they acknowledged care for the environment (85% always/often/sometimes) and communicating a hope-filled outlook (85% always/often/sometimes) as important attributes of their school. Focus groups confirmed that recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture across key learning areas is evident.



#### 7.4.4 School of New Beginnings

The school clearly named and demonstrated its intentional and student-centred approach, creating a supportive and personalized learning environment that offers students a renewed opportunity to thrive within a welcoming community. By meeting diverse learning needs with care and flexibility, the school demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusivity and the success of every learner.

#### 7.4.5 Social Justice Activities

The College demonstrates commitment to social justice, fostering enthusiastic engagement among students through various initiatives. The Breakfast club, Food for the West, visits to an aged care home, and participation in the Dawn Service provide support to peers and the broader community, highlighting a dedication to service and inclusivity. Student social justice groups organise fundraisers and the whole school focuses on initiative (eg RU OK Day), to provide support to peers and the broader community. Through these activities, students develop compassion and are able to develop leadership and a sense of responsibility, making a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

#### 7.4.6 Global Engagement

Through the College’s support for Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders, there is an interest in supporting other Edmund Rice ministries around the world. Staff who have participated in immersion experiences share their stories and promote greater awareness of the work of the Christian Brothers schools and other global Edmund Rice ministries, particularly in India. With international immersions suspended during the COVID era, the College has been creatively exploring ways to maintain links with many of these ministries, and fund-raising projects have been undertaken to support these communities. The College has recently initiated a local/global project plan.

#### 7.4.7 Building Leadership Capacity

The College demonstrates a clear commitment to building the leadership capacity of staff in alignment with the values of justice and solidarity. Emerging and aspiring leaders are intentionally identified and supported through formal roles. Staff are empowered to take on opportunities that promote growth, reflection, and the development of leadership capabilities across a range of contexts. This approach not only strengthens

individual leadership practice but also contributes to a collaborative and future-focused culture where leadership is shared, nurtured, and aligned with the mission and values of the College.

#### 7.4.8 First Nations Engagement

The College is committed to building relationships, respect and opportunities to engage with the Yalukit Willam clan, the traditional owners of the land upon which the school community is located. Activities are conducted which explore Port Phillip Bay, Albert Park and the Yarra River. The College has initiated a Narragunnawali Reconciliation Action Plan, recognising the benefit afforded by a RAP to have planned activities throughout the year that represent high value first nations engagement. The College has conducted immersions to Lake Mungo, annual Reconciliation Week assemblies and advocacy activities and values the impact of these activities on learning and school culture.

## 8 STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

### 8.1 IDENTITY

St Mary's College has made significant progress on its identity journey, having successfully navigated the complex merger of two schools, shaping a distinctive identity as a co-educational school. This evolving identity reflects both resilience and vision, laying a strong foundation for future growth and community connection.

In order to enhance this dimension of school life, it is recommended that the College:

- Charter: in the context of the renewed Charter, evaluates the language of the college "Pillars" with a view to aligning them to the new Touchstone definitions so that the community has clarity in relation to the College values.
- Point of Difference: continues to develop and implement a communications plan which articulates the programs, experiences and outcomes which contribute to a unique learning journey at St Mary's.
- Identity Narrative: builds a culture which celebrates the story of the school, inclusive of the Edmund Rice, Presentation and broader Catholic traditions, projecting forward through a dynamic, connected, consultative and future focused lens
- Enrolments: sets realistic enrolment targets which take account of feeder school enrolment trends and St Mary's enrolment churn data, so that the appropriate resources can be determined to ensure stability and inclusion for all students

### 8.2 CHARTER / CATHOLIC SCHOOL

St Mary's College continues to embrace traditions and values of Catholic education to foster a faith community, where prayer is woven into daily routines, liturgical celebrations are experienced, and religious iconography serves as a reminder of its spiritual foundation. The growing relationship with the parish, alongside meaningful retreat day programs and a culture of openness to other faiths, reflects a deep commitment to nurturing both spiritual and personal growth.

In order to enhance this dimension of school life, it is recommended that the College:

- A Catholic School: engage with the renewed Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition to explore new ways of connecting with the explicit language of scripture, First Nations Knowings and Church Teachings.
- RE Curriculum: Co-designs a meaningful and relevant RE curriculum which reflects and strengthens the Melbourne Archdiocesan outcomes, culminating in a dynamic Senior RE course which links liturgy, ritual and rites of passage
- Justice / Advocacy: Reviews and evaluates the current offerings in Social Justice, Outreach and Service Learning so that all experiences are underpinned by the Social Teachings of the Church, reflect best practice from across the EREA network, and respond to the current needs of the local community.

- **Systematisation:** develop policies, scope and sequence, frameworks and goals for all strands of the spiritual life of the College so that programs are sustainable and not dependent on the initiative of individuals or a small number of staff.

### 8.3 TEACHING AND LEARNING

St Mary's College continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, underpinned by its thoughtfully designed learning environments and the successful implementation of its refurbishment plan. The College's strategic focus on fostering meaningful learning relationships, offering relevant and diverse learning pathways, and raising academic standards reflects a deep understanding of student needs and future-focused education.

In order to enhance this dimension of school life, it is recommended that the College:

- **Learning model:** co-designs a St Mary's St Kilda East Learning Model / Framework that responds to the needs of students, celebrates a range of pathways and is driven by individual teacher decisions and shared collaborative practice.
- **Analysis of Data:** uses data for early identification of student needs, building and supporting best practice intervention systems, fostering a growth mindset and an inclusive community.
- **Evidence-based practice:** continues to build a culture of shared responsibilities for teaching and learning practice through dynamic professional learning teams and initiatives which promote collaboration, accountability and solidarity.
- **Behaviour Management:** strengthens change management processes in relation to well-being outcomes in the co-education context, focussing on consistency of implementation and response.

### 8.4 PEOPLE

St Mary's College workplace culture is underpinned by a dedicated and supportive staff. The College demonstrates a commitment to building leadership capacity in staff and encourages them to embrace opportunities for professional growth.

In order to enhance this dimension of school life, it is recommended that the College:

- **Sustainable Operations:** Balances priorities, expectations and accountabilities in relation to Leadership Team portfolios, Human Resource management and program delivery with the resources available so that the operational structures and processes are clearly understood and implemented.
- **Change Consolidation:** ensures that leadership responds proactively to and supports staff wellbeing, particularly those senior and middle leaders managing multiple portfolios, as well as support staff whose roles are extended to cover a range of duties.
- **Communication:** strengthens operational management through the review of communication processes, aligning operational communication and calendars with strategic goals.

## 9 RECOMMENDATION TO EREA COUNCIL

It is recommended that the EREA Council:

- **Approve** this School Renewal report
- **Accredit** St Mary's College, St Kilda East as a Catholic School in the Edmund Rice Tradition, offering a liberating education, based on a Gospel Spirituality, within an Inclusive Community, committed to Justice and Solidarity for the period of 2025-2030
- **Communicate** this Accreditation and the Report to the EREA Victorian Schools Ltd Board, the CEO of EREA Victorian Schools Ltd and the Principal of St Mary's College.

Panel: Ray Paxton (Chair), Andy Kuppe, Stephen Gough, Laura Ruddick, Rebecca Kirwan