



## SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2018

As part of our funding agreement with the Australian Government, we are required to ensure that specific 'School Performance Information' is made publically available to the school community. The information has been provided by this report which has been posted on our website at [www.stmarks.sa.edu.au](http://www.stmarks.sa.edu.au) and which is also available at the school office.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please direct them to the Principal, Mr James Heyne.

### **Contextual Information**

In 2018 St Mark's Lutheran School operated with a Foundation to Year 6 structure providing 2 classes in each year level. St Mark's continues to operate as a systemic Lutheran school located in the Adelaide Hills. In harmony with our Lutheran ethos, the School is centred on the gospel of Jesus Christ as described in our Mission and Values, which we strive to bring to life each day with all our interactions within and beyond the school community.

### **Our Mission**

'Led by God, St Mark's provides a quality education, developing individuals' potential and encouraging all to reflect Christ's love in care and service to others.'

### **Our Values**

God's Word, as revealed in the Bible, is the authority of what we do and teach. Therefore, we foster and support the following 11 values.

#### ***Love***

We daily reflect God's love for us in our interactions with others.

#### ***Forgiveness***

We forgive others as God forgives us and in doing so, we recognise the wrong, seek reconciliation and begin anew.

#### ***Integrity***

We display a moral character based on honesty, truthfulness and faithfulness.

#### ***Patience***

We display patience through perseverance and self-control.

#### ***Respect***

We are considerate of others, honour their role and recognise their worth as individuals.

#### ***Justice***

We interact with others in a fair and equitable manner.

#### ***Cooperation***

We work together harmoniously, and in doing so, acknowledge differences but remain focused on achieving common goals.

### **Service**

We give selflessly of our time and talents for others.

### **Hope**

We face the future with confidence, in anticipation of the possibilities God holds for us.

### **Compassion**

We care for, and have empathy with, the situations of others as we walk alongside them.

### **Excellence**

We encourage all to aim for excellence through realising their potential.

To provide focus and direction to our operations and activities we provide our strategic plan as a statement of intent. The plan is the result of a consultative community process building upon our strengths and focusing our improvement endeavours in four key areas.

## **St Mark's Lutheran School Strategic Direction 2015 - 2018**

*Learning and growing with Christ.*

"St Mark's vision is to provide a student-centred learning community that engages in 21st century practices while we embrace, value and nurture community in an environment grounded in Christ."

### **Our Strategic Priorities**

#### **1. Focusing on our students being front and centre**

*"Provide an innovative and engaging learning community that is student-centred and reflects 21<sup>st</sup> century learning practices."*

#### **2. Supporting a first class community of staff learners**

*"Provide a satisfying and supportive workplace that encourages people to embrace and develop their skills, abilities and talents as God-given gifts."*

#### **3. Providing sustainable, high quality facilities and environment**

*"Provide an excellent and effective learning environment through responsible and strategic management and planning practices."*

#### **4. Building an engaged and respected school community**

*"Establish a respected and significant presence within the local community while implementing the school's Mission & Ministry objectives."*

St Mark's adopts a holistic approach to learning where individual student needs are developed through quality educational and pastoral programs.

Educationally, ongoing curriculum development and quality teaching results in a strong emphasis placed upon Literacy, Numeracy and Christian Studies. The integration of technology into the learning programs developed from the Australian Curriculum areas of English, Mathematics, Science, HASS, The Arts, Health and PE, Technologies and Languages – German, underpins quality learning experiences for our students.

In 2018 the school consolidated its Philosophy of Learning and its commitment to delivering a 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning environment which equips students with skills, knowledge and understandings creating learners who through collaboration, communication, critical thinking and creativity become active and compassionate citizens in a world of constant change.

In 2018 the school also consolidated its 7 Learning Principles. Our Learning Principles refer to the approaches, processes and methods that are employed by our teachers to deliver a 21<sup>st</sup> century education. The St Mark's Learning Principles include:

**1. Learning through concepts promotes deep understanding, connection and transference of knowledge.**

*At St Mark's concept based teaching is where learning is about 'big ideas' or concepts rather than subject specific knowledge. By leading students to consider the context in which they will use their developing understandings, concept based learning brings real world meaning to content knowledge and skills. Students become critical thinkers which is essential to their ability to creatively solve problems in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

**2. Learning in an environment that is safe, respectful and nurturing promotes confidence, positive risk taking and improved learning outcomes.**

*At St Mark's all efforts are made to promote positive attitudes and behaviours so students feel safe, cared for and included. Our restorative practices in managing student behaviour provide opportunity for those affected by conflict to be part of the healing process. Positive relationships are essential for learning and for maintaining a harmonious community.*

**3. Learning opportunities that cater for the different learning styles and abilities of students enhances progress towards excellence for all students.**

*At St Mark's we believe learning experiences are most effective when students are provided with different pathways to achieve success. Students engage and focus on a task when they are at the centre of their own learning experience. Learning that is student centred leads to deeper understanding and application.*

**4. Learning that is developed from regular assessment and feedback to learners provides challenge and engagement for all students.**

*Quality teaching and learning is informed by regular assessment and timely feedback. Students who learn to evaluate the quality of their learning against well - defined learning goals and criteria develop skills that are invaluable for learning throughout their own lives.*

**5. Learning that connects with students' backgrounds, perspectives and interests promotes self-motivation and authentic engagement.**

*At St Mark's we believe that respecting diversity and providing learning experiences that are inclusive will foster students' developing sense of self, belonging and identity within the learning community.*

**6. Learning that builds essential capabilities while embedding technology as a tool for learning equips students to be able to redefine their understandings, respond to issues and be life-long learners.**

*Designing learning where technology plays an integral role in collaboration, research and presentation ensures our students learn to use ICT with confidence, care and consideration, understanding its possibilities, limitations and impacts on individuals, groups and communities.*

**7. Learning by inquiry with a focus on thinking skills develops higher order thinking learning.**

*At St Mark's inquiry learning sees our students being co-creators of learning actively involved in questioning, communicating, reflecting, collaborating, analysing and responding to 'big ideas' or concepts. Inquiry learning takes place in a social context with students learning from each other, together with others and from individuals and organisations beyond the classroom context.*

*At St Mark's we believe thinking that is productive, purposeful and intentional is at the centre of effective learning. By students developing an increasingly sophisticated understanding of creative and critical thinking they will be well placed to respond to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

Areas of subject specialisation in 2018 included Music, German, Physical Education and collaborative use of our Library/Resource centre.

In addition, students at St Mark's undertake a wide range of learning experiences through many events, activities and learning opportunities as evidenced by the following examples:

<u><i>Social Justice:</i></u>	Support of national and local charities, student involvement at a local aged care facility
<u><i>Leadership:</i></u>	Student Representative Council, House Captains, playground Peer Mentor Program
<u><i>Outdoor Education:</i></u>	Camping program across all year levels, Swimming program Foundation - Year 4 in addition to various day excursions including SAPOL, Splash Theatre, Star Dome, FYI Education, Kidz Biz, China Town and Parliament House excursions
<u><i>Music/Drama Program:</i></u>	Choir, music bands, individual music tutors and the annual school concert
<u><i>Community Events:</i></u>	Parents and Friends events including The Cancer Council's Biggest Morning Tea, student discos, sports day, flag presentation, Remembrance Day, Special Friends Day and many special treats for our students including pizza night, sausage sizzle days, donut days
<u><i>Sport:</i></u>	SAPSASA Swimming and Cross Country, Inter-Lutheran Athletics, Cross Country, Pedal Prix, House Sports
<u><i>Related Curricula:</i></u>	Inter-School Chess, ICAS Competitions

Pastorally, St Mark's strives to develop caring and nurturing relationships between all members of the school community including active parent participation. Our staff, supported by our Religious Pastoral Support Worker provided support and care for our students and families in all aspects of their lives.

In 2018 Staff continued to implement the 'You Can Do It' and Circle Time in classrooms. This supports the school's restorative practices for managing student behaviour.

In 2018 students from Cornerstone College (sister school) were able to support student learning through the college's Legacy Project. This saw Year 11 students volunteering their time in our primary school at different times during the year.

St Mark's has excellent facilities including bright and inviting classrooms, a multi-purpose hall, a substantial computer network, a well-resourced library and high quality play spaces. In 2018 the school completed the student interactive landscape project - nature play space.

### **Our Students**

In 2018 St Mark's provided enrolment for 327 students comprised of 165 girls and 162 boys. 1% of students identified as indigenous. 5% of our students have a language background other than English.

### **Our Staff**

#### *Teacher Standards and Qualifications*

All teachers have satisfied the requirements of teacher registration, including child protection training and a criminal history check.

The following table indicates the highest qualifications of St Mark's teaching staff.

Masters	Bachelor	Graduate Diploma
4	15	5

As lifelong learners dedicated to providing excellent learning environments for our students, our teachers continue to be involved in a range of professional learning activities. Each teacher has an individual professional learning plan based on the AITSL teaching standards to positively improve our impact on student learning.

In 2018 the school continued to actively support the professional learning of staff. A particular focus was the consolidation of the school's 7 Learning Principles and how these are achieved in practice. Staff continued to work collaboratively on the review of the school's Scope and Sequence for each key learning area of the Australian Curriculum with a special focus on the Australian Curriculum Technologies.

In 2018 our staff also engaged in Professional Learning through the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia focusing on Conceptual Planning, Task Design and Moderation for Learning. This was a direct response to Learning Principle 1.

In 2018 the school was served by 24 teaching staff and 11 administration and support staff. No staff identified as Indigenous. Together they form the cornerstone of the quality environment that St Mark's is known for.

### **Student Attendance**

The student attendance in 2018 across the school is reported below for the two collection periods for all students in Years 1 to 6.

Semester One		Term Three	
Year level	% attendance	Year level	% attendance
Year 1	95.0	Year 1	94.2
Year 2	95.4	Year 2	94.5
Year 3	95.0	Year 3	92.2
Year 4	96.2	Year 4	93.4
Year 5	95.8	Year 5	92.8
Year 6	94.6	Year 6	93.6
<b>School Total</b>	<b>95.4</b>	<b>School Total</b>	<b>93.4</b>

When a student is absent without explanation, a phone call is made to the parents or guardians after the morning roll has been marked. Parents and guardians are required to provide explanations for absences from school and apply for attendance exemptions for extended absences.

### **Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy testing.**

Percentage of Students at or above the National Minimum Benchmark

	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar and Punctuation	Numeracy	% of students absent or withdrawn
Year 3	100	100	98	100	100	2
Year 5	100	93	98	91	100	0

Students at St Mark's continue to achieve at high levels with the percentage of students achieving at or above the National Minimum Benchmark above national percentages.

### **Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction with the School**

In 2018 our St Mark's community participated in a Lutheran Education Australia data gathering initiative 'Quality Schools'. This is a biannual data gathering process and is scheduled to occur again in 2020. While favourable results are noted overall, key areas for further consideration and improvement include consistency in how we manage the behaviour of students, student wellbeing, student voice and feedback in the area of student learning as well as teacher performance.

In 2018 we also continued to be affirmed by our community through the following indicators.

- ✓ Our school has again been greatly supported through the wonderful efforts of a dedicated team of Parents and Friends. Throughout the year they undertook both fundraising and community building activities.
- ✓ Student Leadership. Our student leaders set a fine example through their roles in our SRC and House Teams. They modelled a positive approach and service to others through a range of projects.
- ✓ Affirming feedback. The school regularly receives many affirming comments from visitors to St Mark's impressed with the settled, caring and warm community they experienced and observed.
- ✓ Community participation. Students, parents and friends of the school whole heartedly support a range of event days such as sports day, concerts and musical recitals. A strength of the school, which is valued by our community, is our gathering to celebrate the talents of our students.
- ✓ A caring community. Our Religious Pastoral Support Worker oversees our 'Caretaker' which provides valuable support and care for many families in need. She also provides programs of support for students to assist them feel safe and respected in our school. Parent and extended family feedback consistently affirms the care provided to families in times of difficulty.
- ✓ Graduation of students. Families with students graduating from St Mark's continued to express their deep gratitude and thanks to our staff for the care, nurture and education provided to their children.

In 2018 the school also engaged the South Australian Police (SAPOL) to work with students in developing their awareness of cyber safety through the SAPOL schools programs. Our students continued to engage in circle time and class meetings as an opportunity for student voice in school decision making.

Key improvements to the school in 2018 included the consolidation of the school's 7 Learning Principles as well as staff professional learning through the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia which focused on Conceptual Planning, Task Design and Moderation for Learning. In 2018 the school also introduced online assessments through the Australian Council for Educational Research in the areas of literacy and numeracy. We plan for students to sit the assessments twice a year. Students from F to Year 6 will undertake the assessments. The results will better enable us to identify students not achieving benchmarks and then design intervention programs to target their needs.

Key improvements to capital works included the opening of the nature play space, the purchase of 28 library laptops and two interactive whiteboards for the specialist areas of German language and Music. The roll out of new classroom furniture also commenced with Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms fitted with products that achieve the flexibility required for learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**School income broken down by funding source**

Below is listed the income received by the school in 2018. We acknowledge not only the funding provided by the Commonwealth and State Governments but also the significant and substantial level of tuition fees paid by families.

Commonwealth Government Funding	\$ 2,396,083
State Government Funding	\$ 633,476
Tuition Fees	\$ 998,943
Other Income	\$ 347,078
<b><u>Total Income</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 4,404,580</u></b>

Thank you for taking the time read our 2018 School Performance report. I would welcome any questions you may have. The best way to understand the experience we provide for our community is to visit us personally. I would welcome the opportunity to share our story with you.

Respectfully Submitted

James Heyne  
Principal  
St Mark's Lutheran School.