



SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021

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 and which is also available at the school office.

In 2021 COVID-19 saw our usual activities modified or sometimes cancelled in line with advice provided by SA Health and the Association of Independent Schools SA. The Covid-19 lockdown in Term 3 saw learning transition to an online platform.

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

Contextual Information

In 2021 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. In 2021 the school continued to work through its Strategic Priorities and these include:

St Mark's Lutheran Strategic Priorities

Goal 1 - Inspired Students

We will create student focused, innovative learning environments informed by evidence based best practice inspiring students to achieve their God given potential.

- Deliver learning programs that are **student centred** based on a culture of high expectation for all learners as they strive for personal excellence.
- Differentiating learning to accommodate the needs of learners across the spectrum of achievement.
- Promote **student wellbeing** and **student agency** nurturing care and connection so that students feel safe and included.
- Design learning where **technology** plays an integral role in learning through collaboration, communication and creativity.

Goal 2: Passionate Staff

We will empower our staff to use and develop their God given gifts to achieve our St Mark's vision.

Goal 3: Exciting Facilities

To maximise opportunities to enhance our facilities into agile, appealing and inviting learning spaces.

Goal 4: Vibrant Community

We will continue to grow as a Christ centred vibrant community that acknowledges its interconnectedness and reflects the gospel in love and service.

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 2021 the school continued to be guided by its 6 Learning Principles:

1. Learning conceptually through inquiry, focussing on critical and creative thinking, promotes deep understanding, connections and transference of knowledge.

At St Mark's concept based teaching is learning through the pedagogy of inquiry. Concepts are the 'big ideas' 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 21st century.

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 21st 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.

Areas of subject specialisation in 2021 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.

<u>Social Justice:</u>	Support of national and local charities through our chapel offerings
<u>Leadership:</u>	Student Representative Council, House Captains, playground Peer Mentor Program, Student Representative Council lunch clubs
<u>Excursions:</u>	Art Gallery, Museum, Laratinga Wetlands, Parliament House, Adelaide Zoo, Hahndorf German Excursion, Year 6 Survivor Day, LEAH Day, Morialta Conservation Park, Monarto Zoo, The Cedars Hahndorf
<u>Incursions:</u>	Incursions were reintroduced in 2021 and included Music is Fun, Year 2 Science Day, German Day
<u>Outdoor Education:</u>	Year 1 – Year 5 Camps as well as Year 6 Aquatics Camp & Foundation Stay & Play Afternoon
<u>Music/Drama Program:</u>	Senior & Junior Choir, Band, Individual Music Tutor Programs for varied instruments, School Concert and Sounds on Sunday Concert
<u>Community Events:</u>	Parents and Friends Twilight Family Picnic, Ride & Walk to School Days, Colour Run, Parents & Friends PJ & Pizza Night, Student Representative Council Reading Fest, Parents & Friends Student Disco, Year 6 Graduation Dinner and Remembrance Day
<u>Sport:</u>	SAPSASA Swimming, Dancify Dance Program, Barker Districts Athletics Day, Inter-Lutheran Athletics, Cross Country, Pedal Prix, Lightning Carnival, House Sports and Sports Day were all highlights in 2021
<u>Related Curricula:</u>	ICAS Competitions, Lutheran Education Adelaide Hills Stem Project and Premier's Reading Challenge
<u>Learning Support:</u>	Targeted intervention programs for Numeracy and Literacy including MiniLit & MacqLit
<u>St Mark's Church:</u>	We thank the St Mark's congregation for their gifting of Bibles to our Year 2 students and the guidance and support they provide our at risk students through the mentoring program Kids Hope.

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 Pastoral Support Worker provided support and care for our students and families in all aspects of their lives. In a Covid-19 environment this became an even more important priority with the school providing regular communication home for families on self-care for parents, caring for family during a pandemic, helpful home learning tips during lockdown as well as contact details for community support agencies.

In 2021 the school began its journey on formalising its Mission and Ministry Framework. The framework provides four areas of focus including Spiritual Growth, Teaching and Learning, Pastoral Care and Beyond St Mark's. The goal of the framework is to help focus, enhance and assess the Mission and Ministry focus of the school. Our hope is to encourage the St Mark's community and beyond to see, hear and experience a loving God at work in and through every facet of school life.

In 2021 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 early 2021 students from Cornerstone College (sister school) were able to support student learning through the college's Legacy Project.

Our priority at St Mark's is to ensure that our students have the skills and understandings to safely and effectively navigate their way around their digital environment with confidence. In 2021 our students from Year 3 – Year 6 participated in an education session on cyber safety that focused on digital citizenship, online gaming, social media do's & don'ts, cyberbullying and online grooming. A parent information session was also scheduled with a focus on strategies for online wellbeing and screen time management.

Our Students

In 2021 St Mark's provided enrolment for 318 students comprised of 150 girls and 168 boys. 2% of students identified as indigenous. 7% 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 Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care Training and DHS Working With Children Check.

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

Masters	Bachelor	Graduate Diploma
3	21	1

The professional learning of staff is a priority at St Mark's but so is staff wellbeing. As we continued to navigate the challenges of Covid-19 during 2021, leadership made the decision for staff to pause professional learning but continue to innovate on the quality learning programs already established for our context.

The school was able to continue its practice of fortnightly assemblies and weekly chapels either face to face or through the technology available. When students were not able to participate live due to Covid-19 restrictions, they were able to do so from their classrooms allowing staff to continue nurturing the community feel our school is renowned for. When families were not able to attend, they were warmly welcomed to view their child's/children's assemblies and chapels via the school's YouTube channel.

Amidst the challenge of continuing to manage Covid-19, positives can be found. SA Health guidelines requiring parents not attend their child's classroom, saw the school observe students become more independent in caring for their personal needs. Also noted in 2021 was an increase in positive parental perception of the school and the work of its teachers due to the increased parental engagement with their children's learning. Teachers also noted the continued benefit of providing the freedom for students to learn at their own pace and then deliver understandings via different mediums seeing an overall increase in student engagement.

In early 2021, St Mark's was able to achieve several actions documented in its Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The school celebrated National Reconciliation Week and staff engaged in professional learning delivered by a member of the Peramangk community who accompanied the entire staff on a walk through the Mt Barker Summit in a truth telling experience. This was an opportunity for staff to grow in their cultural understanding of First Nations people and our shared history. In 2021 we successfully applied for an Australian Government Saluting Their Service Commemorative Grant which saw the purchase and installation of a flagpole including yardarm allowing the school to fly the Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags. This clearly demonstrates our community's commitment towards reconciliation.

In 2021 the school celebrated Harmony Day. This is an important occasion as it celebrates the changing face of our community encouraging students to respect the different religions and cultures that are now part of St Mark's.

In 2021 the school was served by 25 teaching staff and 14 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 Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy testing.

In 2021 our Year 3 and Year 5 students participated in the National Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) online. Students at St Mark's achieved at high levels with the percentage of students achieving at or above the National Minimum Benchmark above national percentages.

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	100	98	100	0%
Year 5	93	95	93	93	98	2%

Student Attendance

The student attendance in 2021 across the school is reported below for the two collection periods for all students in Years 1 to 6. There is a need to view the 2021 attendances knowing it was a Covid-19 year. A lower than usual attendance rate is reported as students contracting Covid-19 were required to be absent from school in line with advice provided by SA Health.

Semester One	
Year level	% attendance
Year 1	96.4
Year 2	95.3
Year 3	97.0
Year 4	95.8
Year 5	94.0
Year 6	96.5
School Total	95.8

Term Three	
Year level	% attendance
Year 1	96.2
Year 2	93.4
Year 3	96.6
Year 4	95.6
Year 5	95.3
Year 6	95.1
School Total	95.1

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. In a Covid-19 environment some modification to our attendance tracking system was made. Parents used a variety of mediums to inform the school if their child was absent due to learning at home or other circumstances.

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction with the School

In 2021 we 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.
- ✓ Student Representative Council hosted numerous events to promote the school's values. Initiatives included Graffiti Fridays focusing on values, National Reconciliation Week, Harmony Day and a Soup Drive for Service. Our Student Representative Council also hosted numerous lunchtime clubs which were well attended by students from Foundation to Year 6.
- ✓ Affirming feedback - The school regularly received affirming written and verbal comments from the parent community regarding the way the school continues to navigate Covid-19 from both a wellbeing perspective as well as the ongoing delivery of quality learning through challenging times - online learning as well as face to face learning. There are also many appreciative comments from families of students with either a diagnosed learning disability or behaviour that challenges. Parents are delighted and thankful for the level of care and nurture provided to their child by leadership, teachers and support staff.
- ✓ Community participation - Students, parents and friends of the school whole heartedly shared how delighted they are that the school has slowly recommenced welcoming families onsite in line with advice provided by SA Health and the Association of Independent Schools South Australia.

- ✓ A caring community - Our Religious Pastoral Support Worker oversaw our 'Caretnet' which provided valuable support and care for many families in need. She also provided programs of support for students to assist them to feel safe and respected in our school. Parents and extended family feedback consistently affirmed the care provided to families in times of difficulty.
- ✓ Graduation of students. Families with students graduating from St Mark's in 2021 continued to express their deep gratitude and thanks to our staff for the care, nurture and education provided to their children.

Key improvements to capital works included resurfacing of the school carpark, a new bike shelter and the reallocation of the old, new bike and scooter racks, repainting of playground, ground marking of new handball courts, obstacle course and chess board, significant rendering of outer walls of school building, roof painting and painting of all classroom walls, hallways, doors and skirtings as well as hall and specialist classrooms, installation of 60kw solar system, administration office refurbishment, replacement of student lockers, replacement of flooring in staffroom and student locker area, repairs to the bin shelter, 90 new student iPads, replacement of 25 staff laptops, 4 new teacher desks as well as the replacement of soft furnishings including couch, desks and chairs in the Wellbeing Room and Library.

School income broken down by funding source

Below is listed the income received by the school in 2021. 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 Funding:	\$2,757,214
State Funding:	\$741,620
Tuition Fees:	\$1,222,918
Other Income:	\$142,488
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$4,864,240</u>

Thank you for taking the time read our 2021 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.