

# 2021 Annual Report to The School Community



School Name: Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College (8022)



- All teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching ([www.vit.vic.edu.au](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au)).
- The school meets prescribed minimum standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the Education and Training Reform (ETR) Act 2006. This includes schools granted an exemption by the VRQA until 31 December 2021 from the minimum standards for student enrolment numbers and/or curriculum framework for school language program.
- The school is compliant with the Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

«PrincipalSignDescription»

- This 2021 Annual Report to the School Community has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council and will be publicly shared with the school community

«PresidentSignDescription»

## About Our School

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### School context

#### Our history

Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College (MFG) has a long and proud history. The original foundation stone was laid in 1856 when there were few other schools in Geelong. MFG is one of six girls-only state educational providers (since 1940) and the only girls-only provider outside of the metropolitan area. These two factors and the strong performance of the school over so many years means that in the local area MFG is recognized as something of an icon.

#### Our aim

MFG creates lifelong learners who live the MFG traits as positive members of their communities.

MFG learners are able to articulate a core set of values and ethical principles which they apply to their lives.

They are:

- Kind, compassionate and trustworthy
- Caring and respectful of others and themselves
- Knowledgeable about learning and self-aware
- Deep thinkers who are curious and creative
- Problem solvers
- Resilient, adaptable and able to learn from mistakes
- Hard-working, ambitious and confident
- Able to respect and celebrate difference and diversity
- Optimistic about the future
- Responsible and active local and global citizens
- Flexible collaborators, leaders and team members

#### Our location

MFG is located in Geelong within 500 meters from the city centre. The school site is on the edge of the city centre located close to the train station and central bus depot. Our school is used by the Victorian School of Languages, Greek School and a range of fitness and community groups. The school's proximity to the city centre; Geelong Library; Geelong Performing Arts Centre, Geelong Gallery; the Geelong Tech School, Deakin University, Kardinia Park and other cultural facilities for students and teachers to access which provide a wide range of student learning experiences.

MFG has 2 sites: the Main Campus, which consists of 2 buildings (the Merrya built in 1856 and the Embling Building which was built in the 1970s) and the Helen Fraser Campus across the road from the Main Campus. All students are primarily housed on the main site. The Helen Fraser was used for VCE students whilst the building refurbishments were being completed in 2019.

#### Our student and community demographics

Our 2020 enrolment was 609. We are a small city school with a community/family feel.

A proportion of girls are from the immediate locality, but a significant number come from outside the City of Greater Geelong, from areas such as Colac, Barwon Heads, Indented Heads, Lara, Inverleigh, Bannockburn, Werribee and Anakie. There are more than 50 feeder Primary schools from where the students have been drawn over the past 3 years.

Our student population incorporated a diverse range of cultures, socio-economic backgrounds and family blends.

The Student Family Occupation (SFO) was 0.4884 and SFOE were 0.4296. In 2020 were:

- 11 funded PSD students – one Level 1, six Level 2 and three Level 3 and one Level 5
- 16 EAL students
- 16 students with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds

#### Our staffing and leadership profile

- Principal class:3
- Leading Teachers: 4.92

- Learning Specialist 2.05
- Classroom Teachers Level 2: 30.64
- Classroom Teachers Level 1: 6.66
- Instrumental Music Teachers: 1.53
- Integration Teacher: 0.6
- Education Support Staff: 10.29
- Integration Aides: 2.29

We have a highly experienced teacher profile with experienced teachers (Classroom 2) and more than 50% of the teaching staff are part time.

#### Our curriculum and specialisations

Our school values a breadth of curriculum experience for students and the curriculum offerings reflect this at Years 7 & 8, with students gradually able to focus on particular areas of interest from Years 9-12. Our senior pathways include VCE and VCAL; with many of our senior students undertaking a School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT) or VET Course as part of their learning programs.

As a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Maths (STEAM) school we foster the development of creativity, problem solving and critical thinking through a range of subjects that focus on STEAM. Our school works closely with the Geelong Tech School, Biolab and Deakin University to align our learning with their programs, technologies and philosophies and to draw on their facilities and expertise to enhance our own programs and learning experiences.

MFG is an accredited Select Entry Advanced Learner Program (SEALP) provider, the only one in Geelong which is in an all-girls' setting (now TAASS – The Academy of Accredited Select Entry Schools). This program gives students the opportunity to be selected at Year 7 according to academic, talent and leadership potential to undertake an alternative curriculum for Years 7 to 9. This program includes an Outdoor Education, Community Outreach experiences and a focus on developing intellectual character.

Our school has a strong Music program and an Instrumental Music program where students learn an instrument and participate in ensembles and related performances. MFG is the home of the bands the Sweethearts and the Young Hearts. Our Sweethearts perform internationally in music festivals such as the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland and Summerfest in America.

Our School Garden is a key focus for learning at MFG. It is iconic of the permaculture principles of Earth Care, People Care and Fair Share. Our garden is used for learning in all subjects across the school as well as specialized sessions for Home Group and Environmental Technology classes. In addition, it is an inclusive space that we share with young people with disabilities (Dial A Lunch). It is also a great place to find a peaceful nook in which to relax.

Outdoor Education is a key component of our MFG learning programs. Our students are involved in outdoor pursuits within the local community and Victoria. Activities include: mountain bike riding, hiking, climbing, stand up paddle boarding, surfing, kayaking and skiing.

At MFG we offer a range of co-curricular sports programs, year level and subject area camps, National and International Trips (MFG Challenge). We offer Sister School experiences in Indonesia, Reunion Island and France where student exchanges and visitations occur annually.

All students in Years 7 – 12 participate in an Information Technology 1 to 1 program, making use of their own electronic devices for their learning. Students are encouraged to purchase the technology which best suits their needs for learning. The school outlines minimum specifications and recommended devices to support parents when making decisions.

## Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

The implementation of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes at MFG for 2021 focused on the Department of Education and Trainings' (DET) three key priorities: Learning, catch-up and extension priority, Happy, active and healthy kids priority and the Connected to schools priority. Due to the pandemic and the need to move to remote learning the implementation of the intended Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) for 2021 was modified to accommodate Home Based Learning (HBL).

Our HBL goals were for staff to manage the health and wellbeing of ourselves and our families so we could:

- Provide targeted learning opportunities that allowed students to focus on the key learning for their subject
- Support MFG families with the health and wellbeing of their children whilst in remote learning
- Provide on-site learning where necessary for high needs students

### Learning, catch-up and extension priority

With this priority we introduced the Tutor Learning Initiative which focussed on Year 8 & 9 Literacy and Numeracy in Years 7 -10. We also provided tutoring to VCE students in English, Maths, Health and Human Development, Biology and VCAL. The tutoring was most beneficial at the junior levels where significant gains were made particularly in students reading and writing skills.

The following outlines the progress made towards this KIS in 2021:

- o 100% Teachers analysed and used formative assessment data (VCE analysis, teacher detective analysis, etc.) to inform their pedagogy
- o Students requiring additional support in literacy and numeracy were identified and arrangements made for supporting their needs
- o Numeracy scaffolding was introduced to cater for learning catch up and extension
- o An Assessment Schedule for literacy, numeracy and teacher judgement data was established and implemented
- o At risk students participated in small group tutoring/mentoring sessions in literacy and numeracy and as a result their progress in literacy and numeracy improved
- o Teacher Learning Communities continued, even though there were no formal professional development plans (ie PDP). This meant that teachers continued to improve their teaching and learning tool kits by undertaking professional reading and identifying specific techniques teaching techniques through focused professional learning using Dylan Wiliam's formative assessment strategies and Harvard's visible learning strategies.

Teachers provided the following support for learning at remotely during Home Based Learning, they:

- Were on-line and available during timetabled class time - Students used their regular school timetable and accessed their learning via Compass
- Adapted learning and assessments to an online platform so students could access them, resources and teacher feedback
- Focused on the important and essential content/knowledge and skills
- Used the Lesson Plan feature in Compass to outline the lesson focus/intention/success criteria, access to resources etc, so parents and students were aware of what was required of them and could plan for the day
- Had at least 1 Face to Face lesson with their class per week via web-conferencing platform
- Clearly and regularly communicated expectations and protocols for the use of Web-Conferencing platforms
- Participated in ongoing professional learning opportunities to help them adapt and refine their teaching to suit remote learning

### Happy, active and healthy kids priority

The following outlines the progress made towards this KIS in 2021:

- o We documented and started implementation of our MFG Wellbeing Model with staff and students
- o We ran professional learning sessions throughout the year for staff on our MFG Wellbeing Model including a whole staff professional learning day
- o We ran parent evenings relating to aspects of our MFG Wellbeing Model
- o We documented many policies and processes for student engagement

- o We commenced documentation of the Year 7 Home Group Program
- o We started documenting the Year 10 , 11 and 12 Assembly Program
- o Teachers completed professional learning on and then implemented our MFG traits into their teaching programs and documented this in their curriculum

During Home Based Learning we:

- Provided on-site learning and care for a small group of students, many with high needs and the development of the necessary rosters, expectations and protocols. Staff volunteered to support this learning on-site.
- Checked in with staff and students and their families regularly to monitor their wellbeing and learning
- Developed and monitored the implementation of a COVID-Safety Plan to manage OH & S issues

Connected to schools priority

A key action was to plan for and implement school facilities and ground works that mean MFG is a great place to learn.

The major building and grounds works completed were:

- o The Merrya Building is completed and available for use by students and staff
- o A new playground is in place for students to use
- o The new under cover locker bay area is planned and ready to commence building
- o New waterproof lockers have been purchased ready to be installed in the school grounds
- o The minor works grant for identified CAR works were completed on the Helen Fraser site

During Home Based Learning we endeavoured to support our students' connection to school by:

- Having regular, calm and thoughtful communication with staff, students and families via updates using Compass and a variety of media
- Moving a wide range of school programs online including subject selection, staff meetings, student assemblies, SEALP interviews, School Council meetings, student groups etc.
- Following up students and families who were not engaging with our learning online
- Providing laptops and internet connection to students who did not have access to these at home
- Providing mental health support for students at risk
- Running learning programs at school for students with high learning or wellbeing needs

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## Achievement

In 2021, due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, there was a shift in focus to support the implementation of the remote and flexible learning program. Teachers built their capacity to work remotely, learning how to further use COMPASS to ensure that students had all the learning tasks and information required to address the goals set for their classes. Teachers enhanced the remote learning program with explicit teaching and collaborative tasks via web-conferencing platforms and the use of interactive tools such as google classroom and on-line videos. Feedback on assessments were readily available on Compass and made up part of the reporting process to parents. Teachers and support staff organized regular check ins with students and families, supporting the school community during a difficult period for families.

Establishing literacy classes in Years 8 & 9 were a focus to assist with students who required extra assistance. Our MFG focus on improving number skills using our Scaffolding Maths in the Middle Years Program also continued, albeit challenging without hands on materials when the students were working from home. VCE and VCAL teachers maintained the focus on high expectations for all students, ensuring that SACs and SATs and MFG Traits continued throughout remote learning. Students were supported with regular communication and feedback.

Our work documenting and refining our curriculum ensured that teachers were able to provide lessons consistent with our MFG teaching and Learning Model. Teacher teams collaborated to focus on key concepts, essential knowledge and skills and learning programs.

Our Teacher Learning Communities (TLCs) professional learning model was further refined to focus on Formative Assessment and Visible Learning Strategies. This allowed teachers to share best practice with each other and develop new practices across learning areas and within learning area teams.

Reading

Year 9 students achieved 20% High Growth for Reading in 2020. In addition, 60% achieved the expected growth.

Therefore, even with the disruptions of Home Based Learning 80% of Year 9 students performed well with their reading.

#### Writing

Year 9 students achieved 16% High Growth for Writing in 2021 and 62% of Year 9 students achieved the expected growth. Therefore, despite the disruptions of Home Based Learning 80% of students performed well.

The introduction of a Literacy Specialist in 2020 has meant that we have much more accurate data on the reading, writing and spelling levels of our Year 7 students as they come into our school. This data, which indicates that a significant proportion are not at the expected level, has required us to reflect on our English programs to incorporate more explicit teaching of these skills and have a great focus on differentiation. The development of programs, upskilling of teachers and resourcing of this will be on-going work for the next five years. Despite the interruptions to learning, there has been high growth in the overall literacy levels of students who attended these literacy classes regularly. In 2022, we have introduced two literacy classes at Year 8 and two at Year 9 to provide additional support to the low level literacy students.

#### Numeracy

Year 9 students achieved 20% High Growth for Number in Maths in 2020 and a total of 55% of Year 9 students achieved the expected growth at Year 9 despite disruptions due to Home Based Learning.

While as a school we have made considerable growth in our students with numeracy in 2021 we had 48% of our Year 7 cohort come to MFG below the expected standard in Number. This is a common pattern and it is difficult to work closely with a few Primary Schools to address this issue because we attract students from over 50 feeder schools. For this reason in 2019 we introduced The MFG Scaffolding Middle Years Numeracy Program which is aimed at improving the number skills of our students. It appears that the Scaffolding Maths in the Middle Years Program is having a positive impact on our students' Number skills. We will continue to refine and further embed this program into our Year 7-10 Mathematics classes.

#### VCE

In 2021, the MFG VCE median was 29, which is at the target and the mean score was 29.2 which is above the mean for similar schools and the State Average. We will continue to require VCE teachers to analyse their students' performance data and to develop improvement action plans each year. However, we will continue to also feedback these data reflections to the Learning Areas and Leadership Teams to implement adjustments in Years 7-11 curriculum and programs to support the improvement of VCE results and the development of essential skills over 5-6 period. For example, as a result of these reflections we introduced examinations to Year 10 in 2016 and have identified the need to explicitly teach student skills. The implementation of a study skills program will take place over 2022 as will the introduction of a more formal student exam and performance data analysis process for Year 10 and VCE Unit 1-2 teachers.

#### PSD

All students in our PSD program set learning, social and personal goals in their Individual Learning Plans. At times, ILPs needed to be modified due to HBL. However, we still met our goal of meeting with each student and their parent/carer for student support group meetings at least once a term. With the support of the parents/carers, teachers and support staff the students achieved their goals. When at school, students were able to access our new 'Hub' and the adjoining sensory garden which was developed by our VCAL students in consultation with the PSD students. This space is well utilised by a range of funded and non-funded students. In addition, non-funded ASD students were supported by the Occupational Therapist who we employed mid-2020. This made a significant difference to the transition of ASD students from Year 6 into Year 7 in 2021.

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## Engagement

In the second year of the pandemic engaging the students in their learning became more challenging. Once again, COVID affected our students' ability to feel connected and engaged at school. Many of our culturally special days (Eg: MADD Day) and assemblies were unfortunately cancelled. Students' scores on the Students Attitudes to School Survey "I am proud to be a student at this school" was an average of 42%. Our Year 7 and Year 12 students felt the most connected, which was where we aimed our efforts in 2021. Our Year 9 students disengaged the most during Home Based Learning (HBL) despite our best efforts to keep them engaged with school and learning. Our parents indicated that 89% were satisfied with our approach to flexible and remote learning, stating that they

understood what was expected of their child each day and were able to contact teachers if they needed.

In 2021 students' positive endorsement of "I am confident in my learning" on the Attitude to School Survey reduced to an average of 47%. After two years of COVID our students' overall learning confidence had declined. However, a trend that we notice is that our students' confidence in learning increases as they move from Year 7 through to Year 12. Our Year 12 students had a positive endorsement of 62%. This has been a trend over time, so as a school we build our students' learning confidence and we do this better when our students are at school, not at home learning. However, in 2021 the students' confidence most affected was the Year 8 and 9 students. They will be year levels that we focus on in 2022 by focussing our MYLANS and TLI in these year levels. In addition, we will introduce a study skills/revision program at Year 10. We also made some changes to the structure of the Homegroup program in term 4 to allow more time for 7-9 students to spend with a significant teacher.

The MFG absence rate in 2021 was 21.4, however, with HBL this data may not accurately represent the absences for 2021. The average attendance rate for all year levels was 89.5 percent. As a school we continue to focus on following up absences and creating a culture of students wanting to come to school. 76% of students who completed the 2021 Attitudes to School survey registered a positive attitude to attending school, which is lower than usual. In 2022, we will re-establish attendance norms and our MFG culture of attendance at school as being important.

Our teachers and staff took time to reach out to and follow up students and families who needed extra support (where possible) in the form of counselling or referral, physical support with meals and ICT equipment and monetary assistance.

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## Wellbeing

We developed and started to implement our MFG Wellbeing Model which is based on the PERMAH Model. Full implementation of this initiative takes time and was hindered by the need for remote learning and then taking time to reconnect back into school.

Overall, our well-being survey data was lower in 2021 than in previous years, as it was across the State of Victoria.

### Resilience

Students' (in Years 10-12) positive endorsement on the Student Attitude to School Survey "I believe I am tough when it comes to managing challenges" on the resilience scale reduced to an average of 49%. Our MFG wellbeing model will continue to be implemented in 2022 with a focus of wellbeing in Year Level Assemblies and on special days for assisting students to understand resilience and their ability to manage challenges in life by have a repertoire of specific strategies that can draw on. In addition, through their 'teacher detective' work, teachers are considering student wellbeing in their curriculum planning and applying their understandings of our MFG Wellbeing Model into their classrooms. For students and families who require additional support they will be referred to our Mental Health Practitioner, our school nurse, our MFG Advocacy Program and or to local community specialists.

### Connection to school

The second year of COVID really affected our students' mental health. We ran a variety of well-being programs when students were in HBL such as on-line activities such as ATSI Group meetings, yoga, Zumba, counselling, SSGs, House meetings, Home group etc. Once we could return to school, where COVID-19 restrictions permitted, we held lunch time clubs, wellbeing assemblies, home group and respectful relationship programs. We also ran parent evenings to promote our Wellbeing Model and to support parents with young people with mental health concerns.

Topics included "Introduction to headspace" and "Mindset and Maths" This was reinforced through regular parent and student updates with relevant information for them to read or access.

While parents feel that MFG manage bullying well, there was a clear indication in the student survey that the students felt that as a school we could be doing more to arm them with strategies to deal with bullying, which mostly occurs outside of school. Part of our Wellbeing Model is managing our own emotions and developing positive relationships, which form a significant part of our pastoral program and Health and Physical Education curriculum. We will re-focus efforts on supporting our students to have more strategies to manage their own reactions to bullying, particularly via social media. In addition, in 2022 we will investigate what the students perceive will be helpful in supporting them to do this.

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## Finance performance and position

The 2021 Operating surplus is a result of staffing deficit being lower than budgeted. We budgeted \$282,000 staffing deficit and obtained \$68,349 Workforce Bridging support to go towards this deficit. Additional revenue that was not budgeted for included COVID-19 cleaning funds, short term leave reimbursement, Excess Transition Support and Bridging the digital divide fund. A total of \$163,325 was received.

Professional Development expenses were low in 2020 due to COVID. Casual Salaries were higher than budgeted and will probably continue to rise in 2022x.

Utilities were lower than expected due to the school being closed.

Extraordinary Miscellaneous revenue and expenses were the result of MFG being the coordinator school for the local secondary VET bus program, regional bus coordination and VASSP coordinator school.

Equity cash funding, MYLNS, Jobs, Skills & Pathways Coordination & Career Education Funding (CEF) received was utilised to employ centrally paid staff in accordance with the DET guidelines.

We received grants for shade sales, VCE Collaboration Fund & Batforce, which will be carried over 2nd works completed in 2021

The MFG Conveyance claim was a substantial revenue and expense because most students who travel are eligible.

#### Surplus Funds

Some programs were carried over to 2022 due to not being able to be expended due to COVID lock downs. These include Respectful Relationships, Student Excellence, VCE revision lecture funds and equity projects.

We have surplus funds carried into 2022 for building and grounds projects including maintenance, new lockers (this is an ongoing project to eventually replace all lockers), outdoor locker solutions, furniture for classrooms (this is an ongoing project to eventually replace all classroom furniture), website revamp, shade sails for canteen and blinds.

**For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at**  
<https://www.mfgsc.vic.edu.au/>