

Gilson College

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2020**



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SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Gilson College as a community strives to be the premier location for quality Christian education in the western and northern suburbs of Melbourne. Our purpose statement indicates that we aim “through excellence in education to develop people of integrity and Christian character.” This has been the goal and primary endeavour of the College founders, leaders and community for over 30 years. From humble beginnings the College has grown to an enrolment, as of 2020, of around 1300 students on two campuses and more than 110 teaching staff. Each member of the staff and the wider College community works together to further the stated purpose of Gilson College – through excellence in education, to develop people of integrity and Christian character.

Due to Covid there are a number of standard elements that are missing from this report. Firstly, the Victorian Government’s cancellation of NAPLAN has meant that there is no data on which to report. Secondly, our ability to collect data for our annual improvement survey was restricted and so this area is not included in this report. Thirdly, our attendance data although collected, is somewhat meaningless due to the remote learning and days where work was given, monitored and assessed, but no zoom time was organised to help manage ‘screen fatigue.’

CHILD SAFE SCHOOL

Gilson College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all our students. It has a zero-tolerance for child abuse, and has procedures and protocols in place to protect children, support those at risk and respond to incidents or allegations of all forms of child abuse. These procedures are outlined in the Duty of Care, Child Protection and Child Code of Conduct Policies. All are available on the school website.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT



This report covers the 2020 school year and as we look back on it there is no doubt that this will be a year that is well remembered by many. In fact, we are now hearing and using the phrases ‘before Covid’ and ‘since Covid’ which indicates it has certainly been a pivotal year. Despite this we are strengthened by the many promises that are found in the scriptures, such as Joshua 1:9 which states: Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

As a team we have worked to do our best under trying circumstances and we recognise that there are many people on the team and this includes obviously our teachers, but also parents, and the significant number of non-teaching staff (bus drivers, IT, aides, admin / office, uniform, canteen and grounds / maintenance). While we have been challenged, we have all grown as we’ve learned to cope with change.

During the remote learning phase of this year there were many adjustments that had to be made by all. Our teachers had to learn the intricacies of delivering lessons online, while our students had to remain motivated while sitting in front of a screen. While the physical separation can ostensibly be justified, the resultant lack of authentic social interaction has taken its toll on our society in general and, while our

school community has not been immune from this, I am humbled by the spirit of resilience that I have witnessed.

On the Taylors Hill campus during lockdown, we completed our Year 7/8 complex and I know that the junior secondary students were delighted to be back on campus and enjoying a new facility. Also, the construction of the amphitheatre was a pleasant surprise for all our students to see the area of land behind the Eco-Science centre transformed. Finally, on infrastructure our kindergarten centre has been completed and will open in in 2021. This will be a great extension to the existing programmes and it will be a delight to have three- and four-year-olds on the campus.

Our Mernda Campus continues to grow and has around 240 students. This will be our second cohort of Year 12 students to graduate and as our campus continues to develop, we are excited by the increased opportunities that are available.

In 2020 we had six graduates on our Mernda campus with Aya Cheikh Hussein (90.25) being the recipient of the dux award. On the Taylors Hill campus Olivia Craus (97.20) received the dux award from a group of 83 graduates, and we wish all of our graduates God's blessing as they move into new roles in our society. We know that they will make a positive impact and lead out with integrity, compassion and diligence.

With regard to the College's finances, I would like to thank our families for their faithful commitment in honouring their responsibilities. For the first time in Gilson College's history, we offered a 10% reduction in all fees across the board and the fee increase from 2020 to 2021 is zero. We have done this due to the extenuating circumstances that we have all endured and I thank the campus bursars for their diligent work to maintain the College's finances in a positive and sustainable position.

At the close of 2020 we unfortunately farewelled a number of staff and we wish to acknowledge these people and declare our appreciation for their service. On the Taylors Hill campus we said goodbye to:

- Raelene Delvin – moving from Taylors Hill to Mernda
- Kathleen Bourjali – moving from Taylors Hill to Mernda
- Jordan Hutchinson – moving to a sister school in Victoria
- Zachary Redman - moving to a sister school interstate (NSW)
- Justin Littlewood - moving to a sister school interstate (Qld)
- Sarah Harders - moving to a sister school interstate (Qld)
- Shalyce Howard – moving to a sister school interstate (NSW)



Damon Lawty – moving to a sister school interstate (NSW)
Maree Lawty – moving to a sister school interstate (NSW)
Megan Gubb – finished contract and we thank her for her good work
Rebekah Robinson – other employment
Shannon Holmes – one year leave
Andrea Claydon – retirement
Krystal Fauatea – undertaking further study
Brayden Rath – transfer from chaplaincy to Mildura
Katie Woodward – undertaking further study
Anna Hibbins – moving interstate (NSW)

On the Mernda campus we have said farewell to:

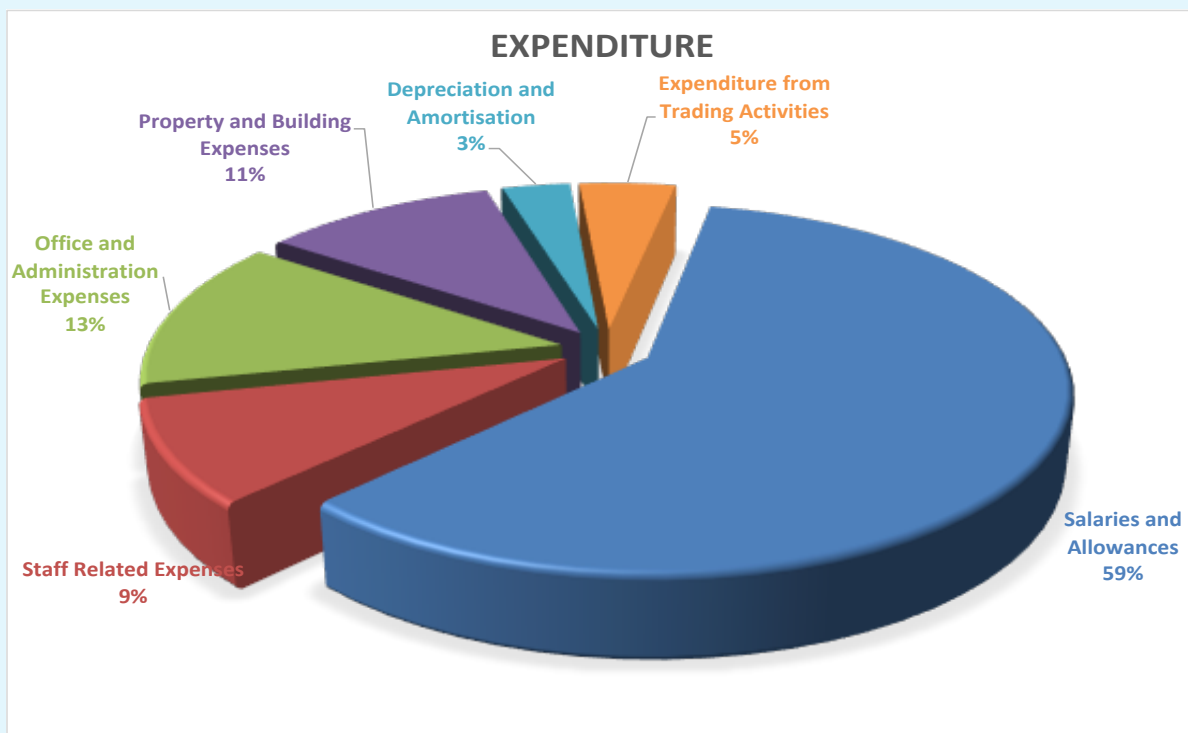
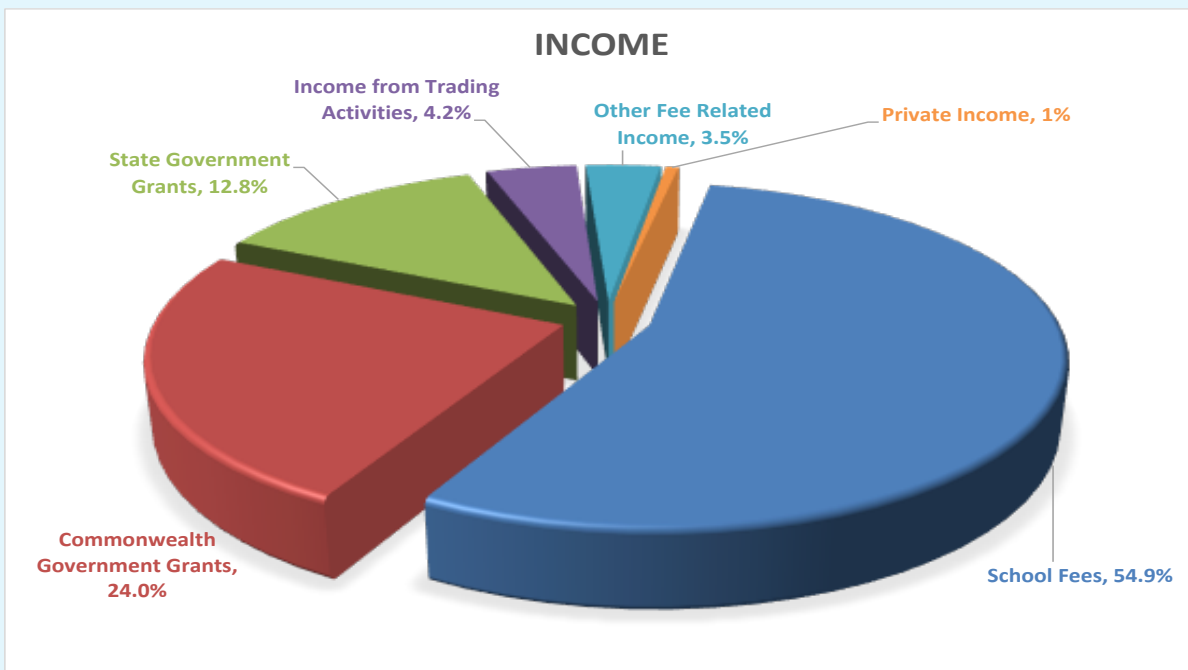
Helen Jakupec – moving to be with her parents in Queensland
Conrad McPhee – moving to a sister school interstate (NSW)
Marcia Christian – retirement
Gina Littlewood – moving to a sister school interstate (Qld)
Bridget Maimbo – other employment

Finally, we acknowledge the faithful service of our colleague and friend - Michelle Jervis who sadly passed away during 2020. The loss is painful and more so for family and loved ones. It is at difficult times like this that we not only offer our condolences to one another but also look forward to the great hope we have in a future resurrection. We have been promised that there will be a place where there is 'no more death' and 'no more crying' and where 'God will wipe away all our tears' (Rev 21:4). In the meantime, we pray that you will seek the support of friends, family and the Father as we face an uncertain future together. We look forward to 2021 and making it an inspiring year.

Mark B Vodéll, Principal

FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial health of Gilson College continues to grow positively, and this is due to efficient management of the College finances and God's blessings. While still offering quality Christian Education the College maintains its goals of minimising its expenditure while maintaining its income. For 2020, the financial benchmarks and budgetary guidelines were met for accounts payable, accounts receivable.



Despite the pandemic challenges of 2020, a significant number of parents continued to support the College through timely payments of their fees. To assist with this, the College offered a 10% discount on all fees. At 54.9%, school fees and other income sources rose approximately 1.9% from 2019.

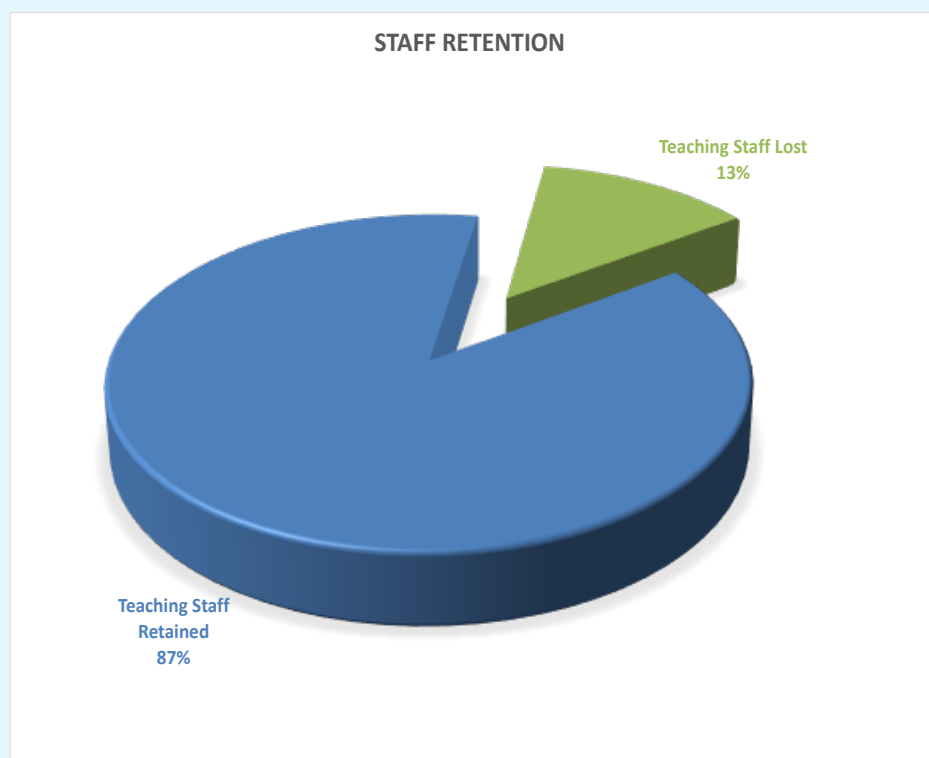
The College significant expense, as always, is paying for staff, with salaries, allowances and staff-related expenses rose to 68%. In contrast, the other major expense, property and building expenses, remained at 11%.

SECTION 2 - PROFESSIONAL FOCUS

STAFF RETENTION

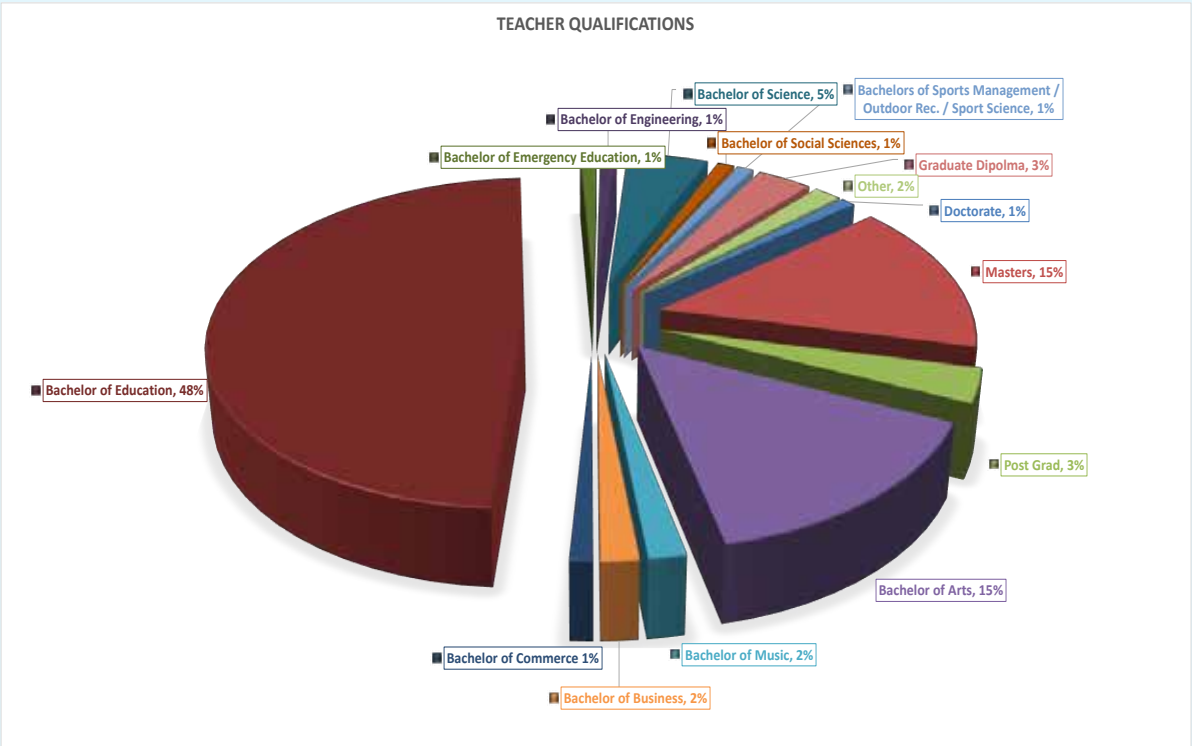
At the end of 2020, 11 staff left the College (both campuses included), out of a total of 110 teaching staff. This provides a retention rate of 87.2%, which indicates that the rate has been reasonably consistent over the last few years.

The most common reasons for leaving the College in 2020: moving to our sister schools, moving interstate, heading into further studies, making a career change and starting a family.



STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

The staff at Gilson College are highly qualified professionals, with the vast majority having earned a university degree, and many having multiple other professional qualifications. The graph below gives a percentage of all the acquired qualifications of the teaching staff at the College. Staff are encouraged to continue their professional learning with incentives offered and time within the program available for further study.



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Primary Teaching and Learning

Smart Spelling: We have embedded Smart Spelling into our primary school from Prep to Year 6. L&T team continues to mentor and coach teachers to ensure that this is being done accurately and is following the SMART SPELLING APPROACH.

Math Pathways: in 2020 we continued to use Paul Goossens as a coach to help support the program. We have seen wonderful results due to this, with 97% of students achieving over 1.3 years growth in one year of learning.

EY Mathematics and IXL: In 2020 we saw the implementation of the MOI assessment to help drive teachers planning and pedagogy. We have seen a significant improvement in student’s academic results and teacher capacity as the MOI allows us to pin point every student’s individual learning needs. This was further supported by the introduction of IXL mathematics program which helped to provide more data to drive planning as well as scaffold students learning needs though targeted intervention.

Literacy Circles/Daily Five/Reciprocal Reading: We continue to embed, develop and enhance Literacy Circles, Daily Five and Reciprocal reading to support students to develop better reading comprehension as they progress from Foundation to Year Six. The teachers continue to be supported in building their capacity in effectively delivering these programs to support students learning through our Literacy and numeracy coach. In 2020 we embedded the CAFÉ model to support and extend the students in year 2.

PLCs: In 2020 we refined our implementing of PLC (professional learning communities) in the primary school through the use of the PLC rubric. This allowed teachers to have more voice in driving their

Professional development as well as using students data to implement change to improve academic results. PAT testing at the end of 2020 showed a significant decline in the number of students on Staircase 1, 2 and 3 as we were meeting students' needs and moving them accordingly. In we will continue to develop our level leaders to be able to effectively lead their teams and to improve student wellbeing, spirituality and academic results.

Peer Observations: In 2020 we continued providing release for teachers to observe another teacher in practise. We also implemented a peer observation recording sheet to help provide feedback and also teachers reflection. This has helped develop staffs capacity.

LLI: in 2020 we have launched the Levelled Literacy Intervention program. This has replaced Reading Recovery as the program allows the teacher to work with up to 5 students at a time which means we can provide extensive intervention to students throughout the year. The program also caters from students in Foundation to year 10. Already we saw a significant improvement in the students Running Record level and comprehension with all students who went on the intervention program reaching benchmark.

7 Steps of writing: This was implemented in 2020 to help provide a whole school framework and focus in writing. This has been adopted well by students and teachers. Already we have seen students more engaged and excited to write. We will continue to implement and develop teacher's capacity in 2021.

Staff Capacity: We have continued to make developing staff capacity a huge priority. This has been enhanced by peer observations, literacy and numeracy coaching, action research as well as appointing an ESO coach.

Secondary Teaching and Learning

SEQTA: Dr Tim Pope, has continued to assist with staff development and training around the use of SEQTA. Staff have been supported with improving and improving the development of online lessons to support the students during the extended lock down periods. There has also been support and training provided around the use of the marks book to provide opportunities for regular student feedback based on assessments. Dr Tim Pope, is encouraging staff to utilise this platform for ongoing feedback as a part of a goal to have teachers continuously reporting student growth and progress.

Online Learning: In 2020 with the lockdowns caused by COVID, opportunities and support were provided to staff to further develop their programs and enrich lessons suitable for online learning. Learning and assessment tasks were supported by additional resources such as Education Perfect. While Education Perfect is new to some staff, training and support were also supplied by the company.

EBO – Heads of Department have recognised the need for regular and structured classroom observations are an important part of developing teacher capacity based on data that is collected through observation. Plans were being put into place using Lara Meyer and the Evidence Based Observation model to train and develop these skills in the Heads of Department. These plans have had to be put on hold for 2020, but will be implemented as lockdowns are lifted and travel opportunities between New Zealand and Australia are eased.

NCCD – collecting data to meet student's needs has been a challenge in the secondary school. This is a result of going from one main teacher in the primary classroom, to multiple teachers in the second-

ary school. Following on from the work that Ms Lee Menzies in 2019, together with teachers, who expressed ideas on how they would see things working, we have put into place a system, that not only supports teachers with their record keeping, it is also ensuring that students are supported. Through this system we know will have adequate ongoing records of the support

Berry Street Model – towards the end of 2019, Raelene Delvin, Andrea Farquharson and Bronwyn Cowled attended a student well-being professional development program. One of the guest speakers was Tom Brunzell, who spoke of strategies for teaching and learning. The strategies enables

teachers to increase student engagement of students with complex, unmet learning needs and ways to improve student's self-regulation, relationships, well-being, growth and academic achievement. With the Positive Behaviour 4 Life program that we are already engaged in, this was seen as another tool assist teachers understand ways to meet the diverse needs of all students in their class. During 2020, There was a team of interested staff from the primary and secondary school who attended the 4-day training program, with a view to implementing training and strategies for teachers to implement in their planning to be implemented into classrooms.

Maths Pathways: in 2020 the Secondary School has continued with implementing the Maths Pathways program. This program, has enabled students to continue with seamless Maths learning during the COVID lockdowns, as the program is all online based. We have seen some excellent growth in students with average growth rate for students of 1.3 years per year of Maths. Teachers have been supported by Janine Shipard the Maths Pathways Coach with regular training sessions. These sessions have been around key improvements to the program and the tools being developed as a part of Maths Pathway that are available to teachers to support each student's growth in their maths learning.



SECTION 3 – STUDENT FOCUS

PRIMARY – TAYLORS HILL

Our Primary school is a fun and engaging learning environment where students are encouraged to explore, think, grow, reflect, learn and serve. It is a place where Christian Values are taught and promoted through learning experiences in our varied programs. The Adventist Identity of our school is a unique part of our ethos that promotes our students to develop a loving relationship with Jesus.

In 2020 how schools operate in Australia and specifically Victoria changed significantly to teaching remotely online and on campus and a mixture of the two. This was a significant year of learning for every community member, students, staff, parents as we came together to ensure that learning continued and that our values, ethos and identity as a Christian school continued in this new learning platforms.

Our year commenced with a dedication Chapel committing our work and year to God inviting him into our school. Appropriately our focus bible text for the year was "Be strong and Courageous" Joshua 1:9 reminding us that God is with us wherever we go. Our Chaplaincy team engaged in a year of online chapels that really engaged students and families at home around the themes of heroes from the Bible. Their support of families, students and staff through this period was exceptional as they supported in lots of different ways - delivering resources to parents at home, calling families to check in and bringing staff a hot drink on Fridays, care packs for teacher and stopping to see how everyone was going, there were lots of big and little ways they connected and showed care during this challenging year. We saw our faith put to test in 2020 and the resilience of Christ demonstrated by our families who maintained their faithful support during the school year.

PB4L (Positive Behaviour for Learning) is the framework we use to support our students wellbeing, learning and development. Our focus on 3Rs Respect, Responsibility and Resilience underpin teaching our students expectations by these 3 value pillars. In 2020 we commenced developing some whole school Tier 1 strategies to further deepen our work with PB4L by introducing the Berry Street Education Model with an introduction from Berry Street School Director of Education Tom Brunzell. We also started the learning around Student Voice. Continued implementation was put on hold to focus on shifting gears to remote learning, however the learning continued for those who will implement these approaches in 2021. In 2020 our wellbeing needs were significant as we saw our Wellbeing team provide ongoing support to families, students and staff in many ways throughout the year - there was substantial zoom and phone support when we could not connect face to face. We continued to try to keep things 'normal' for students by continuing with our regular routines of values certificates and Gotcha cards", acknowledging positive behaviours. Online learning brought other challenges around safe use of technology and reteaching of the expectations in this area by all staff. Our value of resilience was able to be developed during 2020.





Our teachers continued to look at data and worked together strategically in year level teams to weekly weekly according to the data needs of students. As part of our Professional learning Community all teachers are engaged in Evidence Based Observations online and in class, because reflective practice continues to be important to supporting and developing teacher capacity and effective teaching practices. In 2020 all Primary teachers were involved in using the ASV Appraisal process. Our teachers continue to be engaged in ongoing reflective conversation and practice within teams and across the Primary school around areas that are highlighted through our data and we have continued to grow leadership capacity across the school with a focus on our Level leaders. Our ESO are also part of a process of continued learning through an appraisal process and regular professional learning opportunities. In 2020 we also commenced coaching observations with our ESO teams to support growth in how they work with students as well as introduced reading conferences which supported students during online learning. In 2021 we hope to have a year where our plans can be fully reactivated and put into place - COVID free.

KS:CPC Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum providing students with an understanding of their rights but equipping them with a language and a voice to report behaviours that are unacceptable continued to be implemented in 2020. The development of lunch time clubs continued in order to provide a structured place for students to engage in a variety of activities (art, sport, games, constructions etc). In 2020 we could not run clubs however in 2021 we plan to refine and focus our clubs on Tier 2 supports for PB4L - focusing on specific activities to target those students for whom the clubs were designed.

Our learning focus for academic subjects in 2020 were to further develop consistent approaches in all areas - however we refocused on making learning online relevant and have added depth. Our Year 5 and 6 teachers continued implementing and refining the Maths pathways program and Teachers continue to sustain and develop Visible thinking and formative assessment practices that have been long embedded within the habits of teacher pedagogy online as well. The 2020 data showed that there has been growth in learning and our reading results improved. The introduction and implementation of the LLI program (Level Literacy Intervention) data also demonstrated substantial growth for all learners in spite of the year of disrupted learning. In 2021, as per our 2019 data we will continue to focus on Writing using the Seven Steps in English as well as consolidate our existing practices developing the capacity of all teaching staff.

The Gilson Primary students display exemplary attitudes and engagement in school life online including those at school, supported by a caring and committed teaching team. Each year we are amazed by the individual growth in all areas of their school however this year really demonstrated the Resilience of our school community and their commitment to quality learning.

What were the highlights of the year and what were the major events throughout the year:

- Our amazing online learning platforms and the quality and variety of work prepared, collected and presented by teachers and students on google classrooms.
- The wonderful videos and photos of students learning at home.
- The daily work schedules created by teachers on google classroom
- The amazing use of Zoom to teach remotely, meet remotely, develop remotely.
- The wellbeing activities provided weekly for families at home and kids learning at school.
- The way our teams worked together to prepare over 500 learning from home packs and deliver them to each family in our school.
- The 650 + phones calls made - one to each family to check in and the numerous others that followed.
- The amazing families and how they supported us so substantially.
- The gratitude shown by our community.
- The Live more Project - staff wellbeing focus in Term 3.
- The wonderful online chapels and assemblies - the way those leading in these areas provide dynamic and uplifting weekly experiences for students.



- Our Awards Night - Pre-recorded program! Simply amazing
- Our reimagined Year 6 celebration afternoon tea and parents viewed it live streamed.
- The wonderful Music and PE videos of families and students joining in together at home.
- The substantial 1:1 support delivered online by our Learning Support team
- Fun Day - Pizza/Party day with teachers and students to end the academic year.
- The Fun Friday activities in Term 2 and 3
- The Welcome BACK to school in Term 4!! Ending the year together with our students.
- Our final Primary Assembly together class by class.
- The incredible resilience, stamina and positivity displayed by our staff every step of the way.



In 2020 we further to built upon our practices and continue to refine what we do.

- Change to online learning in an effective way - this brought several rethinks to how we do things effectively but on line.
- We continued to develop SPA data platform for teachers to triangulate standardise teacher data
- We introduced the Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI) Program and Reading conferences with our ESO,
- Introducing ESO observation and feedback as part of their appraisal processes and refined their roles.
- Started Berry street Education model, started Student Voice (Just introductions)



It was a year of constant small but substantial changes to how we learn and lead during a pandemic.

We were pleased to congratulate our Learning Support Coordinator: Mrs Natalie Thomas who has completed her Masters in Learning Support. Our current Year 5 Teacher Mr Alagappan

was accepted into the PhD program. Mrs Delvin participated in one Cyclic Review remotely via zoom as part of the Quality Adventist School Framework and is a member of the QASF review Team in 2021. Students' reading results improved, Students were amazing learning online - the majority remaining focused and engaged.

SECONDARY - TAYLORS HILL

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Here at Gilson College, we strive in the Secondary school, for excellence in all aspects of our value-based school and endeavour to provide a learning environment that encourages all students, no matter their ability, to find their God-given place within the school community, and to thrive as a unique individuals. Excellent performance is an expectation and there is a constant focus on building greater engagement within the school by the wider community – school leadership, staff, students, parents, alumni and friends. We have a priority on recognising and celebrating accomplishment, building connections and relationship and ensuring that every student has the opportunity to see the face of Jesus.

We aim to teach students, and not subjects. Therefore, value is heavily placed on knowing our students by name and helping them develop their character so that they may learn more about who they are as individual young adults according to the masterplan which is in the fine print of God's design for their lives. As educators, our focus is intentionally embedded within the Mission Statement which states that through excellence in education it is our desire to develop people of integrity and Christian character. The school vision statement also aligns with our mission in that; we nurture our [scholars] today, assist our [scholars] in becoming active learners for the future, and train our [scholars] in developing a fine character for life. Gilson College is an exciting learning hub that provides the rich soil for our staff and students to learn, to grow, to connect with one another, and to become the best version of ourselves; as we recognise that none of us – adult or child – ever stop learning.





SCHOOL CONTEXT

Gilson College is an open school with a multicultural, socially diverse and geographically dispersed student population. Gilson provides equal opportunity for all students to achieve excellence in academic, cultural, sporting, civic, leadership and social endeavours, in an inclusive environment that supports learning, teaching, service, friendship and spiritual connection. Since 1988, Gilson's culture has been characterised by a pursuit of all round high achievement, a focus on tertiary preparation, diversity in student programs and high-quality outcomes. Gilson College (Taylors Hill campus) is uniquely positioned as the only Seventh-day Adventist School within the Western Suburbs of Melbourne. Although our interview process is rigorous and follows a systematic school-based selection process, entry into the College is open, and not selective. Gilson's important community organisations include:

- Gilson College School Council
- GCCC (Church)
- The P&F Association and its sub-committees
- The Gilson College Alumni, and
- MyMission

It is also important to acknowledge that here at Gilson College, we deeply value the relationship we have built with Avondale College University (NSW) and as such, our Year 11 students annually visit the institute to attend Open Days and have the opportunity to consider the institute as a possible pathway to further their tertiary education. It was however, unfortunate that due to remote learning during 2020 that, for the first time, our students were unable to participate in this program.

2020 ACADEMIC SCHOOL YEAR

Year 7-8 - We began the year with four full classes of Year 7 students and our new students (38% of our cohort) were welcomed with an abundance of excitement and anticipation. Our Year 7 team of

teachers were just as exuberant with the prospect of working collaboratively within the walls of the newly completed 7&8 building. While the Year 7 students just managed to sneak in their Year 7 adventure camp to Howqua, our Year 8 students completed a 4 day back-to-base hiking expedition. This Year 8 camp was designed to prepare them well for the gruelling Year 9 Learning4Life program - which was yet to come.

Year 9-11 – Also against the backdrop of nature, our Year 9 students experienced their therapeutic immersion into team-building amongst the rustic landscape of the great outdoors. It was only a matter of a few days between being locked down by restrictions and being permitted to savour the final days of freedom so that they could experience the adventure playground that is provided by the diversity of the Victorian landscape. Sadly though, our Year 10 cohort was not so lucky. Their Outdoor Education program was postponed, then cancelled, and finally, shelved until 2021. In the same vein, our Year 11 students forfeited their much awaited trip to Avondale College University and Queensland.

Year 12 VCE Results - At the other end of the College, it is important that we congratulate the achievements of our senior graduates. Our results for 2020 were just as impressive despite all the challenges 2020 held, the graduating class excelled across the board and achieved great success which opened the door to a wide range of opportunities in the next stages of their lives. During the course of the year, we saw our students develop new levels of independence and an overwhelming commitment to striving for personal bests, often overcoming isolation and dislocation, illness, learning difficulties or personal hardships. Gilson College students were again, congratulated on their perseverance and resilience, and a little while later, we continue to look on with a sense of anticipation as our graduates of 2020 continue to create positive change in their lives beyond Gilson. The Year 12 VCE Class of 2020 achieved excellent academic results:

- 2% of ATARs scored above 95 (in the top 5% of the state)





- 5.7% of ATARs scored above 90 (in the top 10% of the state)
- Almost a third of all ATARs were above 80 (in the top 20% of the state)
- 52.82% of ATARs were 70 and above (in the top 30% of the state)
- 75.53% of ATARs were 60 and above (in the top 40% of the state)
- The Gilson College median ATAR is 63.45
- 100% of our students have completed their VCE certificates
- 100% of our VCAL students completed their VCAL certificates

We were very pleased to announce Olivia Craus as Gilson's top VCE student for 2020 with an ATAR of 97.2. As the Dux of 2019, we also congratulated Blake Preusker for scoring a 99.55 ATAR result. We acknowledged both Olivia and Blake's achievements at our end of year celebrations where we took this opportunity to applaud their outstanding efforts. The overall results reflect the commitment and diligence of all our students (VCE and VCAL) over many years at Gilson College, and especially throughout the challenges of this year. In partnership with our parents, our sincere thanks must always go to our outstanding team of teaching and professional staff for their expertise, dedication and support of our students, not just at the Year 12 level, but throughout each student's entire Gilson journey. Throughout the year we also acknowledged the 24 students who have been at Gilson College right from Prep to Year 12 and recognised the achievements of Mr. Talonga Pita who received the honorary 2020 Secondary Dedication award. Again, we took this opportunity at Graduation to celebrate with gratitude the enduring partnerships we have sustained here at Gilson College between our valued parents, students and teachers.

We look to the future of all our students - no matter how our young people choose to impact others once they leave our College - whether it be through following the University, TAFE pathways; whether they wish to pursue a degree, diploma, embark upon an apprenticeship, or join the workforce; we know that our staff and parents are committed to enabling each student to achieve their very best. As much of 2020 was taught remotely, we remained committed to providing a robust program for all students with a diverse range of opportunities which allow our students to experience success in their individual areas of strength and interest. In addition to our school camps and excursions, our students

seized the opportunities to participate in community service projects such as volunteering for the Weet Bix Tri and participating in The Duke of Edinburgh Award. We are proud of all of our students who embraced opportunities and extended themselves, in spite of what was happening in the world around them, and they remained connected to one another and continued to pursue their passions. We also recognised that our students are more than the sum of their academic results and therefore, our aim here at Gilson is to always help each of our young people to develop skills that they will help them become more confident and better prepared to take on challenges with courage, be more compassion towards others, and boldly step into their God-given right to become the person they were truly designed to be.

DEPARTMENT NEWS

Humanities Department

2020 has certainly been an eventful year for the Humanities Department. This year saw teachers and students go on new adventures through the journey that was remote learning. Despite the unexpected challenges that came their way, they were able to deliver engaging and hands-on learning experiences for our Secondary students that were all aimed at sparking a life-long appreciation for the Humanities. The following snapshot of the opportunities the Humanities Department has provided illustrates how the department has endeavoured to enrich student learning despite the setbacks of imposed remote learning.



The following snapshot of the opportunities the Humanities Department has provided illustrates how the department has endeavoured to enrich student learning despite the setbacks of imposed remote learning.

Year 7 Humanities: Studies of Ancient China - Term 1, Year 7 students studied the features of Ancient China. They explored the way of life in Ancient China by investigating key concepts through historical lenses such as evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy, significance and contestability. At the conclusion of the unit, students were required

to present to their peers. This saw them communicate their findings from an inquiry question of their choosing. These presentations were very engaging, insightful and effectively demonstrated the wonderful work that was and is currently being done in our Year 7 domain.

Year 8 Humanities: Inquiry of Landforms and Landscapes - Whilst studying Landforms and Landscapes as part of the Geography curriculum, Year 8 students embarked on an inquiry of their favourite coastal landscapes within Australia. Landscapes that were chosen for investigation included the Great



Barrier Reef, the Great Ocean Road, Bondi Beach and the Gold Coast. Students investigated the values and meanings people attach to these landscapes, analysed the geomorphic processes that produce landforms, and examined the human causes and effect of landscape degradation. Students were encouraged to display their creativity skills and use a range of technologies to display their findings.

Year 10 International and Legal Studies: Examining Australia's Political System - Year 10 International and Legal Studies students had the opportunity to study the features of Australia's executive, judicial and legislative systems. They examined the characteristics of Australia's democracy, analysed the challenges to and ways of sustaining a resilient democracy and researched the Australian Government's role and responsibilities at a global level including the provision of foreign aid and international peacekeeping. They also explored the role of our court system and analysed the importance of the court in interpreting the nation's constitution. Students also undertook an analysis of Australia's system of government through a comparison with another system of government of their choice.

Year 10 History: Source Analysis Activities - As part of the Year 10 History course, students were provided with valuable opportunities to undertake a number of source analysis activities that were designed to assist students in examining historical events, analyse the actions of individuals and groups as well as explain patterns of continuity and change over time. By undertaking source analysis studies on the impact of WWII on Australia's home front, as well as, the struggle for equal rights and freedoms by Australia's Aboriginal people, students were able to identify and analyse conflicting perspectives from the past, analyse the cause and effect of past events, and examine different historical interpretations of these events.

Year 10 Career Development: Work Experience Program - Due to the nature of the COVID 19 restrictions in Victoria, the College's Work Experience Program was run on a limited capacity. Between lockdown periods in Melbourne, a small handful of students were able to undertake a week-long work experience placement at an organisation of their choosing. This opportunity provided students with valuable insights into the industry and workplace in which they wish to pursue in the future. The College



would like to thank the local community for accepting our students for placement during 2020.

Year 10 Economics and Business Studies: Entrepreneurship - Earlier in year, the Year 10 Economics and Business Studies students undertook an analysis of Entrepreneurship that required them to examine the pros and cons of taking financial risks as well as identify the characteristics of business entrepreneurs. As part of these studies, students investigated famous entrepreneurs from all over the world and documented their journey in the business world. This activity enabled students to realise that they too must seek out problem solving opportunities, think creatively and accept failure as part of the growth process.

Year 11 Businesses Management: Business Planning - 2020 saw the introduction of a new subject in the form Year 11 Business Management for the first time at the Taylors Hill campus. From the beginning of the year, the subject sparked much interest from the Year 11 cohort and was run as two classes. In Unit 1, students were required to undertake an analysis of how business ideas are created and how conditions can be fostered for new business ideas to emerge. They examined the external environment of a business and investigated how macro and operating factors affect business planning. As part of this course, students were also required to create a business report that demonstrated correct business design, structures and models. Over the course of 2020, students have enjoyed their studies of Business so much, that they are also seeking to complete the VCE Year 12 course. Thank you to Mrs. Crichton and Mrs. Galea for taking on the challenges associated with implementing a new VCE course.

Year 11 Geography: Virtual Fieldwork of Phillip Island - In Unit 2 Geography, the Year 11 Geography class seamlessly adapted to the coronavirus restrictions by using spatial technologies to undertake virtual fieldwork of Phillip Island. Students used Google Earth and interactive maps to examine the nature of ecotourism on the island and to map the key tourist attractions. Students also tuned in to view a live stream of the island's Penguin Parade, which featured expert commentary from park rangers and followed the penguins as they returned to shore. Students thoroughly enjoyed this experience and the ability to be flexible in their approach to fieldwork was also appreciated.

Year 11 and 12 Legal Studies: Melbourne Courts Excursion - Before the implementation of COVID 19 restrictions, the Year 11&12 Legal Studies students visited Melbourne's Magistrates, County and Supreme Courts. Students were given the opportunity to observe the proceedings of multiple court cases



as well as participate in a 'mock trial' in the Supreme Court in which they acted out key roles such as that of the jury, barristers, solicitors, court bailiffs and the presiding judge. This excursion was enjoyed by all and was an overwhelming success that will be continued well into the future.

Year 12 Geography: Land Use Change at Melbourne's Docklands - Earlier this year in Term 1, and as part of the Unit 3 Geography course, Year 12 students travelled into the Docklands region of Melbourne to assess land use change as part of the region's Urban Renewal Project. Whilst here, students collected fieldwork data that helped them examine the key features of this land use change and examine the social, environmental and economic impacts of this redevelopment. Students visited key sites in Docklands such as the Melbourne Observation Wheel, the recently redeveloped retail area known as the District and Victoria Harbour. The day was enjoyable for all involved.

Year 12 History: Investigation of the American Revolution - In the Year 12 History course, students undertook investigations into the American Revolution of 1776 as part of the Unit 3 curriculum. As part of these studies, students explored the causes and consequences of the revolution and were required to analyse how the actions of popular movements and individuals contributed to triggering the revolution as well how social tensions and ideological conflicts contributed to the outbreak of revolution. Students also undertook an analysis of historians' perspectives and interpretations and further devel-

oped their historical thinking through a variety of source analysis activities.

Drama Department

2020 – What a year! The year that certainly no-one could have predicted and most certainly, the year that no-one cares to repeat. The year commenced well with our department but with the arrival of COVID-19 and the announcement of remote, online learning, things in The Arts at Gilson were thrown into disarray. But being a creative and resilient department, the hurdles perceived as challenges only became opportunities. We still managed to deliver quality, creative and worthwhile learning experiences to our students. Definitely not at the standard we would have preferred but, under the circumstances, all of our dedicated staff delivered a product that made connections even when the mode of communication was online. This is not to say that The Arts hasn't taken a hit. As the subjects within this department are predominantly practical this has meant that some of the momentum that would have been normally generated through a hands-on approach, in 2020, this affect was stifled as a result of prolonged, remote learning. In many cases, it was an uphill battle to maintain student engagement (via zoom) without access to the specialist equipment and resources. It was also extremely challenging to build positive connections with our students through remote learning. For instance, the Year 8 Drama students would have ended their elective studies in Drama with a live performance in front of a live audience (parents). The success and buzz from performing live is often what piques students' interest to want to study Drama in Year 9. Despite the hurdles encountered this year and the genuine lack of contact time, the team has rallied together to continue building the profile of The Arts here at Gilson College. As a team we demonstrated that being creative can be enough to put enough colour back into a world that has temporarily lost its blush.

Year 7 Drama – Remained engaging even though a modified (remote) program was used to deliver the majority of the existing program. Students enjoyed online theatre games that still allowed them to interact and connect.

Year 8 Drama – Both units; Improvisation and Documentary Drama, were incredibly difficult to teach within the online context. Semester 1 cohort managed to cover these units but, they really struggled. As a result, Semester 2 cohort had the benefit of an appropriately modified program which included smaller tasks that continued to build dramatic skills. It is important to note that the following challenges were deeply felt by the students as a result of remote learning:

Year 7 have not really had a positive Drama experience. Unfortunately, the online version did not give them an accurate picture of what is encapsulated in Drama. The biggest loss was that





the majority of Year 7 students have not even had a chance to perform in front of their peers.

Year 8 missed out on participating in Year 8 Presents, which is a performance evening that brings together two departments – Home Economics and Drama. This is an invaluable experience for the students as they are able to celebrate with their parents what they have been learning within both of these subjects.

Year 9 Drama – This subject is comprised of a committed group of five students. Although online has altered the face of Drama for these students, they have still accomplished a lot because they've been forced to adapt and reinvent themselves. For instance, students learnt how to:

Devise, direct and perform their own pieces for SEW (Term 1)

Devise and perform their own clowning routines for Foundation students in the new amphitheatre.

Perform a non-realism duologue at the close of the year.

Year 9 Drama students had a heavily modified program for their Semester 2 elective where they made their own Commedia del'Arte masks and developed the skills for their chosen stock character.

Music Department

Music is traditionally well established at Gilson College and operates seamlessly to facilitate many facets of the College's program. With the need to adjust to remote learning, the team worked tirelessly to develop and consolidate online lessons and reference materials to support student learning. Both junior and senior students completed work that was not really modified. It was particularly interesting to note, that they essentially mastered their tasks to an even higher standard than was achieved in previous years. This was possibly due to the one-on-one sessions and use of break-out rooms. Contrastingly, practical tasks for the junior students appeared to struggle with one-on-one sessions and break-out rooms, so they were eliminated from the program. Senior students even managed to learn some new technological skills in the remote music-making context. The team learned how to facilitate music

lessons remotely for all instrumental students. In addition to this, the team was also able to complete band and ensemble songs remotely by using mastering and recording facilities. In VCE Music, the five students were well supported when they were onsite as practical ensemble learning is more challenging when they are working remotely.

Art Department

In Semester 1, many students were quite engaged whilst on campus with Art making activities, however this dropped off suddenly as we transitioned to remote learning. Even so, during 2020, Art students continued to create self-portraits, ceramic pinch pots, Aboriginal Art and remained engaged in activities on the Elements and Principles of Art. In Semester 2, with the changeover of electives and the fatigue of remote learning set in, many students struggled even more to motivate themselves to engage in Art lessons. We were compelled to adjust our lessons during online learning so that our students could feel a sense of accomplishment. Learners explored how other artists created work from home and drew on this inspiration while learning new techniques to create artwork of The World from their Window. Students learnt colour theory and how artists create and manipulated elements to create illusion, depth, space and emphasis. Modern art was explored and students investigated how we consume it in everyday life. Students were then able to create designs for wearable hats and explored the artists' lenses and looked at how they perceived the world and drew on past learning to create. Graffiti art was also a focus of student learning and by far, was the favourite unit.

VCE VISCOM – Gilson offered Visual Communication and Design for the first year for Year 11 (Units 1 and 2) in 2020 with a class of six creative and extremely keen students. They had planned to go to Top Designs, however COVID lockdown meant they were not permitted to attend this event. Students had the opportunity to significantly develop their design skills using the Adobe Suite which helped them to remain motivated and engaged.

VCE Media Studies and Studio Art – In Media Studies, some of the students had to rethink their entire production due to not having access to actors and sets.

Many had to make drastic changes to their planned artworks and production. In Studio Art, final artworks had to be restarted due to a lack of access to equipment, tools, proper environment, and materials. Despite the art kits that were provided for students to use at home, the teachers were delighted to still be able to see their students continue to create. It was this that kept the fire burning and the passion alive. The highlight



in Studio Art was, the virtual tour that the students participated in. Notably, the curator that worked with our students couldn't stop praising them for their participation, manners and appearance. He was astounded that although our students were participating from home, they all managed to have a shirt and tie. Comparatively, none of the other schools that also participated in this event looked as ready to learn as our Gilson students did.

Maths Department

There are 10 teachers who are members of the Maths Department this year. Out of the ten teachers, two teach only Maths classes and eight teach Maths and other subjects as well. As of 2020 the Maths Pathway program has been running in its 4th year and Years 7 to 10 now all use this program. The focus for this year was the "the continued teaching and learning of mathematics through the Maths Pathway Program" in each of our classes. This is done especially in the lower classes and then moving up to the higher classes.

VCE Mathematics is running extremely well and in 2020 both Further Maths and Maths Methods were taught in Year 12 and our VCE math results reflected the calibre of students that we had. VCE teachers were once again helped by the Mathematical Association of Victoria in writing up their SACs for the year.

A department-wide Profesional Development occured in Term 4. These meetings were facilitated by a representative from Maths Pathways. The purpose was to revisit the elements of the Maths Pathway Learning and Teaching Model and how to structure a two-week cycle. The department also particiapted in a Maths Conference run by the Mathematical Association of Victoria at La Trobe University.

French Department

Small modifications were made to the program. Verbal conversational aspects of the lessons were removed and replaced with students writing their answers down. Most of the students managed to complete their assigned work. A minority however, did find remote learning a struggle. Teachers found being able to give instant feedback on students work, especially regarding pronunciations, particularly frustrating as giving feedback is a vital part of learning a new language. A few minor changes were made to the programs and these related mainly to the mise en pratique part of the lessons which focused on conversations and role-plays using the vocabulary learnt within the Units studied. Noted, nearly all of the students who attended the Zoom sessions were able to complete the work set most of the time and the few who did not blamed it on technology and related issues. Year 9-12 classes were productive and worked diligently with regard to engagement and participation.

VCAL

2020 was the second year of our VCAL program. With 21 students who have chosen the VCAL pathway, we have been learning many new things and are planning for even more hands-on-learning experiences to take place. Students began the year well, with 13 students enrolled in external VET courses. Four of these students were offered a School-based Apprenticeship/Traineeship (SBAT). WRS was audited in mid-Term 1 and successfully passed. We got this under our belt just prior to lockdown. Term 1, students planned for the VCAL camp that would have taken place early in Term 2. The students had also planned and looked forward to attending the Australian Grand Prix in Term 1 Week 7, but due

to lockdown none of this was possible. On a more productive note, it's been great to have a dedicated planning period each week to discuss our programming, working on outcomes, devising assessments and providing ways to support our students' learning needs. It's been challenging for students and teachers to try and keep classes engaged during remote learning and also in returning back into the classroom whilst adhering to physical distancing. It was wonderful news when restrictions allowed our potential graduates to attend school to work on their projects and we were eternally grateful for the magnificent VCAL teachers who volunteered their time to supervise our students. Towards the end of 2020, we had seven Year 12 students along with two Year 11 students who were going to complete their VCAL certificate. Five would go on to further study and three had been already offered an apprenticeship/traineeship.

Literacy – Term 1 students spent time learning basic literacy skills as they planned for their VCAL camp. This was done across strands and enabled the students to get a real taste for how literacy can be used in many areas of planning. Term 2 and 3, students studied and researched the text *Crashing into Potential* by Scott B Harris and were able to get a few zoom sessions with Scott himself where students were able to ask him questions about his bike accident and how he dealt with his own setbacks. The students explored their reading & writing outcomes for Literacy through the text, while growing in their own understanding of the brain and themselves. Term 4 was a deliberate focus on oracy outcomes as these were too difficult to pursue via zoom and remote learning. Below is a photo of the students participating in their first socratic circle.

PDS - Semester 1, students planned for the VCAL Camp and attending the Grand Prix. Students were still able to mark off many outcomes as a result of their complex and detailed planning, even though they couldn't attend the event due to imposed COVID restrictions. We did our best to implement applied learning and in Term 2, we had the Foundation students attend a few Primary classes





where they were able to read to the children and assist the teacher within the classroom. Semester 2 enabled our Senior VCAL students to plan, organise work and reflect on their individual projects. The projects included: a breakfast club, a bookshelf, locker-bay litter barriers and a promo video. Mrs Cowled also cooked up many scrumptious meals with the VCAL students to share with staff and students. Mr McAndrew commenced work on a herb garden with the Foundation students that would be used by the Hospitality classes.

WRS - Work Related Skills and Personal Development Skills work hand-in-hand in that WRS looks at all the Occupational Health and Safety aspects of a workplace and what the students may encounter when working on their projects. WRS keeps track of the student's progress with their external courses as well as their work placements. Due to COVID, all work placements were put on hold except for the student's studying a trade. We would have a few opportunities in Term 4 for students to still complete their Structured Workplace Learning unit via a few virtual industry tours organised by Future Connect which is our local LLEN.

Numeracy - Mr McAndrew and Miss Robinson worked well to get students completing tasks that had students thinking about numeracy. They investigated COVID data, measuring and making themselves masks, calculating costs for running the VCAL camp, and creating a budget for the herb garden. Students also undertook a wide range of activities designed to target specific outcomes from their study design.

Biblical Studies - We are still able to use the Encounter program to teach our VCAL students. Mr Scotter also worked closely with Mrs Lassig to help students complete Literacy outcomes through reading and written work. In Biblical Studies, students looked into Biblical authenticity and reliability and delved into Biblical truths such as identity and purpose. Students also had the unique opportunity to be more practical and lead the class in Bible studies and sharing truths that resonate with their hearts.

Science Department

The Science department was blessed with the completion of new science laboratories (used for senior Physics and junior science classes). The additional laboratories enabled classes to enjoy learning in a much bigger space and improved overall student engagement. On a more sombre note, lockdown proved to be a constant hindrance in that it hugely affected the running of science practicals. Despite the setback to onsite learning, teachers did their absolute best to deliver online learning, including semester one examinations via Zoom. In addition to this, most of the planned excursions were also cancelled due to lockdown interruptions.

HPE Department

Year 7-10 – A re-evaluation of the Scope and Sequence was presented to the department at the start of the year with the thought in mind to begin a clean-up of planning and individual marks books. While Years 7, 8 and 10 chose to begin with new SEQTA programs, Year 9 used what had been developed in previous years. A departmental shift occurred in the way in which curriculum had been previously presented to students. In 2020, there was a definite refocus on skills being developed rather than the topics being used to teach the unit.

VCE PE - While still meeting curriculum requirements, the focus of Year 11 PE was to incorporate more practical sessions into Term 1 and 2. This was done through frequent double sessions down to CS Lake. Students were given the option to run or walk, and the activity was recorded on STRAVA.

VET Outdoor Recreation and Sport & Recreation – An abundance of camps and excursions were cancelled due to lockdown. Despite this imposition, every attempt was made to ensure that students were able to meet their outcomes and have the opportunity to complete the necessary planning, drafting and editing that was required in order for them to attain competency.

Sport 7-10 - House competitions were moved to lunchtimes which appeared to work well unless it was plagued with lockdown restrictions. In addition to this, students were again given the option of choosing their sports each Term.

Design and Technology Department

Obviously repeated lockdowns impacted the completion of some of our practical projects but we have still been able to enjoy many successes throughout 2020. In Design Tech students have successfully completed various projects across different year levels with more in the works to be completed in Semester 2. Conversion of the CNC router to UCCNC software which simplifies the setting-up process making it easier and faster to use. - New tool wall and organisation of tools in the metal work room using labels created with the department's CNC router.

Year 7 Digital Technology - Students have learnt about cyber crime and types of cyber crime and solutions/preventions on cyber crime. They have learnt how to use google slides and how to create a basic multimedia program called iMovie.

Year 9 Digital Technology - Students have learnt MS Excel (database) formulas and how to create a document with mathematical formulas. In addition, students had learnt some basic python coding language to create a simple GUI (Graphics User Interface) and they thoroughly enjoyed creating their personalised GUI.

Junior Home Economics - Students enjoyed using the brand-new stoves/ovens in the kitchen and these have reduced the cooking time for all recipes. This has been great for making sure our classes finish on time and are able to produce superior food products. Here are just some of the wonderful dishes the students have made:

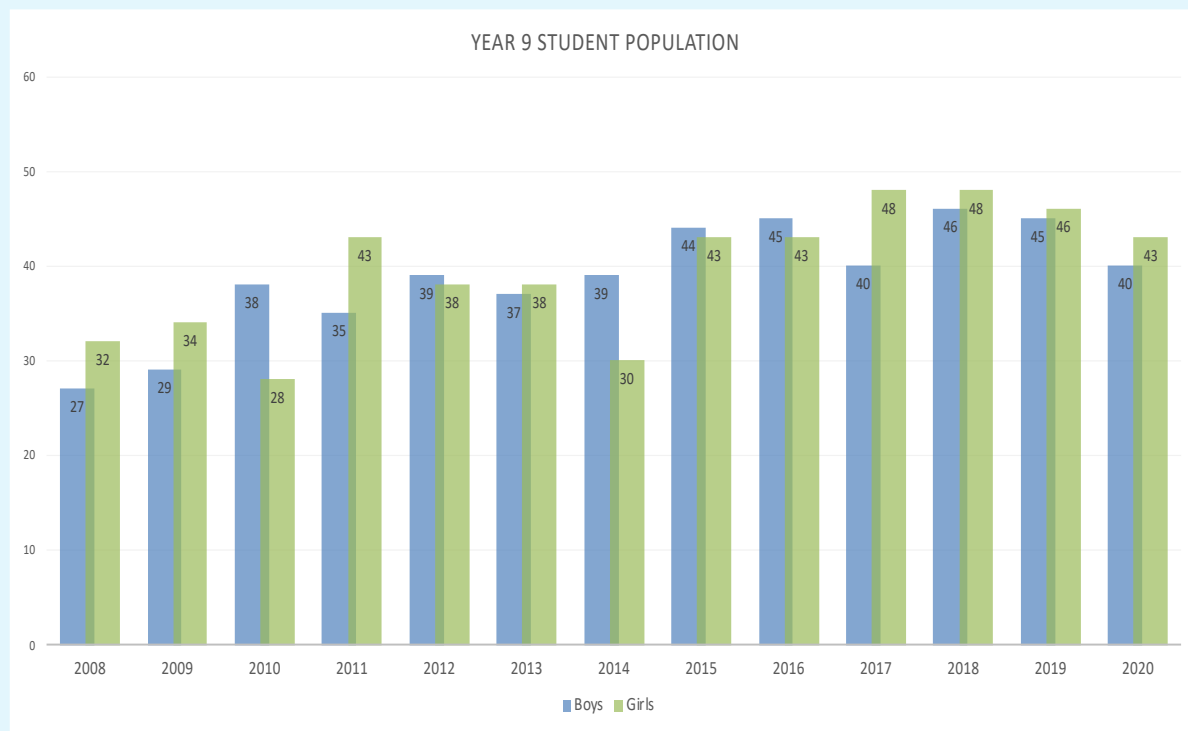
Year 7 Sewing - Students enjoyed learning how to use the sewing machine and making and decorating a tote bag. They also went home during remote learning with a kit for making a hand sewn woodland critter and enjoyed making these with Mrs Clark over Zoom.

Year 9 Textiles - Has been running this year for the first time in quite a few years with 5 students opting to take this class for Semester 1. The students have learnt how to use the sewing machine confidently and have produced some lovely items. This semester they made: A simple skirt, pyjama pants, market tote bag and a dress using a sustainable fabric.

Hospitality Events - During Covid Lockdown in 2020, Mrs Cowled supported students in the Primary School with lessons during their Technology-free Fridays. The Year 4, 5 and 6 students who attended school, whose parents were essential workers learned some basic kitchen skills, such as how to measure ingredients correctly, how to crack eggs hygienically, how to safely use an oven and a stove top, the correct procedures for washing up and cleaning the kitchen, and leaving it as you found it.

Learning 4 Life - The Rite Journey

The Learning 4 Life Experiential Education program continues to develop and mature. Below is a chart of student population.



There are 6 fulltime teaching staff with support in the areas of Home Economics, Art, Information Technology and Industrial Technology. We keep parents informed with 2 information nights (one in November of the previous year and the other in February), and 18 parent newsletters starting in term 4 of

Year 8. Students prepare and present a summary of their year to parents of Year 8 and 9 in November.

The year is made up of 3 major components: Expeditionary Learning, Urban Learning and Service Learning. Personal reflection and journaling are highlighted throughout the year and offer a rich evidential source of growth and development.

The focus for Experiential Education in semester 1 was on the Expeditionary component of the Learning4Life program. Students have been well prepared for their final expedition on the Bogong High Plains through a number of graded walking experiences which included a 10km day walk in the Werribee Gorge State Park, a 5-day base camp at Buangor State Forest with a 20km overnight experience and a 3 day/2 night 20-25 km expedition in the Fryers Ranges Heritage Park. In preparation for these expeditions students studied topics that included minimum impact bushwalking, risk & safety, hygiene, first aid, hut etiquette, food, energy requirements, cooking & nutrition, clothing, tent skills, packs and packing, navigation, map work and weather.

Unfortunately in Term 2 the outbreak of Covid-19 meant that we were not able to follow through with the planned Experiential Education events. This meant that we were not able to do the Urban Learning, the Service Learning or the Bogong High plains components of the program.

Over the past 15 years we have received very positive feedback on the excellent behavior of the students and the value they have added to the various community areas they have worked in. It was a big disappointment that we were not able to continue in 2020

Planned Events

Students are out of the regular classroom 37 days of the year as follows.

Date	Event	Description
Feb 5	Parent Info night	Starts 7.00 pm to give info to Year 9 parents re the walking program
Feb 7	Werribee walk and Calling Ceremony at Mt Macedon	Initial assessment of student ability. Leaving 9:30 am returning about 9:30 pm, 10 km Bring lunch. BBQ for dinner supplied.
Feb 18 - 22	Departure Ceremony and Buangor Training Camp	Parent involvement 7:45 am to 8:30 am at school Base camp and overnight walk, 22 km. Leave 9:30 am Monday return 3.00 pm Friday. Camping and orienteering skills
March 13 - 15	Fryers Ranges State Forest	Leave 9:30 am Wednesday return 3.00 pm Friday. Camping, orienteering skills

May 2	Urban Day 1	City studies
May 16	Urban Day 2	City studies
May 30	Urban Day 3	City studies
June 12	Urban Day 4	City studies
June 27	Urban Day 5	City studies
Aug 8	Local Service Day 1	Working in local areas
Aug 15	Local Service Day 2	Working in local areas
Aug 29	Local Service Day 3	Working in local areas
Sept 9- 19	Warrnambool Service Camp	Warrnambool. Leave 10:30 am return 3.00 pm Thursday 19th
Oct 24 - 25	Training Hike for Bogong	Refresher and training hike in preparation for the Bogong Expedition.
Nov 13 - 21	Bogong Expedition	Walking and orienteering skills, 40 - 60 km. Leave 9:00 am returning 3.00 pm
Dec 3	Year 8 Walk	Lerderderg. Blackwood to O'Brien's Xing
Dec 5	Reflection Day	Return to Werribee Gorge/Mt Macedon where the walk started to reflect on the year, Lunch at Lerderderg Gorge, 10 Pin Bowling if available.

Further improvements have been made in addition to the procedures put in place in 2009.

2019

- Purchase of 5 additional jackets and 5 packs to increase the number of different sizes available for student use.
- Purchase of 3 new radios to increase the total number of radios to 25, this allows for more groups that are smaller but still stay in contact with the coordinator and other groups.

2020

- Purchase of 20 new Wurley 2 tents to replace the aging ridge back tents.
- Purchase of 1 new radio to replace an old radio that failed.

Affiliations

Avondale College of Higher Education continues to be an integral part of the program with students taking part in the Bogong walks. All L4L staff members have qualifications or are in the process of obtaining qualifications from Avondale College of Higher Education in Outdoor Education.

Future

In 2021 we will continue to go to Buangor and Fryers Ranges, both in Victoria. These areas have proved to be suitable with good outcomes, so will continue to be developed further. The Bogong High plains continues to be a valuable experience with good outcomes for the students. We will continue with this practice and reconnoiter and develop additional routes on the high plains to meet the various fitness levels and needs of the students.

It has been recognised that with the growing numbers and the need for trained staff there may need to be some changes in how the camps are run with one suggestion being to split the cohort in two. This would mean less staff from outside the program used and the ability to have a smaller total number of students in the one area. This option continues to be investigated. For 2021 there will be less interaction with Mernda campus as their number continue to grow and when we combine the two groups we are in excess of 110 students which makes it difficult to visit many places. In 2021 Mernda will have numbers high enough to start developing their own program.

Chaplaincy

2020 began with a sense of excitement and enthusiasm around campus. The attitude of both staff and students was remarkably positive, as everyone looked forward to the new year with heightened hope and anticipation. However, very early in the piece it was obvious that things were going pair-shaped. 2020 was a particularly challenging year. We asked ourselves the questions "what's next?" and "where do we go from here?" We discovered that we wanted to communicate to our staff, students and community, that although life can be difficult and messy God is always in control.

College Dedication Service - The year commenced with our annual dedication service inside of the school gymnasium. This event usually brings our entire school community together. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions the event had to be livestreamed to our parents and friend's community.

- Students pledge to be the best students they can be whilst at Gilson College.
- Staff acknowledge the responsibility alongside parents of educating the students and pledge to do their best.
- Families and friends pledge to support the school in the opportunity Gilson gives to nurture their child.

Weekly Chapels - Chapels were impacted greatly by the changes to the normal year during 2020. There was an oscillation between presentations in person and a video. By the end of Semester 1 the frustration was beginning to set in. Secondary school chapels featured inspiring messages and there was always a segment called "Gilson's Finest" which showcased a different student or staff member being interviewed each week to acknowledge and celebrate their gifts and talents. Those interviewed are people who excel in some form of activity from music, to sport, to academics. Secondary students are steeply involved in planning for music and icebreakers from week to week.

Bible Studies - Bible studies were done in a discussion-based group model with each group lead by one of the chaplains. Pr Paul Goltz lead the Years 5-6 Bible study groups, while Pr Jonathon Gillard and Pr Brayden Rath lead the Years 7-10 Bible study groups.

- 10 different Bible study groups across 2 year levels in the Primary school.



- 74 total students in Primary school Bible studies
- 14 different Bible study groups across the 4 Year levels in the Secondary school.
- 131 total students in Secondary College Bible studies.

It is our prayer that each person connected to our school community will discover the plan that God has for them to live their best life.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Results from the 2019 SRC Survey combined with the QAS (Quality Adventist Schools) Improvement Framework were used to ascertain the focus areas for further school improvement

Although there was a change of leadership at the start of 2020, it was necessary for the next steps to be pursued so that the momentum for improvement was not lost in handover. Instead both the 2019 SRC survey and the QAS School Improvement Framework (which supports all ASV schools throughout Australia in the pursuit of excellence by providing clear descriptions of high-quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading) were recognised and carefully considered.

In the 2018–2020 school plan the initial focus was on:

- Identifying where the school currently sat in the QAS Framework
- Working on ways to move from sustaining and growing into excelling in as many areas as possible
- Having all staff understand the QAS Framework and support improvement measures

Over the course of the previous two years, time was systematically dedicated to training staff, reporting and improving elements of the School QAS Framework during Protected Time meetings and at staff-wide Professional Learner's exchange where teachers were able to meet and present (within Department groups) their Action Research to discuss their findings. 2020 was unfortunately interrupted due to the extensive lockdowns which uniquely impacted our Victorian schools. As a result, our teachers were unable to present their departmental findings during the course of the 2020 academic year.

Nevertheless, we still pushed on with online professional development with regards to improving our pedagogical focus on stimulating engagement, motivation and wellbeing. In the domain of Learning, The Berry Street Model was formally introduced in the Secondary College in 2020 to teachers in an effort to create greater engagement in the classroom. Three staff-wide PD days (two on line) along with smaller departmental meetings were dedicated to training teachers how to deal with students with complex, unmet learning needs and to successfully improve all students' self-regulation, relationships, wellbeing, growth and academic achievement. The Berry Street Model was a natural fit for our school because it was so seamlessly adopted within the Primary College and Gilson already shared all of the programs core pedagogical strategies, which incorporated:

- Trauma-informed teaching



- Positive education (PB4L) and
- Wellbeing practices

Teachers were trained in how to use brain breaks effectively within the classroom, how to continue to implement PB4L language in their lessons, how to use trauma-informed teaching strategies to improve engagement and to ensure there was commonality in the language used. Assessment and reporting were also improved through the refinement of how visible thinking through the use of thinking routines and growth-mindset skills were reported. More specifically, teachers were instructed to:

- Create more success experiences for students within the classroom (starting with how they planned their lessons – using success criteria and learning intentions)
- Judge performance against standards (refined their rubrics)
- Assess growth over time (focusing on implementing student profiles and learning plans (ILP))

Culture and wellbeing at the school also improved through the continued work done by the PB4L Committee in building support that was more function-based and com-



prehensive. By using the Tier 1, 2 and 3 levels of intervention teachers were better able to understand why behaviours in students kept reoccurring. In addition to this, our student SEQTA mapping revealed that the building of the PB4L support framework (targeted interventions) appeared to help reduce problematic behaviour as well as, leading to overall academic, social and emotional student success.

The change in the area of Teaching created a move from being fixed on excelling back to understanding and growing. Essentially, Protected Time was focused on providing teachers with skill-building opportunities that were based on positive education and growth mindset models of best practice for the classroom. Teachers were encouraged to begin adjusting their lesson plans to include:

- Building networks by promoting collaborative hubs for learning:
- group work
- mind-mapping
- implementation of lunch-time study clubs
- focus on asking lots of questions;
- higher-order questions
- incorporating thinking routines
- Being an active listener:
- exercising wait-time
- making the speaker more comfortable
- empathise more intentionally
- embrace silence
- remove distractions
- heed the tone
- pay attention to non-verbal communication



- listening for underlying meanings and not words

In the area of Learning and Development the school was doing consistently well. In order to improve in the area of effective classroom practice greater support was given for teacher to plan collaboratively within departments and with co-teachers. While in 2019, focus was given to feedback and how teachers were better able to give meaningful assessment, in 2020 the school continued to propel towards driving students to experience excellence. However, with the year being thrust into remote learning, the domain of Leading, teachers and administrators alike, were compelled to take the bull by the horns and lead our teams through an online space that required greater monitoring of our students, deliberate follow-up of teachers and students, how intentional and directional feedback could be best provided to our students given the online context, and creating assessments that were relevant, meaningful and realistic became the priority. During this period of lockdown, school facilities continued to be optimised within the community and through the use of student, staff and parent surveys the community had a chance to give constructive feedback on leadership, what was working well through online platforms and what wasn't, how well students were engaged in learning over this difficult period of time, and predictors of wellbeing issues were being flagged. Close scrutiny in this space was our focus. An innovation team was established to identify students who required wellbeing intervention. The school 2019 SRC survey process was helpful to refine our school plan during 2020 as greater supports



were provided which led to improvements in the delivery of education and wellbeing services for all of our students and staff.

Focus Area 1 - Using the PB4L and Growth Mindset models to drive motivation and engagement in our students.

Purpose - Our students should all be nurtured to become autonomous, engaged and motivated learners, striving to maximise their potential. At Gilson we want to create positive relationships within and amongst our students and with our staff to ensure there is shared meaning around their learning, and therefore, create a sense of accomplishment.

Overall summary of progress - Engagement of our students was a key part of the 2018-2020 school plan. While the wording of the 2018-2020 plan may have been changed due to the repeated COVID lockdowns and online learning, the theme behind the Strategic Direction 1 has been maintained. Keeping all students engaged in all elements of school life (online or onsite) is a big part of Gilson College. The Strategic Direction 1 splits this into three elements:

- Classroom and climate
- Teacher and wellbeing
- Student and wellbeing

Each of the three areas had areas of improvement in 2020.

Next Steps - The following steps were determined; that:

- The positive psychology framework of PB4L and research of Growth Mindset pedagogy would continue as a rubric for dispositional teaching.

- Leaders, teachers and students would continue to support awareness around wellbeing issues and advocate for the continued implementation of trauma-informed teaching strategies within the classroom as a means to improve motivation and engagement.
- The College would maximise student potential by challenging the accomplished and by energising the energising.

Focus Area 2 - Lighting up our lessons and teaching our students to be critical thinkers

Purpose - Our students need to be active thinkers rather than passive learners, waiting to be fed information. Our students need to be more confident, sophisticated and skilful when required to think and contribute ideas. As teachers we need to ensure we emphasise the value of giving it a go and never giving up so that they may learn the value of persistence and the value of embracing failure as they learn to focus on quality work. Students should learn that collaboration, taking breaks, considering different perspectives, prioritising, planning ahead, mind-mapping, evaluating, revising and actively listening - are all valuable tools to have in life's toolbox.

Overall summary of progress - Strategic Direction 2 may not have gone according to plan. Remote learning and frequent lockdowns caused some setbacks however, the gaps that may have been created will be considered in the 2021/2022 school plan. Difficulties in implementation meant the intended goals did not gain traction and were not achieved as we had hoped, with some revised and adapted (due to remote learning) to make them more manageable. Success in creating more online tasks especially among the younger year levels was the highlight of lighting up our lessons with the focus being on critical thinking and the teacher creating opportunities for interactive activities online, provision for flipping lessons and students creating presentations to share in breakout groups.

Next Steps - The following steps were determined for the future; that:

- We will continue to light up our lessons by taking existing and new approaches to building up the student voice through self-confidence in asking questions and sharing ideas (thinking).
- The inclusion of intentional thinking routines will continue to be implemented in the future so that lessons are created with the purpose to stimulate the practice of collaboration, active and uninhibited thinking, creative brainstorming and confident sharing of perspectives and ideas.



- There will be a continual focus on the Berry Street Model (through trauma-informed teaching) to boost overall student engagement and improve motivation through involvement and participation.

Focus Area 3 - Teaching future-focused learning skills for life

Purpose - Our teachers should continue to polish their practice especially in terms of providing feedback, managing trauma-informed learning and remembering that the brain is plastic so that more of our students can begin to understand that their own learning is a direct result of choices they make and the quality of their partnership with their teacher. Teaching our young people that they need to become a responsible learner who is accountable for his or her own actions and decisions is integral in building up future-focused skills for success. It is also important for our students to become informed about what they are doing well and what they still need to improve on. Therefore, feedback, reporting and assessment is also extremely important, and will continue to be a focus over the next few years. Finally, when students understand that they have a choice about what's going on in the brain, that they can make choices to create thoughts that help to structure the brain, it is highly likely that they will agree to a more intrinsic partnership with their educators. All of these best practice strategies, will enable our young people to reach their learning goals more effectively and help them to pursue excellence with greater vigour and hopefully engage them with their learning so much so, that they will be transformed for life.

Overall summary of progress – We saw most goals achieved in 2020 however, as we head towards the implementation of continuous reporting for 2021, it is obvious that this too, is a continuous process. The focus and auditing of writing feedforward and feedback comments will continue to be perfected during future Protected Time and planning sessions. In addition to this, and to help ensure the success of teaching future-focused skills, teachers will continue to develop their skills in areas of neuroplasticity and brain development (thinking and mind-management).

Next Steps - The following next steps were determined for the future; that:

- The further bedding down of best practice strategies (including research around neuroplasticity, feedback and evaluation, reporting and assessment, and mind-management) will be needed to develop and assess future-focused learning skills.
- Teachers will need to further improve feedforward and feedback processes of group tasks and continuous reporting assessments.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE YEAR

At Gilson College, we celebrate our students' success in all facets of life. Developing the whole student involves not only encouraging academic efforts, but supporting and celebrating achievements of creativity, innovation, aspiration, community, curiosity, and courage. 2020 presented a unique set of challenges, but our students shone through and excelled in so many ways, and to celebrate their experiences and achievements the absolute high of the year was the closing exercises. This included; the final day for Year 12s (Year 12 Chapel and Celebration Dress-up), the Year 12 Graduation Ceremony (video streamed to parents at home) and the Year 12 Formal Banquet (held in the gymnasium). It really was a remarkable year in so many different ways.



PRIMARY AND SECONDARY – MERNDA

In the eighth year at Gilson College Mernda campus we continue to grow in numbers with 245 students in the Primary and Secondary. 2020 proved to be an extraordinary year due to the COVID -19 restrictions that impacted staff, students and families. Learning, experiences and relationships were forged under challenging circumstances and students engaged in learning opportunities, and growth despite learning remotely. Every student was encouraged to take part in all that the school had to offer and staff endeavoured to do more than deliver an academic program; knowing the child and committed to growing young people to the best of their abilities for God and community.

From the formal commencement of the school year at Dedication Night, reflected the 2020 theme which Year 12 selected "On Purpose for His Purpose " and the primary SRC chose "He Holds the World".

Once again we focused on our Positive Behaviour 4 Learning (PB4L) program to enhance wellbeing and to further foster a positive learning environment. Our challenge to be Respectful, Responsible, Resilient & a Learner proved to be particularly important as we experienced education unlike we ever had before. We enhanced the visibility of PB4L in our school by completing two new murals painted on external walls in the playground (completed by a parent for PEP hours).

Our Wellbeing team provided Zoom sessions for vulnerable students and follow up emails/phone-calls. Staff were supported remotely with personal 'self care' packages delivered to their homes by our Wellbeing team.

Bush School continued to be a big focus in Foundation (and also in Year One once students returned after remote learning) to help enhance student wellbeing and social development.

Happy Hands art classes for toddlers, provided two sessions a week when this was permissible.



Young families have really enjoyed these classes that included sensory activities, singing, expressive and explorative creativity with weekly themes and key learning. Take home packs were also available when on-site sessions were not available.

The grounds at Gilson College-Mernda were improved by the re-leveling of land near the Acacia room to help with safety and drainage and the removal of the old house at the back of the property. This will enable future developments.

A new climbing frame playground was ordered to provide more much needed play space for our growing student numbers, due to arrive in April of 2021 (delayed arrival due to Covid).

We saw demountables removed to be relocated on loan to Nunawading Christian College for the next couple of years which opened up the staff car park to more parking options.

With learning moving online, things looked a little differently in 2020. Teachers taught from their offices, their homes and their classrooms at various times. In the Primary, the application - 'Seesaw' was used to share learning tasks with parents.

The Secondary used 'SEQTA Learn'.

Special events occurred via Zoom for half of the year.

Some other Remote Learning Zoom highlights include (but are not limited to):

- Secondary Student & Staff Strava Fitness Challenge
- Online cooking with Chaplain- Sandy
- Reading sessions with ESOs
- Foundation 100 days of school dress up Zoom
- Students dressed in 'Red' for the Anzac Day celebration Zoom.



Learning and Teaching

The delivery of Learning and Teaching in 2020 were adjusted to accommodate both remote and face-to-face learning. Concerted effort by teachers and parents ensured student learning continued during times of remote learning. Though the face-to-face learning was disruptive, a lot were happening behind the scenes to engaged and monitor the progress of our learners:

- Teachers upskilled with new platforms such as ZOOM and Seesaw, as well as utilising SEQTA Learn to deliver the curriculum.
- Bookweek parade "Curios Creatures, Wild Minds" took place in the Primary learning corridor
- NAPLAN cancelled for 2020, however PAT and other online assessments were utilised to gauge our students' progress.
- Writing using VCOP & BIG Write strategies
- Teachers continue to work on their curriculum documentation
- Primary team reflected on reading assessments, in particular Running Records
- Individual needs were supported
- Implemented remote assessments and exams via ZOOM.

Our staff were so excited to see our students return onsite in Term 4 and welcomed them back with balloons and smiles (behind masks of course).

The year ended with the usual celebrations (modified) with infants attending Healesville Sanctuary and Years 3-12 celebrating with a fun day at Funfields.

Our Year 12's enjoyed a lovely morning tea together on campus and a special intimate dinner at a local restaurant.

Year 6 students experienced a personalised picnic dinner beside the college oval with giant lawn games. Their parents were able to join them for their graduation ceremony as they received their Bibles and graduation certificates.

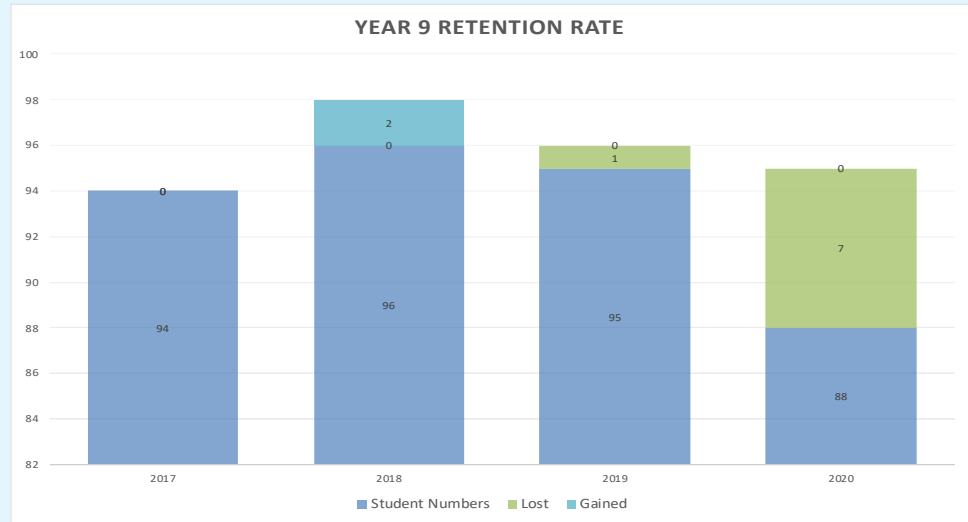
The annual Awards Night in 2020 was recorded and streamed live via Youtube to all of our college community. A special, memorable event where we dedicated our Year Book - Ethos to our beloved Michelle Jervis who passed away in July of 2020.



STUDENT ENROLMENT STATISTICS

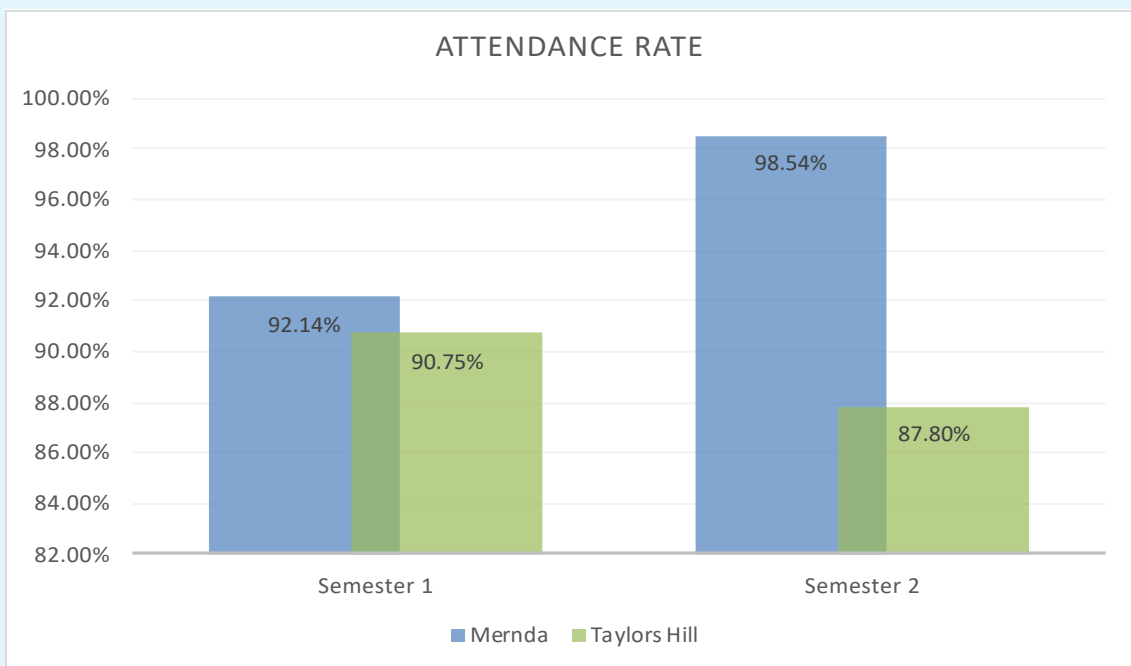
Student enrolments have consistently been on the increase at Gilson College for some years. With the continued expansion of the Taylors Hill Campus and the now established Mernda Campus it is anticipated that student enrolments will continue to grow.

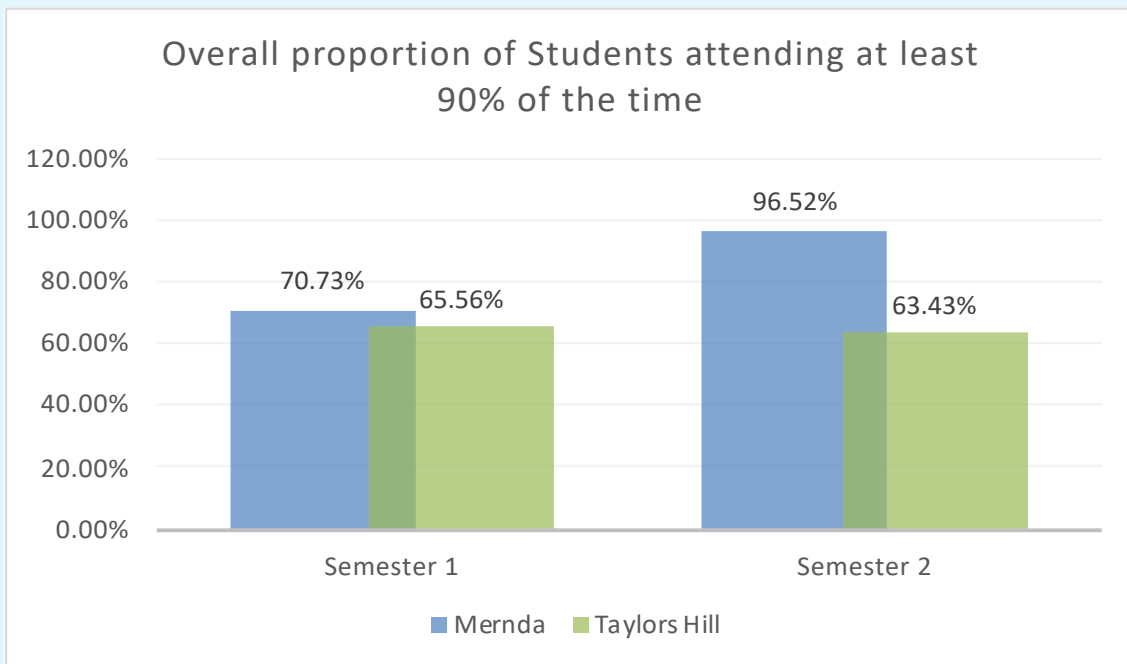
In addition to this, the retention of our Year 9 students has been consistent over the years. In 2020 we retained approximately 96% of the class that began in 2017. Of the 96% that we retained approximately 30% were students that had begun in Foundation in 2007.



STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student attendance at the College was impacted due to changes that were made for online learning. For most part it was consistent but data graphed does not give a true reflection of attendance in a normal school year. Results for both campuses are graphed as shown.





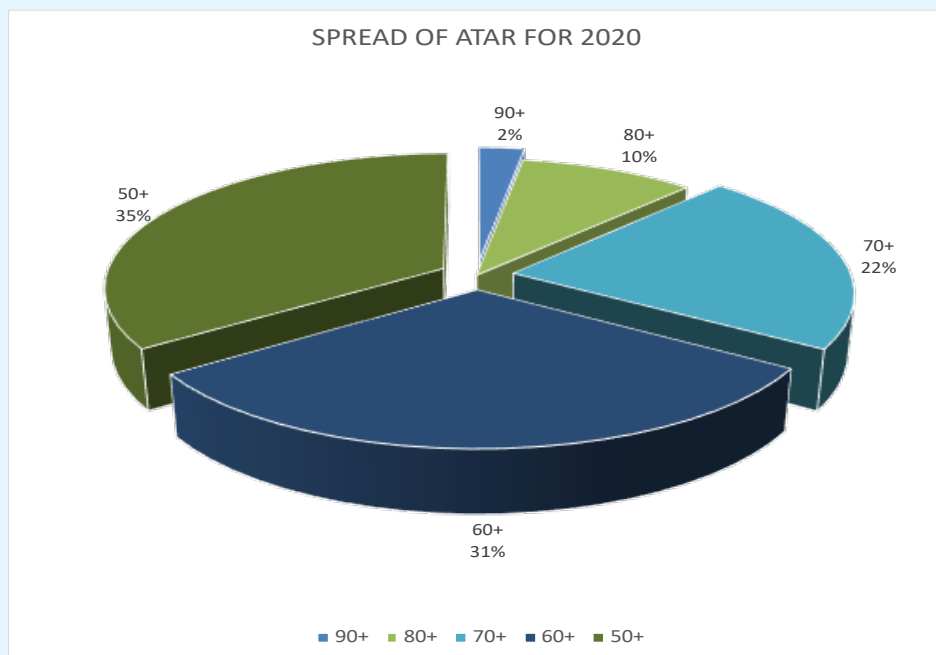
LITERACY AND NUMERACY

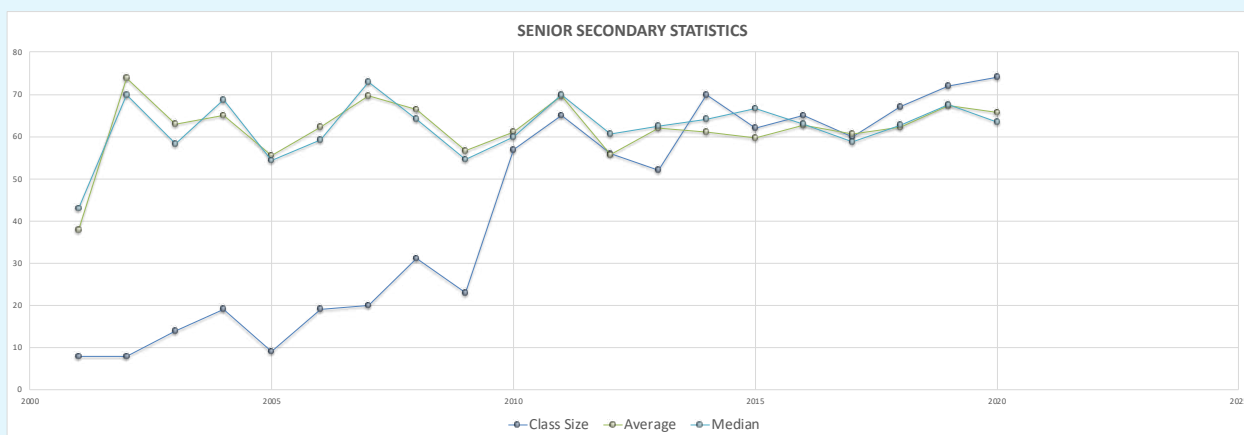
Due to the COVID Pandemic there were no NAPLAN exams held for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 for the Year 2020.

SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES

As shown in the graph the results for the Senior Secondary school has remained consistent across both campuses.

There were 2% of students who achieved results above 90 and 10% of our senior students scored above 80 and 53% of the class scored above 60. In spite of the challenges that our VCE students faced during the year they persevered and achieved great results. The College is proud of our VCE students and their achievements.





PASTORAL CARE AND CHAPLAINCY

The year 2020 started with a cloud of ashes over the state. With many homes, animals and lives lost in the fires that saw towns close down and shut off to the rest of the country due to the severity of the fires. It changed the festive season in nature. Finally when the fires were under control it was time to return to school. We all collectively breathed a sigh of relief ready to safely return to the normality of life. However, the still inside the storm was only for a short time as the pandemic of COVID-19 was just around the corner, unaware of how large the effect would cause changes in the course of the year and time lingering on.

God truly orchestrated and had his hand in our planning of the theme of the overall year. In 2019 we planned for 2020 and we chose the

Overall theme: "Wherever you go..." based on the

Theme verse: Joshua 1:9 - Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. Little did we know that the theme and theme verse chosen in 2019 would help our students, staff and school community in 2020 to be encouraged week in and week out that God was present with them in the known and unknown times.

As we walked through the year, every aspect of how we implemented and executed our programs had to change because of the restrictions that came with COVID-19.

GSD, SEW weeks and combined school day of worship could not take place however,

College Dedication Service – 2020 commenced with the annual dedication service that occurs inside the gymnasium. This brought the school community together including parents and families and allowed them to be part of dedicating the school year to God. The students pledged to be the best student that they could be whilst at Gilson College. Gilson Staff acknowledges the responsibility alongside parents of educating the students and they pledged to do their best. Families and friends pledged to support the school in the opportunity Gilson gives to nurture their child.

Weekly Chapels – Due to COVID-19, our chapel program moved online. Mr. Rath and Mr. Gillard dedicated time and effort towards producing a quality online program that allowed the students to interact during the live stream on Monday mornings. Miss Woodward dedicated her time in to creating

a fun, engaging online chapel program for Primary school. These online chapels in both secondary and primary school featured different students that were on campus because of their parents being essential workers which allowed us to still connect, engage and implement what we had planned but in an online forum.

And at the end of the year, the Chaplaincy team along with the staff and students said farewell to two of our Chaplains. Mr. Brayden Rath and Miss Katie Woodward. They have both been an integral part of our chaplaincy team in impacting the students and staff in both their different ways but collectively connecting and creating a space where everyone can know God and experience God through the dedication of their work and heart for people and God!

As we finished off the year ready to enter in to 2021, our theme verse became the foundation of every twist and turn, trial and celebration. Now each time we turn to Joshua 1:9 we will remember a year of God bringing us through life's uncertainty once again.



SECTION 5 – COMMUNITY FOCUS

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SURVEYS

Due to the COVID Pandemic there were no community, student or staff surveys collated for the year.

SECTION 6 - CONCLUSION

The year 2020 was like no other at Gilson College. This is probably true for most schools as we navigated the constant changing landscape of onsite to online learning

In spite of the challenges with lockdown occurring for most of the school year, school life continued. We celebrated milestones, acknowledged achievements and supported each other via technological means. Excursions, outdoor activities and normal school events quickly became a thing of the past as we had to consider what we could and could not do. Temperature checking, sanitising hands and touchable, physical distancing and donning masks became the norm. Current building projects that began continued to completion albeit the challenges of accessing building supplies.

The Colleges financial outlook continues to remain positive, this is a credit to continuing sound management at the local level, and of course, the leadership of God. This solid financial and philosophical foundation will provide for further developments to the program at both Taylors Hill and at Mernda.

As never before and mostly in time of need the College community came together and persevered. While the negative results of the pandemic are still being felt, there were silver linings in amongst the gloom, parents were vocally appreciative of staff efforts to educate our students online. Families spent more time together. We had time to reflect and change gears perhaps for the better.

Gilson College continues to be a place where students can feel safe and secure, where staff can feel supported and enriched, and where families can be a part of something larger and more permanent than themselves. That has always been the vision, and the results are as always, people of integrity and Christian character.

