



St Bernadette's School, Victoria

About us

We are a small, co-educational, prep–6 Catholic primary school located in Sunshine North, Victoria, with a diverse student cohort drawn primarily from low-socioeconomic backgrounds. Approximately 87% of our students have a language background other than English (LBOTE).

Our approach

Our pedagogical practices at both school and a classroom level involve a range of initiatives and programs.

At a school level, we analyse big and small data to inform strategic direction. We do this with the NAPLAN writing results to see what students have done well and where learning gaps remain and we align this with our teachers' assessments of what students do, say, make or write. This knowledge informs our professional learning agenda which is targeted to meet the gaps.

We invest heavily in the junior years, teaching students to read for meaning and write for the communication of clear and coherent messages.

We have created a leader/co-teacher structure that places leaders alongside teachers, sharing responsibility for student outcomes and mentoring and coaching where needed. Leaders model strategies, provide feedback, co-plan learning sequences and build teacher capacity over time.

At a classroom level, there is a strong focus on data and evidence to establish student prior knowledge and to situate learning progressions. Teachers take students through deconstruction of text, structure and language features, and they model writing to scaffold student learning. Authorial elements such as sentence hooks, sentence length, grammar, punctuation and vocabulary are closely examined.

Students are given multiple opportunities to give and receive feedback based on rubrics to improve their writing. Exemplar texts are used to co-construct rubrics, making visible the success criteria required. Students use these rubrics to evaluate modelled samples, improve their own writing, and also provide feedback to peers. Feedback is used to inform focus groups and writing clinics, with attention given to specific elements requiring improvement or enhancement in each child's writing.

Opportunities to write are both teacher directed and student free choice. Free choice allows students to experiment with genres and publish writing in various multimodal forms, highlighting the range of purposes one can write for as well as the modes one may publish in.

Our profile

ENROLMENTS **358** LBOTE **87%** INDIGENOUS **0%** ICSEA **965**