

Media Release

4 October 2023



Melbourne Archdiocese
Catholic Schools

More families choosing a Catholic education

August 2023 school census figures have revealed that demand for Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Melbourne continues to grow.

Enrolments across 296 Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) primary and secondary schools increased by 1329 students (1.2%) this year to 114,407, up from 113,078 in 2022, representing around 20% of all students.

MACS Executive Director, Dr Edward Simons says it is pleasing that more families are seeking the distinctive ethos and values of Catholic schools for their children.

'This enrolment growth is a credit to the hard work of our principals, teachers and staff in delivering a high-quality, faith-based and affordable education option for families in communities across the Archdiocese.

'We are finding that parents are increasingly looking for a more holistic approach to education – one that is focused on excellence and development of the "whole person", and which will help their child succeed and be happy and confident in the world, no matter what path their future may follow.

'This aligns strongly with the distinctive promise of Catholic schools to provide an education that is inclusive and tailored to each student's individual needs.

'Our research also shows that families value the emphasis Catholic schools place on the pastoral care and wellbeing of students, along with our focus on strong partnerships with parents.'

Dr Simons said one of the key challenges is delivering school infrastructure quickly enough to meet increasing demand.

'Our modelling shows that demand for Catholic education is growing particularly strongly in Melbourne's northern and western corridors, where MACS has opened 12 schools since 2018, now educating over 4750 students. Seven new schools are also planned to open over the next three years in identified growth areas.

'While we greatly appreciate the support of state and federal governments to deliver this community infrastructure, we would welcome increased capital funding to further assist us to keep pace with demand.

'Our school and parish communities save government tens of millions of dollars every year through contributions to school fees and capital works.'

Dr Simons took the opportunity to thank and congratulate school communities for their ongoing good work when addressing principals at a forum in the Catholic Leadership Centre in East Melbourne today.

[See below for the list of new Catholic schools planned in 2024–26.]

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

James Goold House, 228 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne VIC 3002

Correspondence: PO Box 3, East Melbourne VIC 8002

T +61 3 9267 0228 E execdirector@macs.vic.edu.au www.macs.vic.edu.au

ABN 18 643 442 371 ACN 643 442 371

MACS – New schools planned 2024–26

2024

- Marymede Catholic College – Doreen Campus
- St Teresa of Kolkata Catholic Primary School, Tarneit North

2025

- Carlo Acutis Primary School, Wollert West

2026

- Catholic Primary School, Mount Atkinson
- Catholic Primary School, Mount Duneed
- Catholic Primary School, Thornhill Park
- Kolbe Catholic College – Mickleham Campus

Media contact: Gerard Delaney on 0413 274 176 or gdelaney@macs.vic.edu.au

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