

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 - 2024

MARIST SCHOOLS AUSTRALIA LTD



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Photo provided by St Gregory's College Campbelltown

MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR

The **philosophy** of Marist education is inextricably linked, motivated and inspired by Marist spirituality and tradition. Every Marist school throughout the world draws upon the same foundational documents as the well springs of this philosophy of Christian education. *Water from the Rock*¹ is a guide to Marist spirituality that has flowed from Saint Marcellin Champagnat. *In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat* is a guide to Marist pedagogy.

The charism of Saint Marcellin Champagnat is a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church, for the mission of the Church. In the two centuries since Saint Marcellin began Marist education, many people have been attracted to the distinctive Marist educational style. The Marist school has the gospel of Jesus Christ at its heart. Marist educators look to Mary as their example as they seek to nurture, to teach, to gather, to reconcile, and to stand with young people so as to give each and all of them reason and means to believe, to hope and to love. Marist schools are deeply committed to high quality, successful education through which learning outcomes for all students reflect awareness of individual gifts, interests, aspirations and achievements.

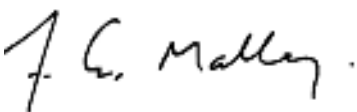
Marist schools strive to mould their school communities as families, where people relate to each other as with dignity, acceptance, honesty, and respect. From this basis, Marist education is both integrated and rigorous, aimed at growing men and women who will be compassionate and critical, articulate and aware, faith-filled and hopeful. On entering a Marist school, a person should find a community that is alive with the Gospel, a warm and hospitable place, *a learning community with purpose* and breadth of vision where there is a special care for those most in need.

The Marist Schools Australia Ltd (MSA Ltd) Strategic Plan identifies four priorities for 2021-2024. These have been discerned by the MSA Ltd Leadership Team in close collaboration with school principals in formal and informal settings. Other key stakeholders included the three MSA Regional Councils, the Marist Association of St Marcellin Champagnat Ltd Board and the Provincial Council of the Marist Brothers.

Whilst providing direction for the MSA Ltd Leadership Team, the plan also communicates priorities to our many partners in Catholic education throughout the 19 Dioceses in which Marist schools are located.

An aspirational document such as this can only bear fruit with much prayer and God's help. St Marcellin himself repeatedly reminded the first Brothers in those early days of Marist education, that the work was under the protection of Mary, Our Good Mother.

As we journey through the coming years, we present this Strategic Plan in a spirit of hope and trust and, like St Marcellin, to make Jesus Christ known and loved, in the way of Mary, through the education and care of young people.



Dr Frank Malloy



Photo provided by St Augustine's College Cairns

OUR MISSION

We exist to support the Catholic Church's evangelising mission to make Jesus Christ known and loved and to ensure quality education in the Marist tradition through our schools.

OUR VISION

Our vision is that our schools are faith filled communities of high quality, contemporary evangelisation in the way of Mary, with proven excellence in achievement for all young people.

WE MARISTS ...

We **Marists** are a vital faith community
an expression of Church
that embraces **God's mission**
with Marian joy, hope and audacity.

Our **discipleship** of Jesus Christ
and the priorities of all our ministries
are inspired by the **Gospel passion**
and compassion
which fired **Saint Marcellin**.

We remain **attentive**
to the God of all life,
and we are **committed**
to nurturing our spirituality
through **ongoing formation**.

We draw on both
Marist **tradition** and **imagination**
To be game-changers for young people,
particularly those most on the **peripheries**.

We foster connectedness and **communion**
among ourselves as an Association,
with the Marist **spiritual family** around the world,
and with the **wider Church** of which we are part.



Photos provided by St Francis Xavier's College Hamilton



OUR VALUES AS MARISTS¹:

Our Spirituality

God works in us, with us and through us. When we gather, we pray, like Mary, with a deep sense of hope: listening, pondering and compelled to act. Our prayer life is simple and deepens our relationships.

We engage in faith formation for mission and service in the Church and in the world.
We draw on the intuition, wisdom and grace of the Marist way of living the Gospel.
We nourish our spiritual life and deepen our personal relationship with Jesus through prayer and contemplation, Word and Sacrament.

Our Ministry

We are in relationship with young people, being attentive and responsive to their emerging needs and educating them to contribute to the building of a more just world – giving them a voice and inspiring hope.

We continue our commitment to evangelisation through education and care of children and young people in the realisation of a more humane world.
We identify and favour children and young people most in need so they can flourish and contribute to the common good.
We draw on our audacious hearts and a daring spirit in responding to the most urgent needs of children and young people.

Our Spiritual Family

We gather together in homes of faith that are hope-filled, where our welcome, homeliness and hospitality create spaces for people to feel a sense of belonging, connection and inclusion.

We nurture relationships with the global Marist family and the wider Catholic Church.
We embrace our shared responsibility for promoting the vitality of our Association and its mission.
We develop ways of strengthening our spiritual family, creating opportunities for people to experience a sense of belonging and commitment.

As Marists. Journeying Together 2019-2021

OBJECTIVES: ENACTING THE PHILOSOPHY - MARIST PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

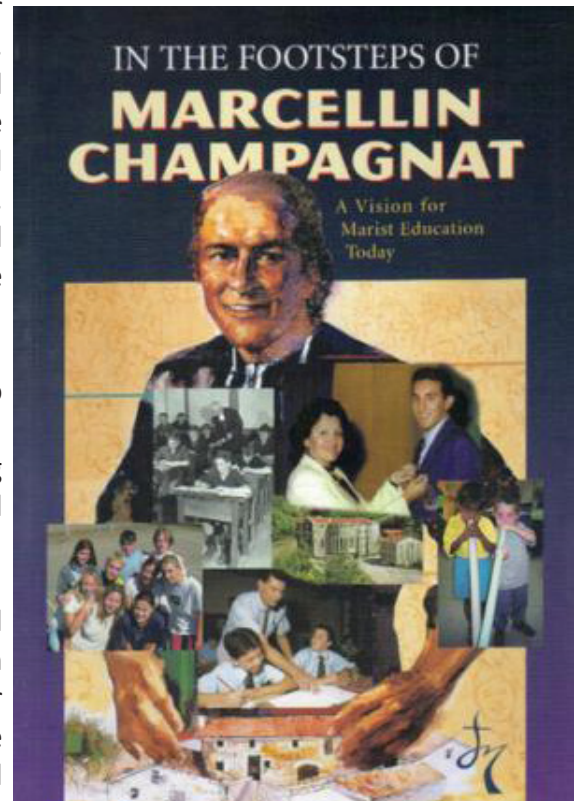
Marist pedagogical practice today draws on the values of the lived experience of generations of Marist educators since 1817. The values underpinning the Marist way of education were first codified in 1852 in *The Teacher's Guide*. The publication was written by companions of the founder Saint Marcellin and drew on his example, guidance and inspiration. Over the years *The Teacher's Guide* was updated, rewritten and translated. *In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat*¹ is the contemporary version of *The Teacher's Guide* and is a foundational formation document for Marist educators across the globe. Importantly five key **objectives** of Marist education are presented in this book and should be evident in every Marist school. These are:

Presence: Marists educate above all through being present to young people in ways that show care for them personally. Knowing each student individually and forming strong relationships creates a climate for learning in a values based educational setting that promotes personal growth.

Simplicity: Marist educators seek to be genuine and straightforward with young people by relating without pretence or duplicity. Such simplicity is the fruit of a unity of mind and heart, of character and action, that derives ultimately from being honest before oneself and before God. Linked to **simplicity** are **humility** and **modesty**, which make the “three violets”, the basic values of the Marist tradition: patiently allowing the action of God to work through people who seek “to do good quietly”. In teaching and organisational structures, Marists show a preference for simplicity of method. The way of educating, like Marcellin's, is personal, rooted in real life, and practical. Likewise simplicity of expression, avoiding any ostentation, guides the Marist way of responding to the possibilities and the demands in contemporary educational settings.

Family Spirit: Saint Marcellin's great desire and legacy is that Marist educators relate to each other and to the young people in their care as the members of a loving family would intuitively do. Life is shared, with its successes and failures. Clear standards of honesty are set, mutual respect and tolerance is established. Belief in each person's inherent goodness is fundamental and promoted. Individual's dignity and goodness are not compromised when mistakes are made. Marists are ready to trust each other, forgive each other, reconcile with each other. In the school setting, family spirit stands in contrast to an assembly-line or results-oriented education which does not respect the dignity and need of each young person. On the contrary, Marists give preferential attention to those whose needs are greatest, who are most deprived, or who are going through hard times.

Love of work: Saint Marcellin Champagnat was a man of work, a sworn enemy of laziness. Dogged effort and total confidence in God were characteristic of the ways he worked and lived. In a school setting, love of work implies a careful preparation of classes and educational activities, thorough correction of students' assignments and projects, planning and evaluation of programs, and additional accompaniment of those who are experiencing any sort of difficulties. It demands vision and decisiveness in developing creative responses to the needs of young people. In a society affected by consumerism and excess, Marists choose to train the younger generation to discover the dignity of work.



In the way of Mary: Mary is the perfect model of the Marist educator, as she was for Marcellin. As woman and layperson, Jesus' first follower, she inspires personal faith. As educator of Jesus at Nazareth, she inspires the Marist pedagogical approach. Mary's was a journey of faith. She was astounded by the extraordinary intervention of God in her life. In faith, she was open to the action of the Holy Spirit and responded wholeheartedly. Marists associate themselves with Mary so as to bring Jesus to birth in the hearts of young people. The credo of Saint Marcellin and for Marist educators the world over is "All to Jesus through Mary. All to Mary for Jesus."

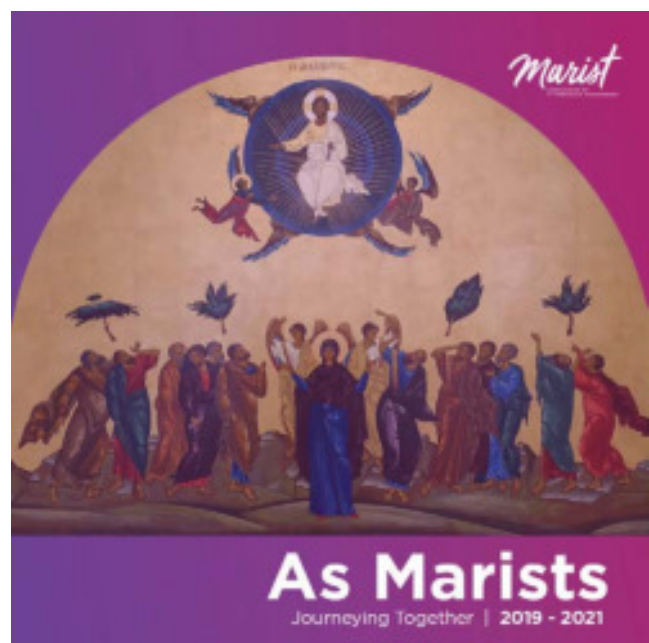
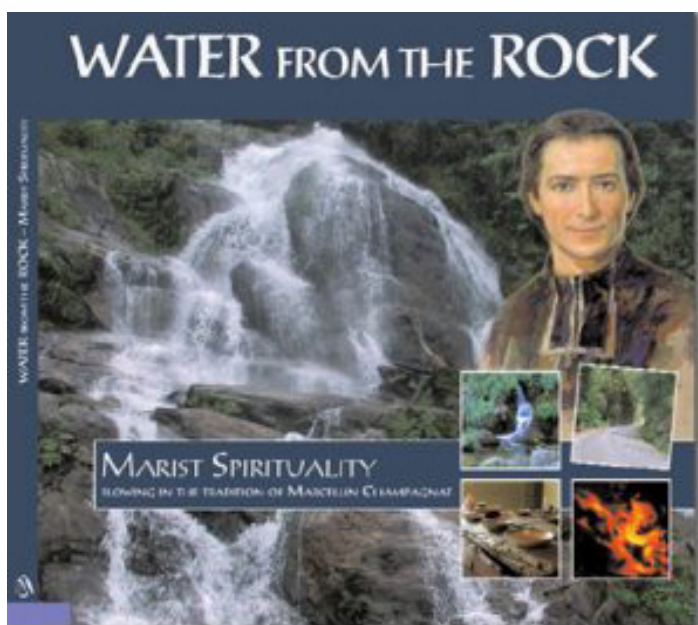
Expectations for schools

Marist Schools Australia Ltd has clear expectations of school leaders and teachers in fostering this educational philosophy in their strategic and day to day leadership. College vision and mission statements must clearly reflect Marist spirituality and pedagogical approach. These statements must be actively promoted to the school and broader community on each College website, in the College's Strategic Plan and College's Annual Report. For prospective and enrolling families Marist spirituality and pedagogical approach must be clearly communicated in the College Prospectus and Enrolment Package. College policies, procedures, and organisation must reflect the essence of Marist pedagogy as outlined In the Footsteps of Marcellin Champagnat and captured in the five characteristics.

Marist Schools Australia Ltd requires school staff to be engaged in ongoing annual Marist formation and professional learning as provided by the Mission and Life Formation team and the MSA Ltd executive, all of whom are highly successful and experienced Marist educational leaders.

Implementation of the Plan

For each year of the Strategic Plan an Annual Improvement Plan is established. Strategic Intentions, projects and specific strategies, personnel accountability, and timelines are clearly articulated. Importantly, evidence of progress is an essential element in reporting on the outcomes, benefits, results, and improvements gained over each 12 month period. The Annual Improvement Plan is a working document of the MSA Executive Team and is shared with MSA Ltd Board, MSA Regional Councils and MSA College Principals. It forms the basis of the Annual MSA Ltd Report.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2021 - 2024

1

CATHOLIC IDENTITY AND MARIST SPIRITUALITY

2

LEARNING AND TEACHING IN THE MARIST WAY

3

GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

4

STUDENT AND STAFF WELLBEING

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Catholic Identity and Marist Spirituality

We Marists are a vital faith community, an expression of Church that embraces God's Mission with Marian joy, hope and audacity.

COMPONENTS	STRATEGIC INTENT
1.1 Strengthening Marist schools as Christ-centred evangelising communities with strong connections to the life of the broader Catholic Church.	1.1.1 Strengthen the role of Marist schools in the evangelising Mission of the Catholic Church through innovative, vibrant and engaging formation programs for staff and students.
	1.1.2 Develop formation programs for leaders that strengthen staff and student relationships and nurture their spirituality.
	1.1.3 Nurture and strengthen the connection and participation of Marist schools with the local Church and neighbouring Catholic schools.
1.2 Enhancing the spiritual capacities of leaders in the Marist tradition.	1.2.1 Prioritise the spiritual development of Principals, Assistant Principals and middle leaders.
	1.2.2 Embed Catholic social teaching in leadership formation programs.
1.3 Strengthening the identity of Marist schools as authentic Catholic schools.	1.3.1 Foster innovative, liturgical, prayer and evangelisation programs that actively engage staff, young people and parents.
	1.3.2 Further nurture the life-giving, centrality of the scriptures in Marist communities.
	1.3.3 Embed Game Changers as the preferred Marist Youth Ministry program for schools.
	1.3.4 Strengthen Marist schools as agents of Catholic social teaching.
1.4 Prioritising the vitality of the Marist Association to support the spiritual life of MSA schools.	1.4.1 Integrate <i>As Marists Journeying Together</i> across professional learning offered by MSA.
	1.4.2 Foster a greater understanding of Marian joy, hope and audacity as characteristics of Marist schools.



Photo provided by Assumption College Kilmore



Photo provided by St Gregory's College Campbelltown

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Learning and Teaching in the Marist Way

We continue our commitment to evangelisation through education and care of children and young people in the realisation of a more humane world.

COMPONENTS	STRATEGIC INTENT
2.1 Strengthening Marist schools as communities of improved learning and teaching.	<p>2.1.1 Discern, communicate and embed proven research-based principles for effective school review and improvement.</p> <p>2.1.2 Strengthen the strategic partnerships with Diocesan Education Offices in the conduct and development of their School Review and Improvement processes.</p> <p>2.1.3 Network and share the most effective school-based improvement practices across the Marist schools of Australia.</p>
2.2 Build staff capacity in leading impactful, contemporary pedagogy enriched by the Marist tradition.	<p>2.2.1 Further discern, nurture, develop and embed Marist pedagogy through the capacity building of key school leaders.</p> <p>2.2.2 Build a shared language and common understanding around what successful learning looks like for young people in contemporary Marist schools.</p>
2.3 Build confidence and capacity among school leaders in the identification and use of student learning outcome data.	2.3.1 Extend the capacity of key school leaders in the use of performance data to enhance learning and teaching and to challenge ineffective pedagogy.
2.4 Identify researched evidenced based organisational and structural aspects of school leadership and management that promote improved learning outcomes.	2.4.1 In collaboration with school leadership teams, review school organisation and structure and modify where appropriate.



Photo provided by Sacred Heart College Adelaide

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Governance and Strategic Leadership

We draw on the intuition, wisdom and grace of the Marist way of living the Gospel.

COMPONENTS	STRATEGIC INTENT
3.1 Strengthen governance, strategic stewardship and accountability.	3.1.1 Collaboratively implement necessary and desired changes as determined by the creation of MSA Ltd.
	3.1.2 Consolidating skills and processes of the MSA Ltd Leadership Team and school leaders in matters related to governance, risk and compliance.
	3.1.3 Refine and improve the skills involved in risk management, compliance and reporting.
	3.1.4 Continuously improve MSA Ltd's compliance and accountability processes.
3.2 Further the development of the MSA Ltd Leadership Team and school leaders in strategic leadership.	3.2.1 Develop effective approaches for the formation, capacity building and skilling of MSA Ltd Councillors, Leadership Team members, Regional Councillors, College Advisory Councillors and school leaders.
	3.2.2 Review and improve HR processes, succession plans and selection processes for school leaders.
3.3 Work in partnership with Dioceses for the provision of new Marist schools in priority demographics.	3.3.1 Refine and clarify the policies, procedures and logistics for the provision of Catholic education in partnership with other stakeholders.



Photo provided by Newman College Perth

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Student and Staff Wellbeing

As Marists we draw on our audacious hearts and a daring spirit in responding to the most urgent needs of children and young people.

COMPONENTS	STRATEGIC INTENT
4.1 Strengthen understanding and response to key factors associated with wellbeing.	4.1.1 Develop comprehensive and longitudinal data sets and analysis in schools which inform decisions to support wellbeing.
	4.1.2 Prioritise and network life-giving and resilient student and staff wellbeing practices and policies.
	4.1.3 Prioritise the integration and ongoing improvement of Child Safeguarding.
4.2 Prioritise leadership formation and programs which address mental health, resilience, connection and a sense of belonging in staff and students.	4.2.1 Share across the MSA Ltd network examples of evidence based, effective, school-based staff and student wellbeing approaches and programs.
	4.2.2 Enhance the skills of Principals and senior leaders to support parents in addressing the wellbeing needs of their children.
4.3 Strengthen understanding of the intimate connection between prayer, resilience and well-being.	4.3.1 Prioritise with leaders the central role of prayer as a foundation for a resilient, connected Catholic community.
	4.3.2 Identify and share effective approaches to student and staff wellbeing in Marist schools.

Marist

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