



**ST MARY'S
COLLEGE**

EST. 1869

Strategic Plan

2025-2029

St Mary's College is an
educational ministry of
Dominican Education Australia



Foreword

St Mary's College was founded in 1869 by seven Dominican sisters, called from Ireland to create a school that provided a best quality education to the girls of greater Adelaide. When you hear the story told like that, you likely understand what happened, but in a distant, vaguely relevant way - it maybe doesn't move you or generate much emotion. We invite you to think differently...

Our starting point for this new era of strategic planning for the College was to spend time immersed in the stories of these seven women. Their names, their achievements, their challenges, their strengths and their frailties. We wondered how they would finish the sentence "I am...". What did they find funny? How did they react when something felt unfair? How did their eyes light up when they smiled?

This strategic plan seeks to connect the personal, lived experiences of those talented, gutsy, spirited and resilient women by picking up the golden thread and handing it to the people of St Mary's in 2025; theirs to sew with, run through their fingers, make a tangle of and set into new fabric. We are steeped in tradition as the oldest girls' school in South Australia, but we are far from traditional.

St Mary's College is founded upon the core Dominican tenet of veritas. In this identity, we are people of truth. Veritas is not a simple, binary kind of truth. For us, truth is the foundation for trust, the compass for decision-making, and the light that guides our community through uncertainty. Just as we are fully formed in the image of God and also growing and changing, so too, truth is in the being and in the becoming. As modern Catholics in the Dominican tradition, seeking truth is our past, present and future. In this search we respond and change as we strive for growth, build community and act for justice.

This plan emerged from dialogue. We are grateful for the generous participation and shared wisdom of this community.

We extend our deep gratitude for the mentoring, advice and love from the Holy Cross Congregation of Dominican sisters, particularly Sr Bernadette Kiley OP, Sr Angela Moloney OP, Sr Maureen O'Connell OP and Sr Anne Dolan OP.

We would also like to acknowledge Lyn Gregg, whose artistry has brought to life the spirit of Mother Teresa Moore's handwriting, gently weaving her presence throughout these pages.

We are both new members of this community. We invite you, whether you are new like us, or have been connected to the College for generations, to come with us as we pursue and realise the vision shared in this 2025-2029 Strategic Plan for St Mary's College.

Heidi Senior
Principal

Bruno Vieceli
Board Chair

Our foundation in veritas

Seven pioneer sisters, young women, individuals with talents, dreams and fears.

Since 1869, the story of St Mary's College has been one of courage, conviction and collective purpose. In the face of adversity that tested their fortitude and faith, the founding Dominican sisters found strength in truth, working together with vision and resilience. Bearing the gifts of knowledge and kindness, they drew on their emotional resolve to push their limits and imagine the impossible - answering the call to establish a secondary school for girls in Adelaide.

They founded a place where no subject or learning goal was off limits for girls and young women, a place that challenged the accepted norms of the time.

The signs of our times - marked by rapid change, digital noise, and deep social divisions - show us that truth is more vital than ever. At St Mary's College, truth empowers every girl to know herself, develop confidence, think critically and act with integrity. In our relationships, truth fosters authenticity and mutual respect.

Truth at St Mary's College is both our being and our becoming. It is the legacy we inherit and the future we shape.

Our pioneers

Mother Teresa Moore
Sister Stephana Waldron
Sister Patrick Hayden
Sister de Sales Gaffney
Sister Thomas Molloy
Sister Baptist Meade
Sister Catherine Murphy



Mother Teresa Moore

Sr Stephana Waldron

Sr Patrick Hayden

Sr. de Sales Gaffney

Sr Thomas Molloy

Sr. Baptist Meade

Sr. Catherine Murphy



**For all that she is,
and all she can be.**

Our Purpose

Our **'I am.'** identity is about recognising every girl as she is, her strengths and struggles, her passions and potential. Her truth is our shared reality and our purpose.

Our Values

Guided by veritas, our values are the lens through which we view the world. These values inform every decision and enliven every dream.

Community

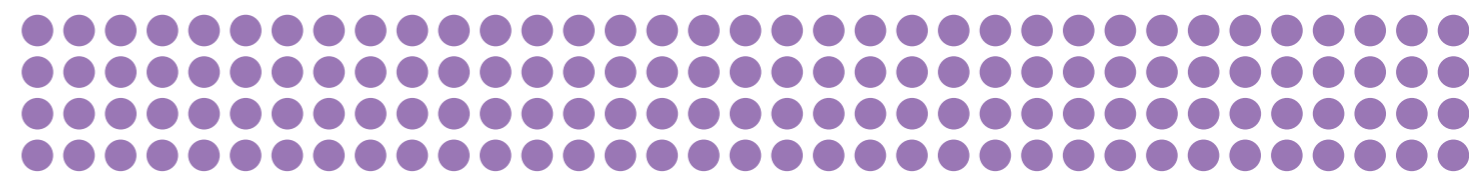
God is revealed to each of us in our encounter with others. We exist, learn and thrive together.

Justice

Jesus taught us that every person is sacred and we discover our interdependence with the Earth. We act with empathy to challenge and overcome injustice.

Growth

We are enlivened by the Holy Spirit to be able to learn. We create relationships and environments that ensure and recognise achievement and personal growth.





Strategic Goals

*In communio,
veritas*

**Truth is sought
in shared
connection, unity
and relationship.**

- 1.1 Strengthen empathy, accountability and respect demonstrated through community conduct and engagement

- 1.2 Sustain a culture of child safety that is active, embedded and visible

- 1.3 Grow the College's community connections to create authentic learning experiences and broaden support options for learners, their families and staff

- 1.4 Advance a communications strategy that strengthens engagement and ensures clarity, timeliness, and accessibility of information for learners and the wider College community

- 1.5 Build a model of subsidiarity in the College, where expertise and decision-making is held as closely as possible to their area of impact



*In educare,
veritas*

Truth is sought through learning, discovery, play and prayer.

2.1 Understand and optimise the learning journey of every student through data, evidence, practice and story

2.2 Enhance the authentic Catholic and Dominican identity of the College in a way that is an active invitation to faith for all

2.3 Strengthen the College's learning narrative by clearly articulating the role of the Junior, Middle, and Senior Years

2.4 Sustain a high-performing, collaborative team of staff who are supported to grow professionally towards optimal student outcomes



*In ordo,
veritas*

Truth is sought through structure, clarity and design.

3.1 Redevelop a College Master Plan that is sensitive to our historical significance and responsive to the needs of learners

3.2 Optimise the maintenance and functionality of current facilities to achieve our goals

3.3 Ensure workflows and systems are efficient, clear, compliant and effective

3.4 Establish a College structure that maximises connectedness and streamlines the services that learners need

3.5 Ensure governance and risk management are pro-active, evidence-informed and effective



A close-up photograph of two young women in school uniforms. The woman in the foreground is smiling broadly, looking towards the right. The woman behind her is also smiling and looking in the same direction. They are outdoors, with a blurred background of greenery and a blue sky. The lighting is bright and natural.

“We are grateful for the voices and stories of this community, each adding to the fabric of who we are and who we are becoming.”

The insights and data that informed our strategic goals came from the following consultation and research:

College Executive Team workshop

Full-day workshop and follow-up session with all College staff

Student survey

Student focus groups

Parent survey

Parent voice forum

Interviews with alumnae parents

Interviews with alumnae

Combined workshops with the College Board of Directors and Leadership Team

Stimulus panel and interviews with professional partners

Source material including the *Global Compact on Education (2019)*, *Mparntwe Education Declaration (2019)*, *Beyond ATAR: A proposal for change (2019)* and a number of papers published by *Learning Creates Australia*.

In ordo, veritas
In educere,
munio, veritas
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