



Chairo  
Christian School

# VRQA Report 2023

*Chairo Parent Governed Christian Education Limited*  
ABN 12 451 824 370

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## Executive Principal's Introduction

The Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority (VRQA) requires all registered schools to submit an annual report (by the end of August in the following year) for publishing on the State Register. It is my privilege to introduce Chairo Christian School's annual report for 2023.

Chairo has maintained a dedicated approach to fulfilling its mission: *to provide excellence in Christ-centred education, in partnership with families, within a caring Christian community*. This report will provide an overview of how that was expressed throughout 2023 across the five campuses operated by Chairo.

Chairo's campuses are located at Drouin East (K3 to Year 4), Drouin (Years 5 to 12), Pakenham (K3 to Year 12), Traralgon (K3 to Year 8) and Leongatha (K3 to Year 10).

Note: a significant development during 2023 was the announcement that Year 11 would commence at the Leongatha campus in 2024, with Year 12 to follow in 2025.

This report specifically covers the areas of staffing and student performance in national and state testing programs, with a particular focus on senior secondary student performance and post-secondary destinations. The data provides clear indications that we are fulfilling our mission at Chairo and serving our students and their families well. Notably, our graduates overwhelmingly were able to access their preferred pathways into tertiary education.

As a school community, we were delighted to provide full delivery of programs and experiences across the campuses in 2023, reinstating opportunities that had been lost during the years of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions. We were conscious of the many lingering effects upon learning and wellbeing, and concerted efforts were made to support students with individual needs.

Educational initiatives, including implementation of the Berry Street Educational Model and further consolidation of Chairo as a Professional Learning Community, have been seen to enhance student outcomes.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank staff members for their dedicated service, students for their engagement and parents for their partnership. Together, we make a community that helps each person to thrive and grow into the person that God intends them to be.

It is also appropriate to commend our company directors for their ongoing wise governance, noting that 2023 was the first full year of Chairo operating as a public company rather than an incorporated association.

I trust that you discover more about the Christian education provided at Chairo Christian School at Drouin, Drouin East, Leongatha, Pakenham and Traralgon by referring to the information provided within this report.

**Peter Wells BA, GDipEd, MEd, GAICD**  
**Executive Principal**

## 1. Contextual Information

Chairo Christian School is affiliated with CEN (Christian Education National). This national organisation of like-minded Christian schools forms an essential part of our identity.

From June 2022, Chairo's operating structure changed from that of incorporated association to public company (limited by guarantee), registered under the *Corporations Act 2001*, with the name Chairo Parent Governed Christian Education Limited.

The school is located on five geographically separate sites. In 2023, campuses operated at Pakenham (K3 to Year 12), Drouin (Years 5 to 12), Drouin East (K3 to Year 4), Leongatha (K3 to Year 10) and Traralgon (K3 to Year 8). From 2024, Leongatha will extend to Year 11, with Year 12 to follow the next year.

Our four kindergartens cater for the special developmental needs of young children through the provision of three-year-old and four-year-old programs. Our junior schools provide supportive and caring learning centres for students from Prep to Year 4, our middle schools cater for the particular learning needs of 'emerging adolescents' in Years 5 to 8 and our senior schools encompass the vital period from Years 9 to 12. Note: our Leongatha campus is an exception with more traditional primary school and secondary school sections.

In 2023, senior schools at our Drouin and Pakenham campuses provided a broad choice of VCE subjects, with some VET offerings, and a VCE VM program at each.

As at the Australian Government Census in August 2023, Chairo had 1,571 students enrolled from Prep to Year 12 across our five campuses. The student population is drawn from a widely spread geographic region, with students coming from as far away as Traralgon and surrounding regions in the east through to Narre Warren in the west and Foster in the south. Due to the rural locations of our five campuses, students predominantly arrive at school via buses or private vehicles.

Chairo caters for students from a diverse range of backgrounds. The families of many students are involved in rural occupations, such as dairy or beef farming and horticulture, with many also living in rural townships. However, the Pakenham campus sees significant numbers of our students coming from urban areas.

Whilst the majority of students come from Christian families, enrolments are also accepted from families that are supportive of the ethos of the school, despite having no church affiliation.

We serve the needs of families from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The My School website indicated that we drew our student intake fairly evenly from across the four Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage quartiles in 2023.

All activities and programs at Chairo are delivered from a Christian worldview perspective. This means that Christian perspectives are integrated throughout the whole curriculum rather than being added as a separate subject. Staff members participate in professional development programs that equip them to teach 'Christianly'.

Chairo continues to provide a vibrant kindergarten to Year 12 curriculum, with academic outcomes comparing favourably with statistically similar schools across the nation, and our VCE results also comparing favourably with the Victorian state average.

## Teaching and learning priorities and achievements

The following information relates to teaching and learning program highlights in 2023:

- Teachers continued to plan, implement and reflect on their classroom practice through the implementation of Chairo as a Professional Learning Community.
- Chairo continued professional learning based on the Berry Street Education Model as a wellbeing-for-learning framework that underpins student learning across every campus.
- All students in Years 5–12 continued to have access to individual personal learning devices, with students therefore having ready access to technology within all classes. Information evenings regarding the proper use of such devices and the internet were held at each campus for parents/guardians and students, along with cyber safety sessions to encourage appropriate use.
- The LOTE program continued to extend throughout the school. Language classes in Indonesian were conducted at the Drouin and Drouin East campuses, while both French and Indonesian were taught at the Pakenham campus.
- Increased ready access to student performance data was provided through the introduction of Essential Assessment for Numeracy, as well as Track One, a program that integrates well with our current school data base.
- The introduction of the Science of Reading framework to Prep to Year 2 classes at the Pakenham campus resulted in a marked improvement in the reading achievement levels in these years. The program will be introduced for students in Years 3 and 4 in 2024.
- Year 12 induction days were held in January for both Drouin and Pakenham campuses at separate locations for the purpose of renewing connections between students, and between students and staff members, and to provide focus and equipping for the year ahead.

At the Drouin campus, there were a series of sessions presented by visiting speakers, staff members and previous students. These sessions dealt with mental health, physical health, career paths, requirements for special consideration, navigating life after school and team-building activities. Lectures regarding how to maximise learning potential during Year 12 were presented by Elevate Education on the following day.

Year 12 students from the Pakenham campus participated in a day trip to Phillip Island, where they focussed on building relationships with the Year 12 and senior leadership teams. They spent time together in team-building and recreational activities. Upon their return to the campus, students engaged in an annual presentation from Elevate Education. This included time management, study skills, and health and wellbeing information.

- The new Vocational Major (VM) was introduced into the VCE suite of offerings for those students who learn best through practical and hands-on activities. Teachers spent the first half of the year ensuring that programs were well implemented, and that assessment and reporting reflected the requirements of the program and met the learning needs of the students.

VCE VM enrolments were consistent across both the Year 11 and 12 cohorts at the Drouin campus and students were involved in a wide range of activities, including the coordination of Vocational Major 'welcome to parents' evenings, and upskilling in small business and barista skills with the purchase of a commercial coffee machine as part of a student-run café.

VCE VM at the Pakenham campus resulted in increased student retention and efficacy for students suited to this style of learning. Students were able to participate in several practical tasks, including planning and running a range of events such as Music on the Lawn, the VM Cafe, food stalls and fundraisers.

- When communicating with students and families, teaching staff members continued to support students and parents/guardians via Linc, our learning management system, by actively engaging them with learning resources, assessments and timely feedback.

## **Capital expenditure, building programs and minor capital works**

The 2023 year saw the commencement and completion of several projects, including completion of the third stage of the major Pakenham Senior Centre and commencement of the fourth stage of the same project. Many smaller projects, including replacement of IT equipment, pathway and balustrading improvements at Drouin and Pakenham, playground improvements and other smaller projects, were completed.

The benefits of these projects will be experienced by the school community for years to come, and further development of car parking, disabled access, playgrounds and services across the school is planned to continue.

## **2. Teacher Standards & Qualifications**

At Census date in 2023, Chairo Christian School employed 164 teachers from Prep to Year 12.

All teaching staff held valid accreditation with the VIT (Victorian Institute of Teaching) and provided satisfactory police record checks.

With regards to their primary qualification, of the 164 teachers employed at Chairo as at Census date in 2023:

- 89 held a bachelor's degree in education or teaching
- 65 held a diploma or graduate diploma in education or teaching
- 10 held a master's degree

Note: 13 of these qualifications were equivalent qualifications, earned from overseas tertiary level educational facilities.

Of the 164 teachers, 98 held multiple qualifications, which included:

- 15 with an additional master's degree
- 3 with doctorates
- 75 with additional bachelor's degrees
- 28 with additional diplomas or graduate diplomas
- 4 with graduate or post graduate certificates

### 3. Workforce Composition

As at the Australian Government Census in August 2023, Chairo had 1,568 student enrolments from Prep to Year 12 across our five campuses. In addition to this, at Census we had 173 children enrolled in three-year-old and four-year-old kindergarten programs located at Drouin East, Pakenham, Traralgon and Leongatha. At Census, the number of staff members employed within the school to appropriately cater for the needs of these students and their families were as follows:

#### Teaching Staff:

129.7 FTE (full-time equivalent) teaching staff members were employed, involving 164 individual staff members. Of these, 79 were full-time and 74% were female.

#### Non-Teaching Staff:

87.1 FTE (full-time equivalent) non-teaching staff members were employed, involving 141 individual staff members. Of these, 28 were full-time and 75% were female.

Note: non-teaching staff members include classroom aides and learning support assistants, administration and finance staff, specialist support staff such as welfare chaplains and grounds & maintenance staff, and non-teaching library staff.

In accordance with the requirements of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012*, Chairo lodged its annual public report for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 with the Workplace Gender Equality Agency. This report included the information below, which was accurate as at 31 March 2024.

Workplace profile									
Worker category (as per Act)	Women		Men		Casual		Total	%	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Women	Men		Women	Men
Board	N/A						Volunteers		
Principal/ CEO	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	100
Key Management Personnel	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	100
Principals/ Other Executives	3	0	1	0	0	0	4	75	25

Senior Managers	6	2	8	0	0	0	16	50	50
Other Managers	5	7	5	1	0	0	18	67	33
Professionals (Teachers/ IT)	54	65	23	20	25	15	202	71	29
Community & Personal Service	1	59	1	13	12	5	91	79	21
Labourers	0	2	4	4	2	0	12	33	67
Technicians And Trade Workers	0	0	4	2	0	0	6	0	100
Clerical & Administrative	6	44	0	1	10	0	61	98	2

#### 4. Student Attendance

On average, the percentage of students absent from school each day in 2023 was 10.04% (therefore 89.96% attendance). This was an improvement on 2022 (86.13% attendance) and continues a gradual move back to pre-COVID attendance levels, as students fully adjust back to normal routines and concern over minor sickness symptoms lessens. The 2023 attendance figures are broken down by year level below:

<u>Year Level</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Year Level</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Prep	91.46%	8.54%	7	89.15%	10.85%
1	90.03%	9.97%	8	90.03%	9.97%
2	90.53%	9.47%	9	87.50%	12.50%
3	91.86%	8.14%	10	88.08%	11.92%
4	90.75%	9.25%	11	90.34%	9.66%
5	90.99%	9.01%	12	90.00%	10.00%
6	90.31%	9.69%			
			<b>Whole School</b>	<b>89.96%</b>	<b>10.04%</b>

#### Management of Student Non-Attendance

At Chairo, we place a high priority on communicating effectively and promptly with all families. This is in line with our mission statement, which refers directly to the term 'in partnership with families' and impacts the way in which we respond to families in relation to student attendance.

Student attendance rolls are marked electronically at the start of, and during, the school day. Notification of student absences, where no explanation has been received, is forwarded promptly to



parents/guardians via an SMS message. If not provided earlier, a parent/guardian explanatory note outlining the reason for an absence is requested upon return to school.

Home group, core or class teachers are expected to personally contact the parents/guardians of a student in their class who has been absent for a number of days. This provides both pastoral care support and a further accountability process in relation to the absence. The number of student absences is also recorded in student semester reports.

## 5. Senior Secondary Outcomes

Statistics from our VCE cohorts	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023</u>
	DRN	PAK	DRN	PAK
No. of students enrolled in VCE Units 3 & 4	70	100	59	69
No. of students enrolled in a VCE VET Certificate	14	30	22	33
% of satisfactory VCE completion	100	100	100	100
% of eligible students applying for tertiary places via VTAC	71	88	96	60
Of those students, % obtaining a first round offer	97	90	77	88
Average ATAR	61.80	62	64.65	67
Highest ATAR	96.55	91.80	98.35	93.05
Median study score	28	27	29	30
% of study scores of 40 or above	4.9	3.7	5.1	3.4
% of students attaining an ATAR score greater than 80	10	15	31	20
% of students attaining an ATAR score greater than 70	38	30	40	50
% of students attaining an ATAR score greater than 60	49	63	54	69
% of students attaining an ATAR score greater than 50	79	78	71	88

## 6. National Literacy and Numeracy Testing Student Outcomes

Chairo is committed to quality assurance through the monitoring of student data. Three main sources of data are used for monitoring: NAPLAN, standardised testing (such as PAT) and VCE.

### NAPLAN Results using the NAPLAN Scale

This report uses the NAPLAN scale. Chairo scores are shown in the upper row for each year level and can be compared to statistically similar schools (SIM) and all schools (ALL) in the lower row.

2023	Reading		Writing		Spelling		Grammar & Punctuation		Numeracy	
<b>Year 3</b>	428		436		402		427		419	
	SIM 412	ALL 405	SIM 423	ALL 416	SIM 408	ALL 404	SIM 418	ALL 411	SIM 413	ALL 407
<b>Year 5</b>	495		476		482		497		492	
	SIM 502	ALL 496	SIM 489	ALL 483	SIM 492	ALL 489	SIM 502	ALL 497	SIM 493	ALL 488

<b>Year 7</b>	550		543		532		543		534	
	SIM 548	ALL 538	SIM 545	ALL 534	SIM 546	ALL 539	SIM 549	ALL 539	SIM 548	ALL 538
<b>Year 9</b>	578		581		569		565		575	
	SIM 573	ALL 564	SIM 579	ALL 567	SIM 573	ALL 568	SIM 567	ALL 557	SIM 576	ALL 568
<b>2022</b>	<b>Reading</b>		<b>Writing</b>		<b>Spelling</b>		<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>		<b>Numeracy</b>	
<b>Year 3</b>	454		439		416		445		420	
	SIM 443	ALL 448	SIM 427	ALL 422	SIM 421	ALL 418	SIM 439	ALL 433	SIM 405	ALL 400
<b>Year 5</b>	509		484		494		492		484	
	SIM 514	ALL 510	SIM 490	ALL 484	SIM 507	ALL 505	SIM 502	ALL 499	SIM 491	ALL 488
<b>Year 7</b>	553		536		543		535		547	
	SIM 548	ALL 543	SIM 536	ALL 530	SIM 551	ALL 547	SIM 539	ALL 533	SIM 551	ALL 546
<b>Year 9</b>	610		577		587		601		597	
	SIM 588	ALL 578	SIM 571	ALL 560	SIM 583	ALL 577	SIM 539	ALL 533	SIM 590	ALL 584

## 7. Parent/Guardian, Student and Teacher School Satisfaction

Chairo highly values the opinions of our students, parents/guardians and staff members. Their responses help us to better provide for the social, emotional and spiritual welfare of our students.

We recognise the educational partnership that exists between home and school and therefore invite regular responses from our school community. These responses are gathered in a variety of ways, including a formal range of surveys, the holding of parent-teacher-student interviews and regular home/school communication.

### Parent Governance

The constitution requires that the board of directors of the company that operates Chairo comprises a majority of members who are parents with children in the school. This is a clear and current means of ensuring that the values, opinions and sentiments of parents are heard and responded to across the school. Company members are also predominantly current or recent past parents, giving them the opportunity to provide feedback through general meetings and the election of parents as directors.

### Student Feedback

Each student meets in a core-group gathering with a consistent teacher each day. As part of this gathering, information is sought and shared with students, including immediate and ongoing feedback on the emotional, social, academic and spiritual welfare of each student.

### Parent Exit Surveys

Whenever a family leaves the school, they are given the opportunity to complete an exit survey to provide feedback about their experiences, both positive and negative, at Chairo. These surveys reinforce the high level of satisfaction that exists amongst our families, while parents/guardians who express concerns provide valuable information that helps drive improvements.

### Staff Feedback

There are formal and informal opportunities for staff members to receive and provide feedback about Chairo as a workplace. An annual 'listening tour' is conducted by the Executive Principal and Human Resources Manager, with staff members at each campus being invited to open meetings (or 1:1 meetings by request) to raise matters that are of concern to them as employees and colleagues. All staff members are also informed of major financial and operational considerations and decisions for the coming twelve months in campus meetings held in Term 4 each year.

### LEAD Surveys

The school regularly surveys students, parents and staff members using annual satisfaction surveys conducted through ISV (Independent Schools Victoria). These are referred to as LEAD surveys (Listen, Evaluate, Act, Deliver). In 2023, we surveyed all three sections of our school community. Collated data was compared to prior years, trends were identified and results were presented to both school management and the Board of Directors for consideration. Communication of outcomes also occurred with those who participated. Findings and recommendations from the surveys were then built into operational plans for the following twelve months to embed improvements into programs.

## 8. Post School Destinations (Year 12)

### Post Year 12 Destination Information:

VCAA school numbers: 01890 (Drouin Campus), 13404 (Pakenham Campus)  
VCAA school name: CHAIRO CHRISTIAN SCHOOL  
Address locality: DROUIN and NAR NAR GOON

	<u>2022</u> DRN	<u>2022</u> PAK	<u>2023</u> DRN	<u>2023</u> PAK
Total completed Year 12 (actual number)	42	49	47	42
<b>Tertiary Applications and Offers</b>				
Tertiary applicants (actual number)	30	41	24	25
Any tertiary offers	97%	100%	100%	100%
University offers	83%	95%	92%	95%
TAFE/VET offers	17%	5%	8%	5%

## 9. Income Broken Down by Funding Source

Chairo operated five campuses during 2023 in relatively low socio-economic areas (SES funding level of 93 and DMI of 93) in rural Victoria and on the Melbourne metropolitan fringe.

In line with this background and the school's ethos, fee policies allow for parents/guardians across all socio-economic quartiles who desire a Christian education for their children to access our school, while ensuring income is maintained at a level that, with good management of resources, ensures excellent educational outcomes.

In 2023, as reported in financial statements, our total operating income was \$40,133,247. Of this, 54.6% came from Australian Government recurrent grants, 16.8% came from State Government recurrent grants, 21.0% came from tuition fees and 7.6% came from other sources.

In 2023, 1,568 students were enrolled across our five campuses from Prep to Year 12. Our operating margin (excluding depreciation) was 11.6%. Chairo is a not-for-profit entity, with any cash operating surpluses being used entirely to further develop and maintain the school. Our Pakenham and Drouin campuses are both in growth areas of Victoria and capital development needs will be consistent as the numbers grow each year.

As at the end of 2023, Chairo had borrowings of \$4,107,711.

----- End of Report -----