EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Marist College is a learning community built on the philosophy that every child is known and loved. It fosters connections between educators, learners and their broader community, working at multiple levels.

While all learners belong to the broader college community, they are given tools to connect with others around them. Learning is structured within 3 villages (La Valla (F-4), Montagne (5-8), Champagnat (9-12)). Each community supports students at their stage of development and builds the skill they need to grow, thrive and continue on their journey of lifelong learning. The Villages have connected themes and language, but are also distinct with their own character and sense of belonging building a picture of interrelated ownership for the learning communities.

LA VALLA

For the school’s youngest learners, La Valla is a beautiful child-centric place of engaged Learning for 5-10-year-olds. Based on a Reggio Emila Approach, Learners are immersed in a dynamic, engaging space that encourages curiosity and imagination. It is a connected, bright and warm textual place that invites students to touch and respond to their environment. The building provides possibilities for exploration with its:

- Child-sized pathways (including a termite mound and dinosaur skeleton entry).
- Life wall (with hidden spaces for learning/display including mirror rooms, dome viewing port, reading nooks, pop-outs etc.).
- Low windows (providing views for those sitting on the ground), internal courtyard/waterway (bringing the landscape in).
- And quiet sensory spaces (retreat).

This foundational space provides children with a grounded beginning that makes learning an inspiring and delightful journey of discovery.

MONTAGNE

From here, Marist Learners move into the Montagne Centre, a beautiful setting sits at the edge of a wetland and is a place where learners engage with their ever-changing landscape. This nurturing environment fosters independence in learners, it’s a space for them to grow and thrive. Here the natural/textural palette continues with new independence in learners, it’s a space for them to grow and change. This nurturing environment fosters a positive and collaborative culture and a strong identity as an organisation. It’s a welcoming place that invites new people in and encourages them to stay to build a growing community together.

A GROWING COMMUNITY

The first students arrived in 2015 (forming the year 7&8 founding cohort), since then Marist College Bendigo has continued to evolve and thrive. The facilities developed across several stages with each phase providing time to reflect and refine the earlier work. Through this filter, the college and the design team have been able to create responsive environments that meet the physical, pedagogical and philosophical needs of Learning.

Settings within Marist College respond to their environment, with empowering spaces that utilise Biophilic design principals to connect learners to the natural world in their every day learning. It is another way to connect to the message that Learning can happen anytime, anywhere and anyhow.

The facilities provide a place to belong and connect, with design elements and a school approach design to foster a positive and collaborative culture and a strong identity as an organisation. It’s a welcoming place that invites new people in and encourages them to stay to build a growing community together.

At Marist, the physical environment has been designed around the pedagogical philosophies, ensuring that the architecture enhances rather than restricts the potential of Learning.

CHAMPAGNAT

As students enter their final years with the school, they needed to be given a more mature setting, linked to an awareness of interdependence with others. While key themes continue in the buildings form, design and layout, the response is refined and targeted to its older occupants.

Champagnat provides enriching environments that allow students within the Marist Approach to thrive as they mature into young adults. Specialist spaces complement more fluid independent and collaborative spaces, ensuring that learners have access to senior science spaces within an array of facilities. Educators and designers collaborated to ensure that areas reflected students learning needs.

SCOPE OF WORKS AND BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Marist College Bendigo</th>
<th>Maiden Gully, Victoria, Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal:</td>
<td>Darren McGregor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area: Site: 14.5ha / 35.83Acre</td>
<td>Total building areas 952m2 / 103,140ft²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity:</td>
<td>1500 (Foundation to Year 12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STAGES:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montagne (5-8)</td>
<td>Completed: Feb 2015, extended 2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building area: 1,328m2 / 14,295ft²</td>
<td>Total Project costs $8.46m (AUD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champagnat (9-12)</td>
<td>Completed: March 2016</td>
<td>Building area: 1,148m2 / 12,357ft²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Hub (joint use)</td>
<td>Completed: March 2016</td>
<td>Building area: 1,865m2 / 20,075ft²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourviere (flexible multipurpose space)</td>
<td>Completed: May 2016, extended 2019</td>
<td>Total Project costs $5.16m (AUD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally the school has some relocatable buildings currently used for Administration and Staff spaces.

Responding to the needs of learners at their stage of development, (Top, La Valla, Middle Montagne, Bottom Champagnat)
Building a Legacy

Connecting to L'Hermitage, France (Birthplace of Marist Faith)

Marist College Journey

Building Program

College Milestones

- Master Planning & Educational Specification
  - 2013

- Founding Students Begin 105 Yrs 7 learners
  - 2014

- Montagne Centre (5-8) Opens
  - Work Commences on
  - 2015

- Community Hub Opens
  - Fourviere Centre opens
  - 2016

- First Year at MCB
  - 225 Learners (7&8)
  - 2017

- Founding Students Graduates
  - 2018

- First Foundation (La Valla)
  - 605 Learners
  - 2019

- Montagne Extension Opens
  - 1280 Learners
  - 2020
I didn't enjoy school as a kid and my daughter battled through primary school. This year she has just blossomed and I think it is because of the way the building at Marist is different, attractive and helps my daughter to relax. We have had some learning nights for parents and we have been able to use these great facilities. I wish I could go back to school.

Cathy Williams: Parent
SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Local Context

Bendigo is a town of 110,000 people, located 200km (125mi) from Melbourne (State Capital). It was founded during the Australian Goldrush in the late 1800s and at the time was the wealthiest city in the world. It has a rich cultural heritage but experienced many years in decline. In recent year’s the region has had a renaissance with new investments in Arts, Culture, Health and Business tied into steady growth.

Bendigo has had significant investment in education in recent years. The region’s changing demographics have lead to strategic re-thinking around delivery and innovation in approach to education, which has been very successful. As a result, the community is receptive to change. Educational Planning of Marist College took full advantage of this climate, and its status as a new school push the boundaries of what a school can be. It’s a place where the growing Marist Community, embrace and enhance the Marist Approach, with a unique setting focused on student agency over learning.

Who are the Communities That a school serves?

This is the fundamental question that lies at the heart of any school development, but for a new school, it is particularly relevant and perhaps less visible. We must identify who we are serving to be able to engage with them and form a strategy that addresses their needs.

For Marist, there was a multitude of factors to consider when thinking about community engagement, including:

- A local community who lacked facilities and assets (a situation that exacerbated by the region’s growth),
- A Marist Community with a strong heritage and traditions that the new facilities could respond to,
- Marist Brothers Old Collegians Association, local alumni of a displaced school who wanted to forge new connections to Marist College
- A regional government and local authorities, who saw the opportunities the new site presented to invest in local infrastructure
- Catholic Education office, who were able to provide support and guidance in the development of the new school
- A local Catholic School, who was at capacity and were able to offer a local support network for the development
- Educational Committee (a group of leading educators from the region who were brought together to create the educational specification for the school)
- A local indigenous community, who gave insights and connections to local heritage
- A network of potential parents and students, who would be excited enough to sign up to the project before it was even a school

Process and Challenges

It was vital that our approach engaged with all stakeholders and aspects early in the development, in order to draw out a plan that would ensure the school’s relevance and importance for its community. When envisioning what Marist College could be, the team worked at multiple levels considering the Educational approach, Culture/Identity and pragmatic tools. This framing enabled meaningful and effective dialogue with communities and built an approach that would provide intrinsic value to the college and its surrounding community.

PRAGMATIC APPROACH

An establishment committee was born that drew in representatives across the spectrum to address the practical issues that the new school would face. Key topics included:

- The lack of sewer/overland flooding that occurred on the site (which lead to a plan to create a holistic approach to water management from the creation of wetlands to the on site treatment of blackwater),
- Building connections to the local precinct plan, which provided the seeds for the joint community use of facilities
- Creating a strategy which factored in yearly funding/grant cycles to develop a staged program that would ensure that students were accommodated throughout the schools years of growth.

CULTURAL/SPRITUAL APPROACH

In addition to the pragmatic issues, the school needed to build a sense of identity and culture. This challenge involved looking at the Marist’s Cultural roots and the local (and Australian) context of the school. It included travelling to France to experience’s significant places for the Marist Brothers as well as discussions with local Dja Dja Wurrung Representatives, and research into the existing site (its found state as farmland and its past as Iron box Forest).

This work created a rich and meaningful master plan, connected to its cultural communities though forms/structure, use of materials and approach to landscape.

EDUCATIONAL DIRECTION

At the heart of all decision making were discussions around the Pedagogical approach the school would take. An educational committee was formed, utilising the skills and expertise of educators and specialists from around the region. This group conducted in-depth discussions, research and reflection that drew on the individual passions and knowledge of members to form a direction moving forward. These initial discussions are built into the school’s DNA school, developing a continuous process of reflection and evaluation of Marist’s approach to learning.
SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Process and Challenges

SUBSEQUENT STAGES
Each year, the College community grows, drawing in new learners, educators, parents and friends who are engaged by the Marist Approach. Different aspects appeal to different individuals, but viewed as a whole it has created a supportive and enthusiastic community driven by common goals.

Before any new project, there are extensive discussions with stakeholders, where the pedagogical needs of learners are assessed and analysed. This method allows for deep critical reflection of the needs of learning before any design decision is made.

As the latest stage, La Valla has greatly benefited for this refinement of the process. We were able to create beautiful, nurturing spaces that respond fluidly to the needs of Learning.

DESIGNING LA VALLA
Before the first school year, the founding group of educators travelled to Italy to immerse themselves in Reggio Emilia practice. This, combined with their extensive research, lead them to become experts on all things Reggio. On returning the Educators created an enriching, nature-based learning environment within some existing portable buildings on the site. In this environment, 45 5 years olds, commenced their first year at Marist and provided a brilliant testing ground to develop the programs and designs of their permanent home.

Over a 4 month period, regular sessions were held with the Educators, design team and Educational experts from La Trobe University to discuss what the Pedagogical approach would look like at Marist. This work was focused on bridging gaps in understanding between the design team and educators (that occur through barriers such as language, comprehension of drawings, mind-set). The approach created a collaborative culture, where ideas where presented, discussed and developed together in a way everyone could understand.

Some of the Activities included
• Site tours to other facilities using a Reggio Approach (with thorough dissemination of the Educators thoughts on their approaches)

• Research and discussion on key themes and ideas relevant to La Valla
  Assessment of Hierarchies / influence of educational programs and the space they required
  Evaluation of relationships between required spaces and programs
  Observations of learning at Marist (where sessions within La Valla were observed, and then discussed)
  Observation on the use of space within existing facilities, what worked/ what didn’t
  Spatio Temporal Exercises where we looked at the use of space over a day (the groupings and distribution of Learners, educators and community support mentors.

This work informed and developed the design team’s response and created a design that fulfils and extends the original brief. Informing the design is a deep understanding of the educational requirements, philosophy and ambitions for learning at Marist. It was created in a process that all the educators could understand and relate to.

Additionally, this partnership has lead to other opportunities:
When it came time to develop their playgrounds, Marist College wanted to engage with the Children at La Valla and their families. Children worked with their educators to build ideas on what they wanted, creating drawings, paintings, and physical sculptures that represented their idea. The kids presented their ideas, which were developed into the design of their discovery garden. This garden was then created by the Marist community, with parents and friends all lending a hand to build an enriching outdoor learning environment that the children with cherished for years to come.
What are you making?
‘We’re not sure yet, but we’re going to use our imagination’
Amelia & Zoe (La Valla Learners)
EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Marist Approach

Marist College Bendigo is a learning community where the student is at the centre of all learning experiences. This proposition is key to understanding the educational environment at Marist and is inbuilt in the approach to learning from Foundation to Year 12. The college provides its community with a guiding set of Principles of Learning and Educating that give a clear set of goals and expectations to all parties. These principles place the needs of each learner are at the forefront of all decision making. They are designed to stimulate and engage all learners, no matter their age, interest, preferences or skills. The facilities have been designed to support student-centric learning, providing age-appropriate settings that inspire learners.

Principles of Learning

- A student learns most effectively in a calm environment where they feel safe and their opinions are valued.
- Students learn in a range of different ways and the individual learning styles of students are to be recognised and utilised.
- Students learn best when they are engaged in their learning.
- Students learn best when their curriculum is meaningful to their lives.
- Numeracy and literacy are critical to all elements of student learning.
- A skills based approach best prepares a student for further learning.
- Project based learning is to be encouraged for all students.
- Learning is enhanced through the use of effective feedback.

Principles of Educating

- Collaboration between educators is essential for quality facilitation of learning.
- Educators will focus on their role of facilitating learning.
- Educators will strive to recognise the learning style of each student.
- Educators will adjust curriculum based on student data and their knowledge of each student.
- Educators will focus on essential skill development.
- All Educators shall value the importance of numeracy and literacy.
- Explicit teaching has its place in enhancing student centred learning.
- Educators utilise a variety of feedback methods to enhance student learning.
- Educators are lifelong learners and will model this to the students.

Stages of Development

While the Principals of Educating and Learning provide overall guidance, the approach is framed around the child’s journey from early childhood to young adult.

The 3 Villages - La Valla (5-10 year olds), Montagne (10-14), Champagnat (14-18). Familiar themes run through the programs in each village but become increasingly complex as learners mature, giving them the skills they need to grow and thrive. Additionally, new focus areas and approaches are introduced that keep student engaged as they are designed to resonate with learners at their stage of development.
A REGGIO APPROACH

“When it came to designing a program for the schools youngest learners, the educators were inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy and its unique view of the child.

SHARING
In this approach, there is a belief that children have rights and should be given opportunities to develop their potential. Children are believed “knowledge bearers”, so they are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas about everything they could meet or do during the day.

ACTIVE CONSTRUCTORS
Students are also viewed as being an active constructor of knowledge. Rather than being seen as the target of instruction, students are seen as having the active role of an apprentice.

RESEARCHERS
This role also extends to that of a researcher. Much of the instruction at Marist takes place in the form of projects where they have opportunities to explore, observe, hypothesize, question, and discuss to clarify their understanding.

SOCIALLY AND EMOTIONALLY AWARE
Students are also viewed as social beings and a focus is made on the child in relation to other children, the family, the educators, and the community rather than on each child in isolation.”

Educators Message

La Valla Environment
La Valla is child-centric it is an environment that encourages them to be curious, to use their imagination and to explore and test their ideas. Design elements focus on the child’s perspective and offer experiences and journeys that allow children to create their own narratives. Nature is used throughout the Village, threading inside and out to create a rich tapestry for the children.

"Children do not wait for our permission to think. Indeed, children are bursting with ideas that are always impatient to escape through language (and we say a hundred languages) to connect and communicate with the things of the world.”

Loris Malaguzzi, Founder Reggio Emilia Approach
STRUCTURE TO BUILDING ZONING
La Valla can be divided into four main areas, this includes; 2 studios to the North (that can house up to 120 learners), 1 to the South West (for up to 60 Learners), and a shared dynamic Piazza space that sits between.

ATELIER
Experimentation and discovery sit at the heart of all learning at La Valla, and their environments needed to support this. As such the majority of space within each studio acts as an Atelier (workshop/making space), allowing learners to spread out and push their ideas onwards without being limited by space. The atelier act as giant workshops but are complemented by the placement of sliding screens and joinery units that can be used to zone and screen spaces. This allows for various configurations of learners as they move from working in a small group to large across their day. It also creates opportunities to define areas based on activities and topics.

SOFT SPOT
It was also imperative that each studio had access to a quieter / calmer space. The soft spots provide a retreat, a place for reading and quiet instruction.

SENSORY SPACES
Additionally, learners have access to Sensory spaces that provide a soothing and nurturing place for overstimulated minds to calm down.

PIAZZA
This shared space is a vital tool used in everyday learning. While infinitely flexible this space needed to be purposeful (ensuring its usefulness). This was done by creating zones around different activities while maintaining circulation roots.
Additionally, the Piazza provides access to a range of child-centric experiences with a life wall. This element offers a variety of opportunities from infinity mirror spaces, lighting/shadow play areas, interactive display areas, seating, pop-outs and more.

COURTYARD
A central courtyard between the to North Studios provides additional connections to nature. A stream runs through this space using water runoff from the building. Eventually, plan tings will make this into a small oasis within the village.

OUTDOORS
Throughout La Valla, there is a constant connection to outdoors, from the materials and language to physical links that allow learning spill outwards and celebrate the ever-changing environment.

“The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say: “The children are now working as if I did not exist” – Maria Montessori
La Valla - What does learning look like?
Literacy, Numeracy, Imagination, Curiosity

Example of a Project plan, that builds themes and comprehension over time

Example of how this works in practice

Our Experiment Day

"The greatest sign of success for a teacher is to be able to say: 'The children are now working as if I did not exist" - Maria Montessori

Sharing our learning with others makes it more purposeful. In planning our first Experiment Day, the students were personally responsible for collecting and bringing materials from home as well as inviting families and friends to attend. Within our La Valla learning experience the children are encouraged to build robust learning, organizational and problem-solving skills (Personal Capabilities). Some children had practised even as an egg that cracked on the way to school. Initially, the children had some difficulty dealing with the disappointment of having a cracked egg and then modifying their thoughts on how the experiment might then proceed with a cracked egg.

The students followed their individual experiment methods; they had written, discussing their materials, following the steps, making observations and collecting data. Family and friends were invited to be a part of these observations, use of scientific vocabulary and independent behaviour shown on the day. As active participants in their learning, they were able to develop new understandings that would lead them to either confirm their hypotheses or question further.

Following on from the experiments, the students created three science installations throughout the college campus in Montague, Chapagne and Meridian. Thus, the whole college was able to engage in the learning; our learning become visible. Connections with other students, educators and visitors who were engaged with our students in their science experiments made our learning more meaningful whilst also building their sense of belonging as part of the Mont College community.

Outcomes are published regularly
Educational Environment: Montagne
Literacy, Numeracy, Creativity, Discovery

“At Marist, our learning motto is that students learn anywhere, anyhow and anytime. This places significant pressure on the building design as every space becomes a learning space. The Montagne Centre is a place of new and exciting learning and the building is simply perfect for this new era and philosophy.”
Principal’s Comment

The 5-8 program focuses on a Project-Based Learning approach, with the introduction of 6D’s as a framework for projects provided a new platform for innovation within our Projects. The 6D method includes:
Define, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver and Debrief.

Learners are encouraged to innovate real-world solutions and products working both individually and in teams in a collaborative environment. Montagne is focused on developing learners personal capabilities and their critical and creative thinking skills within and across each project.

Design Response

The Design of Montagne works in tandem with this program. It provides a variety of scalable settings that support various modes of learning and student interactions. Giving them space to work unimpeded by limitations in their environment.

INTEGRATED DESIGN

Integrated specialist space gives students access to a variety of facilities. These include:

• A gastronomy kitchen linking foods to learning.
• An exploratory laboratory and messy projects area providing facilities for creative and messy exploration.
• A think tank zone provides a space for casual discussion and access to resources.

These areas are designed to encourage parent participation and foster with coffee facilities, access to resources, food making opportunities and comfortable gathering areas.

It complements the school’s philosophy of community building and a nurturing program of engaging activities.

VISIBILITY

A high degree of transparency and visual connection plus a sense of physical freedom have been achieved within and between the interior spaces of the building via a system of glazed sliding doors and writable sliding wall panels.

Additional Where ever you are in Montagne, there is the opportunity to connect with the outside environment. Its location on the edge of the wetlands provides students with unique opportunities and experiences.

SCALABLE

Space within Montagne is flexible, it can be used to accommodate individual learners, groups of learners, large groups and whole cohort gatherings. Two main tools provide this flexibility:

1. Spaces are adaptable
They can be opened, partially closed, or fully closed to expand or enclose specific areas and settings as required for different activities.

2. Activity base settings,
Allow students to move and organise themselves as they need. This includes providing a range of contexts within studio spaces including, reflective retreat spaces (such as the cave window space), small open and enclosed meeting rooms, resources areas with casual seating and an array of seat options across space (including a popular choice: the floor)

Additional space opens up to the outdoors with large folding glass doors connecting outdoor learning spaces around the building including an undercover assembly area with tiered seating, an outdoor kitchen and dining area, and two deck areas overlooking the wetlands.

The Learning model at Montagne adapts to the needs of learners and provides truly flexible facilities that respond to changing needs. It is a nurturing and enriching environment that encourages learners to build their confidence and become more independent in the thinking and maturity.
At my old school the teachers tried to do new things but the school buildings were the same old ones and learning just got boring. At Marist it is easier to learn. This is not because the building is new it is because it so clever in the way it is designed. The spaces allow me to learn in so many different ways.

Dion Symonds: Year 8 student
Upper floor

SENIOR YEARS (10-12)
In the upper floors students from years 10-12 have access to an array of self-governed study spaces, as an adjunct to more structured studios. These study spaces give control to the learners who negotiate their use/arrangement. Seating, scale and level of seclusion is varied and authorable surfaces allow for impromptu discussions and collaboration. Lockers are close by giving further student ownership.

Mid-Level floor

SENIOR SCIENCE: COLLABORATION-HUB
At the heart of Champagnat is shared access to science facilities that extend beyond labs and theory spaces into a collaborative hub off the centre's main entrance. The hub allows for unprogrammed sessions between learners, supporting Project Based Learning. The centrality of the hub also encourages a community of shared exploration where learning is collaborative and learners build on each other’s insights as they develop their own breakthroughs.

Lower floor

Y9: STUDENT-CENTRED LEARNING
The lowest floor of Champagnat is dedicated to year 9s; giving them their own place to grow and develop as the settle into the senior community.

Champagnat matures the project-based learning program that learners are already familiar with. A student-centred approach encourages learners to take the lead over their learning with a flexible layout that provides a variety of settings. Here learners choose how and where they learn, depending on their needs and preferences.

Educational Environment: Champagnat
Literacy, Numeracy, Passion, Reasoning

Champagnat adds a new chapter to the story of Marist College Bendigo, creating high-quality environments for senior learners. The centre is designed to advance independence, interdependence and student ownership over learning, aligning the physical environment with the school’s learning approach. Champagnat is a confident example of this with its mature design inherently linked to its educational goals for the school’s Senior Learners. Across its 3 floors, it creates a range of settings that support individual learning choices within an interdependent support system. It continues the Marist message that learning can happen Anytime, Anyhow and Anywhere that helps shape its community of engaged lifelong learners.
AGILE
As a senior centre, Champagnat has instilled independence and student agency through its program and physical environment. Learners are encouraged to move around, based on their needs and activities. Settings of varying sizes and configurations support a flexible occupation that promotes student ownership through their locations and scale. The arrangement allows for multiple learning formats ensuring the college can adapt its approach over time.

Mobile furniture and quick to use door configurations allow spaces to be adapted quickly based on the needs of the learners. This agility enables areas to have multiple purposes while ensuring no space is underutilised.

ADAPTABLE COMMUNITIES
Champagnat is located on a steep portion of the site (dropping 5m from east to west). The middle level of the building provides the main access point to the facility and this level houses the majority of shared/specialist spaces and forms the central community space for all.

While currently the year 9 program is housed on the lower floor, the building allows for reconfiguration of groups as needed. As the building is expanded, this lower floor will be modified into a Learning Resource space for the whole school community. Its separation from the upper floors and its direct access outside make it ideal for this purpose.

Both the Mid and upper floor provide several flexible studio-sized spaces, meeting rooms and shared resources, that enable their adaptive use by difference configurations of learning groups.

STUDIOS:
Students value the open and flexible design commenting that it; 'Feels spacious, but makes for intimate interactions with Educators because spaces are still separate while still allowing interactions & collaboration with other classes'.

EXPANDABLE | RECONFIGURABLE
The middle floor was designed to accommodate the extension to the south (currently under construction), allowing the senior centre to expand with the needs of the college while continuing the culture of shared central space.

The new wing provides large open plan studios with excellent visibility across the space. These new facilities have been designed from earlier testing of the Yr9 program within the Fouviere building (which is essentially a large shed). Lessons learnt from this experience (as well as the main Champagnat village) informed the design of the new wing leading to the following critical choices:

• There is excellent visibility across space so that learners and educators are aware of their impact on others and work together collaboratively as a community
• Teaching walls face outwards so that when explicit teaching occurs, learners are not disrupted by other groups and individuals around them
• Students have access to a variety of settings/choice of how they learn
• Spaces connect outwards with access to decks and views, and all areas have fantastic access to natural daylight.

As a result, Champagnat will have a vast array and variety of learning spaces, including:

• Small intimate spaces - meeting rooms and study nooks
• Seminar space
• The Rock Theatre
• Small group spaces
• Individual studios
• Shared studios
• Large open plan studio areas
• Science labs
• Informal experimentation spaces
• Display and representation areas

The open plan design in studios is fantastic. It feels spacious, but makes for intimate interactions with Educators because spaces are still separate while still allowing interactions & collaboration with other classes.

Yr11 Learner, MCB
“Our place is awesome. There are so many different spaces and each one can be used in lots of different ways. I don’t feel like I am walking into a school each morning, and that makes it so much more enjoyable to learn.”

Year 9 Student
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
Inspiring / motivating place of learning
Utilising Biophilic Design Principles*

Landscape plays an integral role in learning at Marist College. Throughout the buildings and site more broadly, there is deep consideration of nature. This approach has been vital in creating the warm, nurturing, and inspiring places within the school. It ensures all learners and educators feel a connection and affinity with their environment.

The buildings work at many levels of fostering connections, and a key to this is a Biophilic approach. There is an embedded appreciation of the natural world within the facilities, some of the results include:

Natural Light, creating bright, welcoming spaces and contrasts with other intricate spaces that create variety. This has to lead to some truly unique spaces such as the Rock-Theatre. Its dramatic atmosphere and rock face backdrop loved by both staff and students.

Educators comment ‘the sense of calm and quality of the space seems to settle the kids, and they seem to respect the space.’

Water, ensuring that learners are connected to experiences of water throughout their time at Marist.

Views to the landscape: throughout the buildings, moments frame views and connect students to their environment. Additionally, spaces fluidly connect indoor to outdoor, ensuring learners connect with their landscape in everyday learning.

Use of natural materials and elements that draw from the natural world, to create tactile, visceral experiences that will age over time and settle into the environment.

Airflow, Bendigo experiences relatively fair weather for most of the school year, and Marist embraces this with big open spaces that allow air to flow through. This is further enhanced through the cooling effect of the wetlands.

Prospect and Refuge, creating a range of spaces and experiences from vast expansive vistas to small intimate spaces that provide shelter and retreat. This accommodates the broad needs of learners and learning at Marist.

The result are spaces that are beloved by the Marist community, they create beautiful settings for learning that connect to the message that learning can be anywhere, anytime and anyhow.

*Principles listed related to: Browning, W., Ryan, C. and Clancy, J. (2014). 14 Patterns of Biophilic Design - Terrapin Bright Green
A Sense of Belonging
At Marist, the buildings and landscape work together, forming a sense of place for this new community. Future memories are created with meandering Journeys and experiences that can be found across the site. These combine texture, repeated material/colour palettes, connections/views to the landscape and vista lines to form a unique sense of place.

Marist draws on the cultural roots of Marist faith, referencing built forms and design rules found at the Charism’s founding place, l’hermitage, France. These included:
• The role of water on the landscape, including crossings and approach
• The role of craftsmanship and natural / found materials
• Carving into the rockface / the use of rock (earth)
• Creating framed views
• Building into the hillside
• Axis lines, Avenues and vistas

These experiences are recontextualised at Marist through a contemporary Australian lens. The landscapes, materials and approach consider the local context drawing on aspects that make our site unique. This land sits at the edge of the regional centre, it’s a place where scattered forests, farmland and new housing developments meet.

Our site was for many years, cleared pastoral land with dams that occasionally flooded or dried out depending on the weather. Before that, it was likely to have been box ironbark forest, which are found in the area. The development of Marist can be seen as a rebirth of the landscape, creating new habitats and spaces for people and wildlife. It acts much like the bush after a fire, when regeneration brings out vivid bright new growth and opportunities.

Marist draws on site features such as;
• Creating the new wetlands,
• Building with the slope of the land,
• Creating viewpoints,
• Vistas and axis lines
• It works with local/natural materials that require carpenters and other skilled tradespeople including:
• Reclaimed timber post (old telegraph posts),
• Laminated timber trusses,
• Rammed Earth,
• Extensive use of timber and plywood).

The colour palette’s used throughout Marist draw from the surrounding landscape but give each village its own character that connects to the age of learners. This connected but distinct approach provides learners with a sense of identity that is linked to their village but also to the overall Marist Community.

‘The buildings are part of the reasons I love coming to school. Each building is relevant to the year it holds (design feels like it develops over year levels). Champagnat feels more independent and mature. La Valla feels nurturing & stimulating. Montagne feels creative & communal.’

YR 11 Learner MCB

By recognising both the Marist connections to France and the role of a Local narrative, Marist college has been able to create a new culture and identity. This welcoming environment has been embraced by its community, who proudly see themselves as a life long learning community.
Holistic Water Management

When developing the site for the new school, there were some interesting challenges to address in regards to water management. The site lacked access to the sewer network, and it would be a high cost to connect. Additionally, site flooding was identified early in the process as an issue. The school also had the desire to be an ecologically sound proposition, wishing to regenerate rather than to deteriorate its environment. Instead of framing the challenges as problems, we saw the opportunities to look at water management in new ways, creating fantastic assets for the local community that enrich learning at the school.

Through the support of the local council and Office of Living Victoria, we were able to create a holistic system of water management; collecting, treating and recycling onsite water. The showpiece of this work are the Wetlands, sitting at the school’s doorstep and embedded in the college ethos.

This system has attracted wildlife to the area, and now supports a productive network of biodiversity that has enriched the local environment. Learners are embedded in this ever-changing landscape, and it is a learning tool that works passively in the background of all day to day learning. Additionally, it provides opportunities for unique experiences and activities, with the ability for learners experiment and assess the conditions of their waterways.

This integrated system now acts as both an educational and functional asset for the school and surrounding community. It is a shining example of what is possible when we build assets from site challenges and is a showcase to others when considering their own sites.
I cannot recall a single time when our learning has had to change because the facilities have been limiting. That is simply unheard of in traditional education.

Darren McGregor: Principal
Results of the Process & Project

Educational Goals for the School and Region

Marist College Bendigo has come a long way from the small group of Year 7s and 8s who started in 2015 in a single building. Since then the program has expanded dramatically with the 3 Villages and other specialist buildings supporting students from Foundation to Year 12.

The staged approach has provided the school with a fantastic tool to expand and develop their ideas on what education can be. Each new project has included extensive time for reviewing what has worked and what could be improved from previous stages. This work includes Post occupancy reviews with Learners and Educators and intensive sessions with stakeholders before any design decisions are made on new stages.

This review process reflects both on the physical environment and the Educational approach and the interactions between the two. It has created a beneficial method which allows for continued refinement and development of Pedagogy that is aligned and embedded in the Marist Ethos.

The work at Marist college fulfils the regional goals of the Catholic Education Office, to extend options within education in the Bendigo and provide families with choice when seeking Catholic Education. The program and facilities at Marist College offer a contemporary alternative that is designed to nurture resilient learners who can meet the expectations of tomorrow’s world.

Marist College Bendigo is a learning community where the student is at the centre of all learning experiences.

The facilities provide supportive environments that align with this goal, with solutions that create opportunities for learning that can happen Anytime, Anywhere and Anyhow.

The Village model responds to the needs of learners at their level of development:

At La Valla, this has resulted in a child-centric design that is focused on creating experiences from the child’s perspective

At Montagne, Activity Base setting provides learners with a vast array of facilities where they can explore their ideas and gain independence

In Champagnat, Learners have access to more mature settings that support them to grow. Here they can develop their skills further so that they are capable life long learners when they leave the College.

No Matter where Learners sit within the College, they are provided with an educational approach and physical space that provides them with opportunities and choice. Their environment is enriching, focused on Learning principles that harness their inner potential and facilitate their growth.

Results and Achievements

It can be a hard sell to convince families to send their children to a brand new school. Marist College has had a continuous building a program on-site since it opened, with each new building and outdoor area accommodating an ever-increasing school body. Additionally, the school’s first students will not graduate until the end of this year. This means that Marist College cannot rely on traditional outcome rankings to reassure prospective parents.

And yet, families are flocking to the school in droves, confident in both in Marist’s educational direction and its ability to serve learners. For the next years enrolment, the College has been in the unfortunate position to have to turn away families as it reaches and extends its planned capacity.

While undergoing immense change, the Marist Community is brimming with pride and confidence in its abilities to serve learners. The educational facilities mirror the expectations of learning in a building that is both connected to its site and place in Australia and the Heritage of Marist Education.

Principles of Learning

A student learns most effectively in a calm environment where they feel safe and their opinions are valued.

Students learn in a range of different ways and the individual learning styles of students are to be recognised and utilised

Students learn best when they are engaged in their learning

Students learn best when their curriculum is meaningful to their lives

Numeracy and literacy are critical to all elements of student learning

A skills based approach best prepares a student for further learning

Project based learning is to be encouraged for all students

Learning is enhanced through the use of effective feedback
Results of the Process & Project

Community goals

Additionally, the project has tapped into several community goals, creating new shared spaces that enhance both the natural environment and community facilities.

Environmental Goals

As noted in earlier sections, the regeneration of the site has increased biodiversity for the surrounding areas. The wetlands tackle issues of overland flooding in the surrounding area and manage water sustainably, ensuring that water leaves the College in good condition and in a controlled approach that prevents surrounding residential areas from flooding.

Community Facilities

A highlight of the community engagement process was identifying a shared need and building a plan together to benefit all.

The Community Hub at Marist is a joint venture between the school and the local council, to create facilities for sports and recreation that were in demand in the growing suburb. This included:

- 2 Australian Football Ovals (for Junior and Senior players)
- Netball/basketball courts (both indoor and outdoor)
- Club rooms and function space (that doubles as a learning environment)
- Training Kitchen (with the potential use by community organisations as well as by the school)
- Spectator areas
- Kiosk (that also acts as the school's canteen)

As the council already has the infrastructure and work teams, they will continue to maintain the sports grounds moving forward. Equally, the school opens up its site for community use outside of school hours, providing the local community with fantastic grounds that they can utilise.

The partnership is enriching and beneficial to all parties and maximises the opportunities and use of the site, which will become increasingly important as the local community grows.
Results of the Process & Project- Child Central Approach La Valla

- Nooks and hideaways allow students to engage and retreat as they need
- Termite mound. Engaging child centric approach
- Step-ups that invite learners to move
- Learners choice
- Moveable screens that create adjustable zone within atelier
- Connected to decks that allow learning to spill out
- Language of architecture continues from earlier stage, but is scaled down/ lower to adjust to the child’s perspective
- Textured rug creates zones for activity
- Courtyard brings in outdoor space into the centre of the atelier
- Furniture section that extends the natural texture palette beyond the building
Results of the Process & Project - La Valla Piazza

- Hideaways that encourage children to find a place where they are safe and comfortable
- Tactile surface that act as display and provide acoustic relief
- Window frames that encourage children to peek through
- Tiered steps act as storage, display and seating
- Views out (even if the heart of the building)
- View into the termite mound light filled passage
- Life wall provides space for children to interact and modify their environment depending on their wonderings
- On show but separate
- The cubby curiosity window into the piazza
- On rainy days students can hear the water as it down the drains

La Valla Piazza
Results of the Process & Project - Montagne - Activity Based Learning

Learning spaces have direct access outside.

Direct access to books and resources by continuous program of learning.

Calm/ safe environment. Small and intimate spaces sit within the larger rooms to provide choice in setting.

Choice - a variety of seating options and settings supporting individual learning needs.

Scalable. Adjustable partitions allow variety of configurations from small to very large while providing additional writing surfaces.

AUTHORABLE surfaces. White board tables support collaboration, problem solving and creativity.

Low level storage units provide divisions without compromising visibility access space.

Low level storage units provide divisions without compromising visibility access space.
Results of the Process & Project- Montagne - Activity Based Learning

- Essential resources.
  Centralised project store is easily accessible allowing students to develop their work over time.

- Recycled columns adding texture and sense of history to the new building.

- Inviting.
  Warm welcoming Character, creating a comfortable place.

- Wetlands.
  Wetlands are a part of the learning environment, learning can spill outside.

- Adjustable.
  Learners can reshape their environment as needed. Surfaces are non-precious. Learning are not restricted by the environment.

- Messy projects.
  Space for learners to make, create and discover the heart of their buildings.

- Adjustable.
  Spaces can be explained and contracted as needed. This allows learners to move.

- Hanging Power allows students to plug in as needed while keeping clean.

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- Fixed joinery.
  To the edges maximise flexibility of layout in between.

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- Results of the Process & Project- Montagne - Activity Based Learning
Results of the Process & Project - Champagnat informal experimentation space

Science at Marist requires technical mastery and collaboration as part of PBL and learning in senior years.

Visibility of the tech lab makes all stages of science learning visible to students.

SCIENCE HUB

MULTIFUNCTION USAGE
Within a scientific framework, the space provides a range of activities including wet area experimentation, lab preparations and instrument use along with conceptual work.

SPACIAL QUALITIES
Creating a stimulating learning environment with multiple focus points through volume and texture variety and loads of natural light.

STUDENT AGENCY
Variety of settings for mixed sized consultation and peer selected study groups.

MOBILE FURNITURE
A degree of flexible furniture allows students to generate spaces to suit their needs/preferences.

STUDENT CONTROL
Spaces support technical and conceptual activities with students assuming authority over furniture and walls.

CONNECTIONS TO MARIST HERITAGE
Using volume to create a welcoming entry that makes connections between levels and is tied to the Marist Foundations in France.

L'hermitage, France Champagnat

PREPARATION LAB
Visibility of the tech lab makes all stages of science learning visible to students.
