



# St Mary's Catholic Primary School Bundaberg

2019 Annual School Report



Catholic Education  
Diocese of Rockhampton

# System

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

# Principal

Madonna Davitt

# Address

Frank Gilbert Drive  
Bundaberg Q 4670

# Total enrolments

357

# Year levels offered

Prep – Year 6

# Type of School:

Co-educational

# Curriculum Offerings

## Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Bundaberg is a welcoming learning community that works to inspire all individuals to discover the joy and success of learning in an inclusive, collaborative and nurturing environment where Gospel values are purposefully embedded and evident in everyday life.

Our extensive curriculum and nurturing approach helps children discover and explore their potential - academically, culturally and spiritually. Our charisms of Nano Nagle and Catherine McAuley enrich the life of our school and our Restorative Practices approach enhances the respectful relationships within our school community.

## Extra Curricula Activities

St Mary's students are offered a range of extra curricula activities including:

- Instrumental Music Program (Years 4 – 6)
- Junior (Years 1 – 3) and Senior Choir (Years 4 – 6)
- Makerspace provides opportunities to plan, design, construct and experiment with recycled materials and robotics.
- Liturgies and Masses are an important part of the fabric of St Mary's. They are occasions for gathering in a spiritual and religious capacity when we celebrate the values and virtues of our tradition.
- Our St Mary's students are offered engagement with regional competitions; including Opti-minds, Technology Discovery Days, Maths Challenge Days, Speech and Music Eisteddfods and participation in the Bundaberg Regional Show.
- Student Leadership is an important element of the community focus of the school. These student leadership groups (CARE) support community events, artistic endeavours, recreational, safety and the environmental health of the school.
- Year 6 are involved in Buddy reading with various kindergartens and day cares in Bundaberg.
- Camps and excursions are organised for Years 5 and 6 annually. These promote qualities such as leadership, independence and interdependence. The camps are held at Chaverim Outdoor Education Camp and visiting various educational and cultural sites in Brisbane.
- Students can participate in sporting events such as interschool sport, Cross Country, Athletics and Challenge Cup.

## How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

Students in Years 3 – 6 have access to a Chromebook each to support their learning. Prep to Year 2 have access to a bank of classroom iPads and the computer laboratory. The classrooms are also resourced with devices such as interactive televisions and white boards, Smart televisions and laptops to support changing classroom learning strategies which include digital perspectives and pedagogies.

Opportunities for students to work autonomously and collaboratively are available through the applications provided on one-to-one devices. Students can receive immediate, real time feedback from their teachers via these applications. Teachers access regular professional development to keep up to date with developments in this area.

Makerspace offers students further opportunities to plan, design, construct and experiment with recycled materials and technology.

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## Social Climate

### Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School each child is recognised as a beloved child of God. In light of this, we commit to working through conflict using restorative practices which enables students to take responsibility for their actions. In this process we will recognise children's beloved status and work fairly, respectfully and collaboratively to maintain and restore relationships in this learning community.

Our “Way to Go” program is our positive culture development instrument. Students have regular lessons from the program to promote positive and restorative practices.

MJR (Making Jesus Real) is about working together as a school community to bring the Catholic faith to life for students by showing them how to live it every day. It gives them the tools they need to feel the Spirit of Jesus each day and find the God Moments that are always happening around them.

There is a buddy program across the school where the younger students are buddied with older students to complete a range of activities.

Our Parents and Friends Association organises a range of diverse activities such as the Welcome BBQ, Mother’s and Father’s Day stalls, school discos, St Mary’s Showcase evening, Christmas Spirit Night, trivia nights and a variety of other social events, all of which add to the family spirit of the school.

The PALs program (Parents as Liaisons) provides pastoral care and social outings for families. It is coordinated by parents and school staff.

Counselling services are available for students through the regular presence of a counsellor two days per week.

## **Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies**

Anti-bullying strategies employed by our school include regular Student Well-Being surveys, “Way to Go” class sessions, Circle Time, Restorative Practice Conferences, Support Plans and feedback contributions from teachers and assistants. Duty teachers and Year 6 Peer Mediators keep a record of playground behaviour and report back to the leadership team on issues that arise. Buzz Club and The Friendship Chair contributes to an anti-bullying climate. In the event of bullying, the principles of Restorative Practice are applied to restore, heal and build a stronger, positive social climate.

Cyber safety is essential to the well-being of the students as they engage with technologies in their daily learning. To ensure their safety, lessons on cyber safety are accessed through Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) or local law enforcement authorities and are conducted for students and their parents. Student well-being surveys, Restorative Practice class conferences and counselling sessions support access to and maintenance of a positive, on-line experience for our students.

## **Strategies for involving parents in their child’s education**

A strong and positive parent – child – school relationship is essential for the vitality of our school learning community.

All parents/carers in our school community attend two face-to-face interviews with their child’s teacher and receive two written reports on their child’s progress. Parents are most welcome to approach class teachers regarding their child’s progress throughout the year.

Parents are routinely invited to support student learning during class activities such as after school coaching programs, art and craft activities and literacy support groups. Volunteer parents support our participation in a variety of community events such as the Reading Challenges, Eisteddfod, Math and STEM Challenges.

The BBB Café provides parents with an opportunity to enjoy reading with their child in a supportive environment and a strong home – school connection is established in the early years with this support for our home reading program.

The Parents and Friends Association invites parents to be active in our school community by helping to organise and promote various functions.

Parents are encouraged to attend Liturgies, Masses, Book Week’s “Share a Book in the Shade”, Catholic Education week lunchtime picnic and other events.

St Mary’s families, in partnership with the school staff, contribute to the sense of community by being involved in the “Just One Thing” project which gives parents a range of practical activities they can become involved in. Through this project, families can offer tangible support for the school and create positive, social connections.

## **Reducing the school’s environmental footprint**

The reduction of the school’s environmental footprint is as important as the education surrounding the concept.

To save energy, we have solar panels. Air conditioners have timers and are only used during the warmer months. To save water there are water saving devices on drink fountains, taps, toilets, etc. and the gardens and grounds are irrigated from late afternoon.

To reduce paper waste, we encourage printing on both sides of the paper and only staff have access to printers. In the classrooms and office, we have separate bins for paper and ordinary waste.

We have a Year 6 CARE group which focuses on the environment in our school. They have introduced:

- the Nude Food initiative every Thursday to reduce the amount of lunch packaging waste
- the students' food scraps go to feeding our chickens every day
- special bins to collect plastic, cans and juice containers for recycling.

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## Characteristics of the Student Body

The school's student population is largely a mix of third and fourth generation families with some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. We also have European, Egyptian, Vietnamese, Sri Lankan, Indian, Philippine, Chinese, Malaysian, Assyrian, Fijian, Kiribati and Maori heritage children who bring an immense range of cultural history, language and life experiences to the school community. Students come mainly from two-parent families with a smaller number from single parent families. Strong family values are apparent.

Most of our families live within a 5km radius of the school and the majority of the remainder within 25km. Just a small number of families come to us from locations more than 25km away. The school population is well established with a mobility rate of less than 5%. A broad cross-section of the socioeconomic spectrum is represented in the school. This provides us with the opportunity to support our families in a variety of ways, giving life to our school ethos.

### Average student attendance rate (%)

94.67 %

### Management of non-attendance

Our administration system is able to provide us with data regarding late arrival to school, days absent and early pick up by parents. With this information, we are able to SMS parents in the morning by 10.00am if their children are absent without explanation. Routine or prolonged absences without explanation from parents, are reported to the principal who monitors attendance and/or contacts the family.

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## Staffing Information

### Workforce Composition

| Workforce Composition | Teaching Staff | Non-Teaching Staff | Indigenous Staff |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Headcounts            | 29.00          | 23.00              | 1.00             |
| Full-time equivalents | 25.52          | 12.42              | 0.58             |

### Qualifications of all teachers

| Qualification – highest level of attainment | Percentage of staff with this Qualification |
|---|---|
| Doctoral / Post-doctoral                    |   |
| Masters                                     | 3.45 %                                      |
| Bachelor Degree                             | 89.66 %                                     |

|             |        |
|-------------|--------|
| Diploma     | 6.90 % |
| Certificate |        |

## Major Professional Development Initiatives

All staff members access professional development. Seven staff learning days are held as pupil free days throughout the year so that all staff members are able to attend. PD Initiatives include:

- Bishop's In-service Day - for the purpose of developing knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Ethos and Identity in an Education setting.
- Professional Collaboration at different year levels for the development of consistency in Teaching, Learning and Assessing the Australian Curriculum.
- ICT Code of Practice
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Student Protection and Well Being

In addition to these days, the staff engage in school based professional development initiatives which address the whole school learning goals. Recent professional development included:

- The Writing Project
- Teaching Hands On Mathematics in the Primary Classroom
- Differentiation in the Primary Classroom
- Visible Learning
- Collaborative Professionalism
- Clarity
- Teaching and Learning Framework

The percentage of teacher participation in professional development was 100%

## Total funds expended on Professional Development

The total of funds expended on teacher professional development was \$ 125,100

## Average Staff Attendance and Retention

93.92 %

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 90.24 %

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## School Income

<http://www.myschool.edu.au>

(The School information below is available on the My School website).

Find a school

Search by school name

GO

Search by suburb, town or postcode

Sector  Government  Non-government

SEARCH

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## National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for Years 3 and 5 are available via the My School website at [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au).

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school's NAPLAN results.

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## Key Student Outcomes and Value Added

Key student outcomes for the school are measured through a variety of means with academic, cultural, social, religious and spiritual engagement regarded highly in our school community. Academic outcomes are measured through the snapshot of NAPLAN testing and indicate that between Yr 3 entry and the tests in Yr 5, students demonstrate growth in all tested areas at a positive effect size. Details of results for these tests are available on the My School website at [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au). Data from the NAPLAN tests is mapped and compared with classroom data to ensure that the students have every opportunity to progress towards success. Our academic story is one of growth.

Cultural outcomes are measured through our successful student participation at a range of local and regional events. Student engagement in and enjoyment of the Arts program continues to develop and the program has grown to include band and choir as a result. We are also involved in a range of local and regional sporting events.

Community building events, usually in a spiritual context are our instruments for measuring the success of our religious and spiritual presence. We host a range of very successful events throughout the year for the families of our community: Welcome BBQ's, the Induction Mass for Year 6 Leaders, Grandparents' Day and the Year 6 Graduation Ceremony are three such events. Our strong participation in Anzac Day ceremonies is another way we measure our relevance in the community. These events are all well attended by the students and their extended families and the engagement of all is genuine.

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## Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

### Strategic progress in 2019

Our major learning focuses for 2019 were:

1. To continue to improve our reading levels to the extent where 80% of students in each cohort achieve "at or above" the expected year level standard.
2. Through the Writing Project, each year level had a particular focus to improve an aspect of writing in their cohort. The main focus was sentence structure.

The school made good progress on the learning goals for 2019 by:

- Collecting data on student learning to plan for, measure and celebrate success
- Being precise in our targeted teaching to address student learning needs
- Providing internal support to classroom teachers during small group guided instruction thus allowing teachers to work with small groups of students while the other students operated on developing independence with a supervising adult
- Meeting with teachers to discuss and develop the implementation of our goals
- Providing support reading resources
- Engaging collaboratively with students and their families, through our Home Reading Program, the Premier's Reading Challenge, the BBB Café, Book Week activities and whole school targeted support. We measured our success in October, to find most cohorts across the school had reached the target. This created feedback for teachers to direct their feedback and 'next step' teaching to the learners' needs. Tier 3 students made significant progress during six week intervention blocks using this process.

## Strategic Priorities for 2020

Focus areas for improvement and longer term school goals are recorded in the School Improvement Plan. These goals include continuing our work on developing literacy and numeracy through a direct focus:

1. To continue on and develop the Writing Project, incorporating spelling as another focus within this project
2. To improve our skill levels in the analysis of data and teacher engagement in data to inform our planning and teaching strategies
3. To continue the development of the Teaching and Learning Framework so staff have a clear understanding of and consistency in the pedagogical practices of this school.

Strategic plans, recorded in the school improvement plan assist us in making progress towards our desired achievements. These are:

- Set high expectations for all learners
- Collect and analyse data to inform teaching
- Plan and implement focused programs to support student achievement
- Continue targeted, precision teaching to student needs
- Develop capacity building partnerships to advance quality teaching and learning.

National Assessments and local benchmarks are indicators used to gauge progress in this area. Teachers will employ the responsible use of digital technology in achieving these goals.

## Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

Feedback from parents suggests a high level of satisfaction with what the school is offering to our students and the whole community. Parents of St Mary's students value the family-friendly atmosphere of the school, the enacted curriculum and the extra-curricular opportunities and the involvement of the school in events associated with the wider community. Parent – teacher interviews further reflect this sense of satisfaction. Functions organised by the P&F Association are well received and attended by the parent body and school staff. As a result, the relationship between parents, students and staff is positive and constructive. It is evident during enrolment interviews and through general feedback that the school is well regarded in the local community.