



# St Mary's Catholic Primary School Bundaberg

2021 Annual School Report



Catholic Education  
Diocese of Rockhampton

# **St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Bundaberg**

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

## **Principal**

Mr Bill Goodwin

## **Address**

Frank Gilbert Drive  
Bundaberg Qld 4670

## **Total enrolments**

389

## **Year levels offered**

Prep – Year 6

## **Type of School:**

Co-educational

## School Overview

*Our School Mission Statement outlines our vision to provide a nurturing, learning environment where our students engage in a balanced, enriching education that is both inspired and guided by the gospel values of Jesus. We strengthen the partnership between home, school and parish and purposefully provide opportunities for our students to develop a sense of responsibility and stewardship.*

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is located on spacious grounds in South Bundaberg. Founded in 1952, the school moved to its current site in 1994. The school offers a broad, co-educational primary education to approximately 370 students from Prep to Year Six. It is founded on traditional Catholic values and honours these traditions by offering education based on the Gospel values. Our charism is strongly influenced by the Sisters of Mercy and the Presentation Sisters who were guided by Gospel values. They were driven by their belief that Catholic education provided children opportunities that would improve their lives and the lives of others. Classes engage in Religion lessons every week and liturgical celebrations every term. The daily emphasis, however, is on living our motto 'Knowledge and Love' by demonstrating respect for others and for learning.

St Mary's has a strong emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy, enhanced through the effective use of contemporary technologies which are integrated into all curriculum areas. Specialist teachers deliver programs in Science, Music, Instrumental Music, Physical Education and Learning Support. A range of additional opportunities is offered to students to enhance their creativity, planning and self-discipline highlighted by our Instrumental Music Program which now includes Strings. Parent involvement is encouraged, ensuring a close working relationship exists between home and school which is essential for the education of every student. The school is recognised for a healthy level of sporting achievement. Current programs offered to augment student skill in physical activity include coaching in tennis, netball, cricket and rugby league. Counselling and pastoral services are available and Personal Development Education courses are provided to assist students.

St Mary's has been recognised regionally for its green and healthy environment. Each year, classes adopt environmental projects to reduce the school's carbon footprint. Before and After School Hours Care is available and Vacation Care is offered during school holidays.

More information on our school can be accessed from [myschool.edu.au](http://myschool.edu.au)

## 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 help 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.
- Student Leadership is an important element of the community focus of the school. These student leadership groups (CARE) support community events, artistic endeavours, recreational activities and the environmental health of the school.
- 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 (Year 5) and visiting various educational and cultural sites in Brisbane (Year 6).
- Students can participate in sporting events and competitions such as interschool sport, cross country, athletics, swimming and Challenge Cup.

- Our St Mary's students are offered engagement with regional competitions such as Music Eisteddfods.
- St Mary's students participate in the Queensland Premier's Reading Challenge, National Simultaneous Storytime, Life Education each year.

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

Students in Years 4 – 6 participate in a 1:1 device program to support their learning. Each student in Year 3 has access to a Chromebook. Prep to Year 2 students have access to a bank of classroom iPads. The classrooms are also resourced with interactive televisions or smart televisions 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 technology and ICT.

## 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.

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.

Each class participates in regular circle times which promote consistent, predictable routines that is about building connection and belonging.

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.

Counselling services are available for students through the regular presence of a counsellor 2.5 days per week.

### Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

Anti-bullying strategies employed by our school include regular Student Well-Being surveys, Circle Time, Restorative Practice Conferences, Support Plans and feedback contributed by 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. The Reading Garden and The Friendship Chair contribute 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), E Safety Commissioner 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.

We participate in events, such as Safer Internet Day, as they arise.

## 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. We have an open door policy where parents are most welcome to approach or contact 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.

The Reading Garden 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" and Dress Up Day, Easter Bonnet parade, Catholic Education week activities, athletic and swimming carnivals and other events.

## 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 prize each week is freshly laid eggs from our chickens.
- the students' food scraps go to feeding our chickens every day.
- special bins to collect plastic, cans and juice containers for recycling.

## 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, Vietnamese, Sri Lankan, Indian, Philippine, Chinese, Malaysian, Fijian, Japanese 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 (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2021 was 94.58%.

## 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 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.

## **Staffing Information**

### **Workforce Composition**

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	27.000	25.00	1.00
Full-time equivalents	23.68	15.29	0.63

### **Qualifications of all teachers**

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	3.70%
Bachelor Degree	96.30%
Diploma	
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

- Analysing spelling within writing
- Differentiation in the primary classroom
- Inclusive education and differentiation within the classroom.

The percentage of teachers engaged in professional development was 100%.

### **Total funds expended on Professional Development**

The total of funds expended on teacher professional development was \$36,700.

### **Average Staff Attendance and Retention**

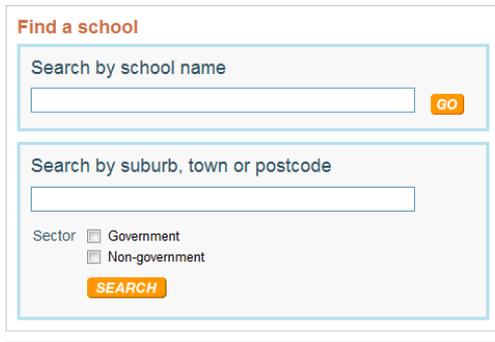
The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 92.69%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 83.15%.

## School Income

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

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



The screenshot shows a search interface titled "Find a school". It contains two search boxes: "Search by school name" with a "GO" button, and "Search by suburb, town or postcode" with a "SEARCH" button. Below the second search box, there are radio buttons for "Sector" with options "Government" and "Non-government".

## 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.

## 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.

Our academic story is one of growth. 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 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. We also use assessments such as the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA), PAT Reading, PAT Maths and PAT Spelling to measure learning growth. Teachers also use a range of formative and summative classroom assessments to measure academic outcomes.

Cultural outcomes are measured through our successful student participation at a range of local and regional events. Student engagement in Music continues to develop and the program includes instrumental music, band and choir as a result. In 2022, a strings program will be commencing in Year 4.

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.

## Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

### Strategic progress in 2021

Our major learning focuses for 2021 were

- To further develop the teaching and learning of spelling through student writing
- To improve our skill levels in the analysis of data and teacher engagement in data to inform our planning and teaching strategies

- 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.

The school made progress on the learning goals for 2021 by:

- Collecting data on student learning to plan for, measure and celebrate success
- Being precise in our targeted teaching to address student learning needs
- Meeting with teachers to discuss and develop the implementation of our goals
- Engaging in whole school professional development on the teaching of spelling within writing
- Engaging in Monitoring Learning Growth with a focus on the teaching of spelling within writing. This included collaborating with staff at other Catholic primary schools, to share best practice and share and reflect on student outcomes as a result of the teaching and learning process.

## Strategic Priorities for 2022

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.
- To further develop spelling strategies through the Writing and Spelling Project and Monitoring Learning Growth to improve student outcomes in spelling within their written context.
- To continue enhancing the data literacy skills of teachers to better inform their teaching and learning practices.
- By September 2022, 70% of students will be at, or above benchmark in DRA.
- To further implement Making Jesus Real practices across all aspects of the school and its curriculum using Scripture as a source.
- To respond to our Mission Statement's call to "become responsible stewards of God's creation" by creating a "Sacred Space" that incorporates Indigenous culture and connection to the land and environment.
- To incorporate Berry Street resources into the school curriculum and practices improving quality learning and teaching environments and further enhancing student well-being by incorporating positive language and strategies from the moment of entry into the school.
- To enhance parent engagement in their child's learning through consistent and open communication.

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.

## 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, 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.