



St Mary's Catholic Primary School Bundaberg

2024 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

1 Frank Gilbert Drive
Thabeban
Bundaberg QLD 4670

Total enrolments

467

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 467 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 skills 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 www.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 Ready to Learn approach enhances the respectful relationships within our school community.

Our Inclusive Education team, working together with classroom teachers, offers students with diverse learning needs a range of learning opportunities and targeted programs to assist with their additional needs.

Extra Curricula Activities

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

- Instrumental & Strings Music Programs (Years 3 – 6)
- Junior (Years 1 – 3) and Senior Choir (Years 4 – 6)
- Piano lessons (Prep – Year 6)
- Makerspace provides opportunities to plan, design, construct and experiment with recycled materials and robotics.
- Prayer, 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.
- Students have the opportunity to participate in Code Camp after school.

- Camps 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 educational sites and participating in team building opportunities in Brisbane & the Gold Coast (Year 6).
- Students can participate in sporting events and competitions such as interschool sports, cross country, athletics, swimming and Challenge Cup.
- Our students are offered engagement with regional competitions such as Music Eisteddfods.
- St Mary's Showcase in Term 3 provides an opportunity for students to perform for their families.
- St Mary's students participate in the Queensland Premier's Reading Challenge, National Simultaneous Storytime,
- Life Education, Book Week and other like events each year.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

Students in Years 4 – 6 participate in a 1:1 device program (Chromebooks) 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 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. Our Year 3 – 6 students use Google Classroom as their platform for learning. Prep – Year 2 use Seesaw for Schools.

Makerspace and Code Camp offer students further opportunities to plan, design, construct and experiment with digital 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 ready to learn strategies which enable 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 school has adopted a Ready to Learn culture. This has been developed using various resources that are embedded in scientific evidence and research-based practices.

One of our resources is the *Berry Street Education Model*. BSEM equips staff with practical, classroom-based strategies to increase the engagement of all students. This education model enables schools to support students' self-regulation, relationships and wellbeing to increase student engagement and significantly improve academic achievement.

The *Zones of Regulation* also form part of our Ready to Learn culture which fosters a common language for communication, problem solving, and emotional understanding

We are working with *Jump Up For Kids*, an occupational therapy practice based in Brisbane. For healthy development, children need to move, play outdoors and connect with others. Jump Up assists our staff to elevate learning outcomes through evidence-based strategies, resources and professional development in these areas.

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 and engage in a range of educational and social activities.

Our Parents and Friends (P&F) Forum organises a range of diverse activities such as the Welcome BBQ, Mother's and Father's Day stalls, school discos, Christmas Spirit Night 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 student well-being surveys, our Ready to Learn practices, support plans and feedback contributed by teachers and teacher assistants.

Duty teachers keep a record of playground behaviour and report back to the leadership team on issues that arise.

There is a post break relationship check in for students who have experienced issues during the school breaks.

The Reading Garden and the Friendship Chair contribute to an anti-bullying climate.

In the event of bullying, the principles of our Ready to Learn practices 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.

The QPS come and speak to our Year 6 students regarding safety and positive online practice.

Some of our classes focus on cyber safety modules when Life Education visits.

Student well-being surveys, class conferences and counselling sessions support access to and maintenance of a positive, online experience for our students.

We participate in cyber safety 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 are provided the opportunity to attend two face-to-face interviews with their child's teacher.

They also receive two written reports on their child's progress at the end of each semester.

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 was established in the early years with this support for our home reading program.

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

Parents are encouraged to attend our weekly assembly, liturgies, Masses, Book Week's "Share a Book in the Shade" and Dress Up Day, Catholic Education week activities, athletic and swimming carnivals, Christmas Spirit night and other events.

Our school families are kept informed about what is happening at school through weekly newsletters and a Facebook page.

We have a Showcase in Term 3 which provides students with the opportunity to perform for their families in Music and Dance.

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. Classroom air conditioners have timers and are only used during 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/cardboard and ordinary waste.

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

- the students' food scraps go to feeding our chickens every day.
- special bins to collect plastic, cans and juice bottles for recycling.

Characteristics of the Student Body

The school's student population is largely a mix of third and fourth generation families, including an increasing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. We also have families from countries in Europe, Asia and Oceania who bring an immense range of cultural history, language and life experiences to the school community.

Students come from two parents and single parent families. Strong family values are apparent.

Most of our families live within a 5km radius of the school with 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 and enrolment is growing.

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

Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2024 was 90.53%.

Management of non-attendance

Our administration system is able to provide us with data regarding late arrival at 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	First Nations Staff
Headcounts	31.00	34.00	1.00

Full-time equivalents	27.70	21.43	0.70
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Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	3.23%
Bachelor Degree	96.77%
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
- Religious Education Professional Development Day
- Professional collaboration for the development of consistency in Teaching, Learning and Assessing the Australian Curriculum
- ICT Code of Practice
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Student Protection and Wellbeing

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:

- Professional Development engaging with the Australian Curriculum V9.
- Inclusive education and differentiation within the classroom.
- Introduction of literacy units for the Australian Curriculum V9.
- Monitoring Learning Growth with a Maths focused on problem solving.
- Training for the Berry St Educational Model – trauma affected practices.
- Participation in the Leading Mathematics Education Project Phase 1

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 \$46,070.00.

Average Staff Attendance and Retention

The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sickness and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 91.68%.

The percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 98.53%.

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

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

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. 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, string ensemble and choir.

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 Liturgy for Year 6 Leaders, Grandparents' Day and the Year 6 Graduation Ceremony are examples of such events. Our participation in Anzac Day ceremonies is another way we measure our relevance within the community. These events are attended by the students and their extended families and the engagement of all is genuine.

Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

Strategic progress in 2024

Focus areas for improvement and longer-term school goals are recorded in the School Improvement Plan. These goals include:

- Continuing the focus of students will gain understanding of, and be able to articulate, what a Dialogue School is like in the 21st Century.
- Construct a "Sacred Space" that incorporates both Indigenous Culture and Connection to the Land and Environment in the local context so that whole school community can utilise.

- The school will develop and publish a RAP that reflects our response to the process of Reconciliation.
- By September 2024, 80% of students will be at, or above, the benchmark in DRA.
- To implement Australian Curriculum V9 Mathematics and English and work towards developing consistent routines in these learning areas.
- Through our participation in the Maths Project, to develop and form high performance Mathematics coaches, leading to outstanding Mathematics learning in every classroom in our school.
- To continue to develop and implement a school data conversation plan to engage staff in the identification, collection, discussion, analysis and reflection of school and classroom data sets.
- To continue 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 continue to enhance parent engagement in their child's learning through consistent and open communication

The school made progress on these goals for 2024 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 goals. Engaging in whole school professional development on the implementation of the new Literacy units for Australian Curriculum V9.
- Engaging in Monitoring Learning Growth with a focus on the problem solving in Mathematics. This included collaborating with staff at other Catholic primary schools, to share best practice and share and reflect on student outcomes because of the teaching and learning process.
- The 'sacred space' preparations began but with proposed building in 2025, the sacred space will need to be relocated. When proposed building works are completed, this will be a priority.
- Class teachers engaged in PD in staff meetings relating to the Maths Project.

Strategic Priorities for 2025

Focus areas for improvement and longer-term school goals are recorded in the School Improvement Plan. These priorities include:

- Using our 2024 ECSI Report and recommendations to guide strategies in developing and enhancing Catholic Identity in our school.
- Discuss in a collaborative way key elements of a "Sacred Space" that incorporates both Indigenous Culture and Connection to the Land and Environment in the local context so that the whole school community can utilise with the notion of completion being after building project in 2025.
- The school will develop and publish a RAP that reflects our response to the process of Reconciliation.
- Developing explicit routines in Literacy based around V9 of the Australian Curriculum.
- Developing class teacher's skills in providing outstanding Mathematics learning in every classroom in our school during Phase 2 of the Leading Mathematics Education Project.
- Continue to develop and implement a school data plan to engage staff in the identification, collection, discussion, analysis and reflection of school and classroom data sets. Building collaboration and viewing data in a positive light will lead to data-informed change to target individual, group, cohort and whole school learning needs.
- Embedded practice throughout the school in our Ready to Learn approach.
- To continue to develop a whole school approach to parent communication to ensure that we achieve a consistent and open approach to parent engagement.

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

Our increasing student enrolments and low staff turnover suggests that there is a high level of satisfaction with St Mary's Catholic Primary School.

Feedback from parents suggests they are very satisfied 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.

Functions organised by the P&F Forum 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.