

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Longreach

2022 Annual School Report



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Longreach

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

Principal

Mr Peter Thurecht

Address

85 Eagle Street
Longreach Qld 4730

Total enrolments

88

Year levels offered

Prep to Year 6

Type of School:

Co-educational

School Overview

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School is situated in the remote Far Western Queensland rural community of Longreach. Longreach has a population of approximately 3500 and specialises in livestock industries, with a thriving tourism culture and home to the Stockman's Hall of Fame and the Qantas Museum. Established in 1900, our school follows the mission of Jesus as lived by Venerable Nano Nagle and the Presentation Sisters, the congregation she founded. Five pillars, drawn from our Presentation charism, underpin all we do and how we approach life at Our Lady's. These are Compassion, Hospitality, Simplicity, Courage and Justice and are enacted through our school motto "Light Tomorrow with Today".

In recent years, our school has been re-built and now comprises state of the art learning areas with flexible environments which cater for students in year level class groups from Prep to Year Six. Our multi-purpose centre has excellent facilities for the many sports offered both during and after school. Our Lady's is set amongst extensive, well-maintained gardens and includes several areas utilised as outdoor teaching spaces. The school boasts an enviable collection of garden artworks many of which recognise our faith background and the traditional owners of our land. Instrumental music lessons are provided through the Primary Music Institute and telehealth services are available for speech pathology and student counselling, through valued partnerships with Royal Far West and the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

We firmly believe that the primary educators of children are parents and caregivers. The partnership between parents and teachers, one of mutual support, is crucial to the successful education and wellbeing of children. At Our Lady's, we are committed to working with parents to ensure that all children are encouraged to develop holistically and achieve their potential.

More information on our school can be accessed from myschool.edu.au

Curriculum Offerings

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School caters for students from Prep-Year 6 in a single steam setting. Our curriculum embeds the teachings of the Gospels and the Charisms of the Presentation Sisters. Our Lady's focuses on the whole child and places a large emphasis on the social and emotional wellbeing and development of a growth mindset and resilience within its students.

Students in Years 3-6 participate in weekly zoom lessons learning Spanish from MEG Languages. The school also has Art and PE Specialist teachers that provide weekly lessons.

The school has a wide variety of intervention programs that assist students with learning difficulties. MiniLit and MacqLit is offered on a weekly basis and the school has strong partnerships with Outback Futures and Royal Far West to assist children with speech, occupational therapy and counselling sessions.

Extra Curricula Activities

Our Lady's offers instrumental music through our partnership with The Cathedral College, Rockhampton, via zoom link on a weekly basis. The school also offers choir for all students from Prep-Year 6 and their talents are showcased at community events.

Students at Our Lady's have many sporting opportunities through Central West and North West Schools Sports. Several students are selected at a North West level to attend State Championships across Queensland. Several visiting sports organisations such as NRL and Queensland Cricket visit Our Lady's at least once a year.

Our Lady's participates yearly in the Rockhampton Catholic School Challenge Cup in rugby league and netball, which is held in Yeppoon.

Yearly our Prep-Year 2 students participate in Under 8's Week. The school combines with other local schools and community organisations to celebrate this week. Along with Longreach State School, Our Lady's take turns in hosting this event.

The annual Longreach Show provides our students with opportunities to highlight their talents. Students are amongst the prize winners of the schools' exhibits in writing and art pieces. Several students also showcase their talents and perform at a local level with Longreach School of Dance. The school participates in the annual Winton Poetry Festival. The students perform group and solo performances.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

There is a commitment to the integration of Technologies in all key learning areas. Smart TVs and the Vivi system are in all classrooms for teachers to facilitate learning through technologies. Each teacher has a touch screen laptop and stylus pen that allow for further interactive experiences for students.

Students have access to computers in all classrooms with the Years 3 to 6 students having 1-1 Chromebooks and Prep to Year 2 students having 1-1 iPads, which are used in a variety of curriculum areas. Google classroom is used largely in our Year 3-6 classes and SeeSaw is used in our P-2 classes. These educational tools allow for leadership and parents to be fully interactive with the student's learning.

Teachers continually participate in professional development opportunities to ensure that the students are not disadvantaged due to the remote location of the school. The school is exploring the use of STEM in the classrooms.

Social Climate

Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture

All students, regardless of their faith background, participate in liturgical celebrations. Each class attends a parish mass once a week and whole school masses occur once a term. Mass is held either at St Brigid's Church or in the school's Bush Chapel. There is a vital link between the school and parish community. These strong links are sustained by the efforts of staff, parents, students, parish priest and members of the parish community. The school principal is a member of the Parish Council and along with the Assistant Principal Religious Education are members of the Regional Parish Council.

Our Lady's is a family orientated school focusing highly on the pastoral care for students and families. The teacher-pupil ratio makes for an intimate school environment.

The school also has staff trained in the Seasons for Growth program for students who may have experienced loss, are dealing with grief or some trauma in their lives.

Breakfast club is held daily with the support of the St Brigid's Parish Drought Fund. Parents are invited to attend breakfast and are rostered on each Thursday to cook a hot breakfast for the students. The 'Just One Thing' form that goes out each semester allows parents to be actively involved in the school in many ways.

Events are celebrated including Anzac Day, Catholic Education Week, Day for Daniel, Day for Dolly, National Day of Action against Bullying, The Biggest Morning Tea as well as celebrating feast days, leadership inductions and special days including Mother's and Father's Day.

Students also participate in community service including Meals on Wheels, visits to the Pioneer Home and visiting the local kindergarten.

Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

Our Lady's has implemented the Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton policies on Acceptable Use of Agreements and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Code of Practice for students and staff. The school regularly communicates to the school community about cyber safety issues. The school has developed a Mobile Phone and Wearable Technology Statement. It also has a school anti-bullying policy.

All Catholic Education and school policies are reviewed on a regular basis. The school works in partnership with the local police and anti-bullying and cyber safety agencies to educate students and parents/carers about prevention of, and dealing with, bullying and cyber safety concerns.

Strategies for involving parents in their child's education

Parents are strongly encouraged and often personally invited to join the School Board or P&F groups. Conferences are available for Board and P&F representatives. The Just One Thing initiative allows parents to display their talents and to participate in school life rather than just attend meetings.

Parents are invited to attend beginning of year information nights, liturgical celebrations, assemblies, morning teas and school breakfasts plus a variety of other school events. Parents, once completing their volunteer induction training, assist in general classroom activities.

The school's Facebook page is used widely as a form of parent communication as are the use of emails and text messages. The school website included all the up-to-date information. The school provides its newsletter on a fortnightly basis via electronic or paper form.

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

Our Lady's has introduced several initiatives to care for our environment. The school participates annually in the Clean up Australia Day and often holds nude food days promoted by our school leaders. Our Lady's participates in the containers for exchange program to recycle milk and juice poppers. Newsletters, notes, report cards etc. are sent electronically to reduce the paper usage of the school.

Characteristics of the Student Body

All students are impacted culturally by the isolation of our town. The continued downturn in Australia's agricultural sector affects significantly on Longreach and Our Lady's. The impact is somewhat offset by the growing tourism industry in the region. Drought continues to be a major impacting factor for most of our families. Most families in our school community have at least one income earner in the family. A small percentage of families are involved in the grazing industry. The school has a high number of Indigenous families and a low rate of students with English as a Second Language.

Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2022 was 79.98%.

Management of non-attendance

Parents are expected to advise the school of non-attendance by their children. Families are contacted through a text message at 9am if the child is not present at school and this has not been communicated. If a parent has not responded to the text message a follow up phone call is made. The principal regularly obtains the daily non-attendance sheets, follows up with families, and formulates an action plan with strategies to support the families.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	13.00	13.00	2.00
Full-time equivalents	11.83	6.76	0.79

Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	
Bachelor Degree	100%
Diploma	
Certificate	

Major Professional Development Initiatives

- Bishop's in-service Day
- WPHS/Student Protection/Code of Conduct
- ICT Code of Conduct
- Reading Pedagogy
- Berry Street Trauma Informed Practice
- Phonics workshops – the TAP Program
- R\Ed Ex – new Religious Education program.

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 \$10,600.

Average Staff Attendance and Retention

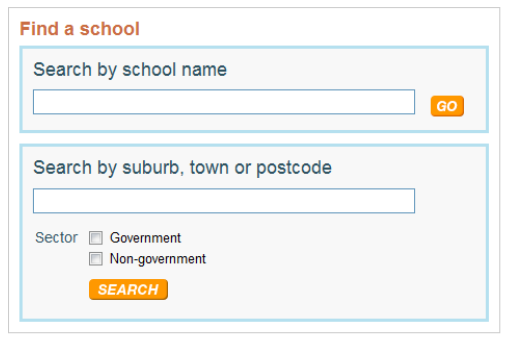
The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 91.49%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 100%.

School Income

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

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



The screenshot shows the 'Find a school' section of the My School website. It features 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 checkboxes 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.

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

NAPLAN was conducted again in 2022, however there is no growth data as NAPLAN was not conducted in 2020. In 2022, our Year 3 class had 66% of students achieving above national minimum standard in Reading. With Numeracy, 100% of our Year 3 class achieved above the national minimum standard. In Year 5, 80% of our students achieved above national minimum standard in both Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation.

DRA and Oral Language data walls continue to give teachers a perspective on the strength and weakness of the students. PAT R and PAT M data was collected and used to find the gaps in students learning and allow the school to pinpoint what areas of reading and mathematics need to be focused on.

Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

Strategic progress in 2022

Based off NAPLAN and Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) data it was determined that the school would undertake a review of its Literacy Block routines and in particular focus on the reading pedagogy component. Working with curriculum consultants and outside agencies, Our Lady's was committed to providing purposeful reading instruction to improve student outcomes. Improved results were seen in data collected at the end of 2022.

Our Lady's reviewed our student well-being and positive behaviour guidelines and by the end of 2022 had a draft policy to be implemented in 2023. Our staff attended Berry Street Trauma Informed Practice professional development which improved their knowledge of supportive strategies in the classroom.

Strategic Priorities for 2023

After reviewing NAPLAN data, it was determined that we would further develop of our Literacy Block routines with a particular lens on improving student writing outcomes. Staff will participate in professional development on the 6+1 Writing Traits delivered by Educational Consultant, Angela Ehmer. This will give Our Lady's a consistent approach to writing across the school. Teachers will monitor improvement in writing using the CEDR Writing Analysis Tool.

Another goal is to develop positive and growth mindsets with students. Staff will be working with James Anderson on Growth Mindsets and the Mindset Continuum to build on our learning culture at Our Lady's.

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

Our Lady's Catholic Primary School has a very good reputation within the Longreach community for offering a quality inclusive Catholic education where expectations are high, where students are encouraged to reach their potential, where a variety of academic, social, spiritual and physical opportunities are provided for students and where students are seen as individuals and emphasis is placed on the values of respect, justice, dignity, honesty and love. Such opinions are shared in a variety of forums, including enrolment interviews, parent and student satisfaction surveys, school social functions, excursions with the community, staff, and P&F meetings and by visiting personnel and new staff.