



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Mackay

2020 Annual School Report



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Mackay

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

Principal

Bianca Morris

Address

4 Canberra Street
North Mackay Qld 4740

Total enrolments

312

Year levels offered

Prep – Year 6

Type of School:

Co-educational

School Overview

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, established in 1936 by the Sisters of Mercy, offers children from Prep to Year 6 a Catholic Education in an innovative, progressive and holistic environment. The school population comes from quite diverse backgrounds and localities throughout the harbour city of Mackay. St Joseph's has consistently been regarded as the 'Family School' with a genuine connection made to our patron saint, St Joseph, and the Holy Family. We enjoy a strong partnership with the St Joseph's Parish Community. Our school through its motto, 'With Christ We Grow', promotes personal, spiritual and academic growth through nurturing connectedness in an atmosphere of care and concern, while providing a holistic education through the delivery of a structured curriculum that is relevant and meaningful.

A range of Information and Communication Technologies is utilised in teaching and learning across all curriculum areas. At St Joseph's, we offer specialist HPE lessons and pride ourselves on offering many sporting opportunities to our students. Students have the chance to learn skills and participate in team competitions and carnivals including swimming, athletics, netball, touch football, hockey and rugby league. We have a comprehensive classroom music program led by a specialist teacher, and cultural pursuits and extra-curricular activities are offered including eisteddfod, instrumental music, drama and school musicals.

At St Joseph's, we are dedicated to providing dynamic programs which foster the physical, mental and social wellbeing of our young people as well as our school community, supported by our school counsellor and other pastoral support and wellbeing programs. Our Outside School Hours Care programs also cater for the needs of families. St Joseph's is a well-resourced school, with modern classrooms and facilities and a variety of outside learning and play spaces. To support the different learning needs of students, classrooms from Years 3-6 have been equipped with flexible seating. Most importantly, St Joseph's has a dedicated team of professionals committed to providing quality and rich learning experiences and supporting the ethos of Catholic Education.

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

Curriculum Offerings

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

St. Joseph's offers a holistic, varied and integrated curriculum for students from Prep to Year 6. Students engage in Technology, Music and HPE as specialist disciplines delivered by specialist teachers, a 1:1 iPad program, a variety of school sporting and cultural opportunities and meaningful prayer experiences. Lunchtime clubs are also offered for students to engage in structured activity during lunch times, including Lego, Gardening, Coding and STEAM activities.

Extra Curricula Activities

Extra-curricular activities at St. Joseph's include sporting, academic and cultural pursuits. Our students are encouraged to 'aim higher and achieve more every day'. A particularly strong sports' culture exists at St. Joseph's, with the school participating in swimming, athletics and cross country. Opportunity to participate in Swimming, Athletics, Basketball, Dancing and Aussie Rules are offered throughout the year. St Joseph's participates in the Mackay and District Netball Competition and Vicki Wilson Cup.

At St. Joseph's, we believe that cultural experiences allow children to develop self-confidence and cooperation in an exciting and dynamic environment, while building discipline and perseverance skills. Speech & Drama lessons are offered after school, by a private teacher, to students from Prep to Year 6. All students are given the opportunity to participate and perform at numerous school and community events including Assemblies, Masses and the Mackay Eisteddfod.

In addition to the curriculum, students participate in compulsory instrumental music in Years 3, 4 and 5, with offerings in percussion and piano. Students from Years 5 and 6 participate in the Mackay Mathematics Challenge, hosted by St Joseph's with over 50 teams competing from across Mackay and the Whitsundays. Each term, students from Year 6 are selected to participate in an Extended Learning Program which offers challenging activities aimed to extend their knowledge and experience.

Students are encouraged to participate in several community fundraising activities for charity including Project Compassion and Catholic Mission fundraising, Mercy Works, Shave for a Cure and St Vincent de Paul. Students from Prep-Year 6 march annually in the Mackay Region Anzac Day Parade.

It was unfortunate that some of our extra-curricula activities had to be curtailed in 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

All learning spaces at St Joseph's have SMART screens and these are used to enhance the teaching and learning process. Teachers are supported to integrate ICTs into their planning and implementation of learning experiences through access to a laptop, iPad and class sets of iPads which connect using Vivi.

At St Joseph's, Prep-Year 6 students participate in the 1:1 iPad program and specialist Technology classes, accessing individual devices to participate in the curriculum, supported by our well-equipped Maker Space. These resources are also utilised by classes outside of Technology lessons. The school also has access to secure Diocesan Links and Portals that provide safe access to educationally approved platforms for learning. Teachers are constantly engaging in training in the use of iPads to assist with the implementation of our 1:1 device program to support the use of ICTs in enhancing the teaching and learning process.

Teachers regularly use Google Classrooms as a platform for learning, particularly when required to support learning from home.

Social Climate

Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture

St Joseph's is committed to a quality, inclusive, Catholic Education. We share in the Mission of the Church, providing through our Religion program knowledge and rich experiences that will inspire and empower the children and families in our care, guided by our Mercy charism. Our Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures reflect our school values of Respect, Justice, Compassion, Service and Excellence, with a commitment to a restorative approach to discipline and correcting behaviours.

Buddy Classes are determined at the beginning of the school year, with a lower year level class being 'buddied' with an upper year level class. These classes participate together in everyday school activities and contribute to building a sense of community between classes and across the school. In 2020, our theme was "Connect" and students engaged with this theme through our Positive Detective Program, class goals and pastoral groups.

Our School Counsellor works two and half days a week and is very well-utilised throughout St. Joseph's, implementing individual, small group and class wellbeing programs in addition to formal counselling services. St Joseph's has a commitment to enhancing wellbeing, with our Wellbeing PLT working on the development of our Positive Behaviour Support and Wellbeing Framework, aligned to trauma-informed practices.

Regular School Assemblies celebrating individual and class achievement and the celebration of Faith/Feast Days and significant public events are an important part of developing the social and cultural life of the school. Liturgy and prayer form a consistent part of our school life, with our school gathering each morning to celebrate our faith.

Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

Our school has implemented CEO policies on Acceptable Use Agreements for students and staff. The school regularly communicates to parents and the school community about Cyber Safety issues. We implement the Child Safety Curriculum and engage guest speakers to present to students, staff and parents on an annual basis to support awareness in this area. St Joseph's actively promotes and participates in Day for Daniel activities annually. We also have appropriate policies in place to deal with the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices and engage guest speakers to address students, staff and parents annually on Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying strategies.

Our school has a number of social/emotional learning programs in place to assist students in guarding against bullying at school. The school community is kept up to date about developments in this area. All CEO and school policies are reviewed on a regular basis. St Joseph's also participates in the National Day of Awareness Against Bullying and Violence.

Strategies for involving parents in their child's education

Our St. Joseph's School Board and P&F Association (the Joey's Supporters) are two organisations that contribute in very positive ways towards engaging parents and building community in our school. Our School Board works very effectively in relation to school policy, budgeting and the maintenance of school facilities and setting strategic priorities. The Joey's Supporters is a tireless group within our school who build parent engagement and raise much needed funds for a variety of resources. In 2020, community building events included our welcome BBQ and contributions to our Art Show and Carols Night. Parents also offer valuable assistance in our tuckshop and library.

A family school, St. Joseph's utilises our parents within classrooms through Learning Support programs such as reading groups. Parents are also involved in everyday class activities, special celebrations, coordination of sporting teams and cultural performances. Our school encourages parents to attend parent information sessions at the

beginning of each school year and, when necessary, the school further communicates curriculum initiatives to parents through information evenings and workshops, which include our Out-of-the-Box Night (1:1 Devices), Prep transition visits and ICT workshops.

Student progress is reported via annual parent/teacher and three-way (parent/teacher/child) interviews and twice-yearly written reports. Communication with parents is encouraged and supported by weekly newsletters and our school website, Facebook page and Class Dojo app.

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

In 2020, improving sustainable practices was a significant school goal. The St Joseph's Sustainability Project Committee involving administration, teachers, support staff, parents, students and community partners implemented a number of initiatives to improve waste management and sustainable practices. These include our Reef Guardian School partnership, implementing and embedding our new waste management system, the introduction of composting and worm farm involving community partnerships with Mackay Regional Council and Bunnings. St Joseph's also reduced printing paper consumption through greater monitoring using the Paper Cut program.

St Joseph's is a fully refurbished school and therefore old buildings with a 'heavy environmental cost' in terms of maintenance and servicing have been replaced by new, more energy-efficient design features. The school continues to look for ways to reduce energy costs, with the use of solar panels to greatly reduce energy consumption and the continued replacement of existing lights with LED bulbs. Most communication with parents is now done electronically, greatly reducing the paper used by the school.

Characteristics of the Student Body

St. Joseph's has students enrolled from a variety of cultural and social backgrounds. Our socio-economic status is wide and varied, as is our cultural impact, with professional and government assisted families, as well as a mix of Filipino, Maltese, German, Indian, South African, Egyptian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. The majority of the school population is drawn from the local urban community. However, some students still come to us from more rural areas. A range of cultures is reflected in the school population, with these and other cultures celebrated at our school.

Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2020 was 95.96%.

Management of non-attendance

At St Joseph's parents are required to contact the office when students are absent. Following our roll marking procedures each morning, a text message is sent to families who have not reported an absence. Extended absences must be informed in writing to the office or class teacher. When students are absent without notification for longer than three days, the office will contact the parents.

At St Joseph's, we try to handle the complex nature of student absence pastorally, which include support for families through our school counselling services. A dedicated phone extension and email address has been created to allow parents to easily communicate absences to our school.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	24.0	24.00	1.00
Full-time equivalents	20.30	14.19	0.47

Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	4.17%
Bachelor Degree	95.83%
Diploma	
Certificate	

Major Professional Development Initiatives

In 2020, staff engaged in professional development initiatives based around the book “Clarity” by Lyn Sharratt. This book was used to work towards our school goals, which focused on creating a collaborative culture of learning. All staff, teachers and support staff, used this book to support our critical analysis of school data and application of the focus parameters for school improvement to identify shared practices essential for improved student outcomes.

All staff engaged in Professional Learning Days to support our whole school improvement goals, including key curriculum initiatives to support our Teaching and Learning Framework, Student Protection and the Diocesan Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework, and ongoing training in the use of technology to enhance pedagogy.

Support staff engaged in Professional Learning supported by webinars and online tutorials through the Australia Teacher Aide portal. Staff also participated in faith formation and Bishop's Inservice Day workshops to support the teaching of Religion. MJR continued to be a focus, with staff working to align this program to existing behaviour and wellbeing initiatives and identified language to be used consistently in our school.

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 \$44,900.

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 88.09%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 94.81%.

School Income

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

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

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National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results

In 2020, NAPLAN did not proceed as a result of the disruptions caused by COVID-19. Previous NAPLAN results 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

Data continues to drive quality teaching practices. In 2020, PAT tests continued to be used to collect comparable data in the areas of Reading, Spelling and Numeracy. With no NAPLAN this year, St Joseph's used this data to assist in strategic planning, resourcing and the relevant and targeted professional development.

Further use of the data has been seen in the implementation of the whole school data collection tool, triangulating the data, and the introduction of a whole school approach to gathering data agreed practices document. This whole school tool and document have continued to create more effective collaboration across year levels, increased opportunities for professional learning amongst colleagues and greater consistency in use of the data to inform practice and use of explicit and effective teaching strategies, to improve student outcomes.

Spelling had been identified in 2019 as an area for further development and, together with professional development, in 2020, a whole school scope and sequence has been trialled across the whole school, based on best practices and use of effective teaching strategies.

Reading has been identified as a priority area of development, for 2021, through both internal and external data.

Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

Strategic progress in 2020

Catholic Ethos Goals 2020:

- To enhance our Catholic Identity by creating visible links between our Catholic tradition and Mercy story
- To review the School Prayer to align with our values and Mercy charism to ensure students understand their meaning and application within our school
- To embed MJR language and practices, especially Greet, Treat and Speak in whole school and classroom environments to enhance our connection with Jesus.

In 2020, we enhanced our Catholic Identity with visible links between our Catholic Tradition and our Mercy Story. Posters were created and distributed to each classroom and learning space with one of our five Mercy values related to a quote from Catherine McAuley, a related scripture verse. Workshops were held with all classes to look at the Charism of St Joseph's - our Mercy values, MJR, the history of the school, our patron saint, our Mercy story and what was written in our current school prayer. From these workshops, students and staff had their say in what should be in a new school prayer to reflect all of these components.

A new school prayer was written and approved at a staff meeting, a board meeting and a P & F meeting. In 2021, the new school prayer was introduced to the school community. Throughout 2020, MJR focus and language were embedded within the school. Class prayers based on MJR language and concepts were celebrated daily. Signage was put up within the school grounds to promote the concept of Greet, Treat and Speak. At the end of 2020, students were introduced to a new greeting, "Jesus in our hearts....forever"; with the aim to embed it in 2021.

Effective Teaching and Learning Goals 2020:

- To develop school wide processes for pedagogy, assessment, collection and regular analysis of data to inform teaching and learning programs, and as a basis for feedback and improvement
- To develop a scope and sequence of Grammar and Punctuation skills from Prep to Year 6 to ensure school-wide consistency for improved student outcomes
- To implement consistent pedagogy in teaching Spelling from Prep to Year 6 for improved student outcomes.

In 2020, a whole school data collection was fully developed for implementation in 2021. Through the work of the Effective Professional Learning Team, together with whole staff consultation, and based on the research and evidence of Lyn Sharratt and Michael Fullan, school wide practices and shared agreements were developed for implementation in 2021.

A consistent approach to Spelling was implemented, from Prep to Year 6, based on Effective Spelling by Christine Topfer, to improve student outcomes. This approach established shared language across the school, together with embedding consistent evidence-based classroom practices.

A grammar scope and sequence was developed to ensure school wide consistent practices and language for improved student outcomes.

Pastoral Support and Wellbeing Goals 2020:

- To implement school-wide behaviour management guidelines, aligned to the school wellbeing framework, to support positive behaviour, enhance positive relationships and improve engaged learning time in classrooms for all students
- To improve student wellbeing by developing our School Mental Health and Wellbeing Guidelines aligned to CEO policy and framework.

In 2020, the PLT engaged in Professional Learning on trauma-informed practices, and the Berry Street Education Model. Staff also adopted the CEO Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework, resulting in the creation of the Positive Behaviour Support and Wellbeing Guidelines which combined wellbeing and behaviour initiative into one succinct approach. 2021 will focus on the implementation of these guidelines and creation of support documents and resources.

Leadership, Partnership and Resourcing Goals 2020:

- To identify school and wider community partnerships in the areas of sustainability and service, that will provide richer, real-life and relevant learning opportunities to enhance student outcomes.

In 2020, this PLT worked to identify service and sustainability partnerships for implementation in 2021. The sustainability projects include waste management practices, water and power conservation, worm farming, and the creation of a chicken coop and vegetable gardens. Partnerships to be enhanced in 2021 include GBRMPA and Mackay Regional Council, in collaboration with our parent community.

Strategic Priorities for 2021

Catholic Ethos and Identity Goals 2021:

- To enhance our Catholic identity by creating visible links between our Catholic Tradition and Mercy Story.
- To embed MJR language and practices, especially GREET, TREAT and SPEAK in whole school and classroom environments to enhance our connection with Jesus

Target: To increase the percentages from the Catholic Identity School Based Google Form Survey,

Effective Teaching and Learning Goals 2021:

- To implement school wide processes for pedagogy, assessment, collection and regular analysis of data to inform teaching and learning programs and as a basis for feedback and improvement.

Target: By the end of 2021, a school wide process for pedagogy, assessment, collection and regular analysis of data will be implemented to inform teaching, planning and feedback for improvement, through identified school sample groups reading outcomes.

- To develop a whole school reading and reading comprehension program to improve student outcomes

Target: By the end of 2021, develop a whole school reading and reading comprehension program to improve student reading outcomes from 54% at or above to 80% at or above, as reflected in identified school sample groups.

- To monitor and assess consistent pedagogy in teaching Spelling from Prep to Year 6 for improved student outcomes

Target: By the end of 2021, students will demonstrate a growth in Spelling, evident in data collections of NAPLAN and Pat S in identified school sample groups.

Pastoral Support and Wellbeing Goal 2021:

- To implement school-wide behaviour management and wellbeing initiatives to prioritise student voice, to improve engaged learning time in classrooms for all students.

Target: By the end of 2021, to increase student reported Readiness to Learn to 80%.

Leadership, Partnerships and Resources Goal 2021:

- To engage school and wider community partnerships in the areas of sustainability and service, that will provide richer, real life and relevant learning opportunities to enhance student outcomes.

Target: By the end of 2021, students will demonstrate enhanced understanding of sustainability practices relating to their class project.

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

In 2020 all members of our school community were invited to provide feedback via an externally moderated survey as part of our school improvement processes. The results of our survey were overwhelmingly positive, with feedback from staff, parents and students giving an excellent satisfaction rating in all four result areas (Catholic Ethos and Identity; Pastoral Support and Wellbeing; Leadership, Partnership and Resourcing; and Effecting Teaching and Learning).

St Joseph's recognises the important contribution of parents and the members of our community in the teaching and learning process, and we are proud to have strong engagement through our Parents and Friends Association (known as the St Joey's Supporters), our School Board and in creating and strengthening partnerships with the wider community. In 2020, enhancing parent engagement and broadening our community partnerships continued to be a priority.