



St Mary's Catholic Primary School Rockhampton

2020 Annual School Report



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, North Rockhampton

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

Principal

Jennifer Harris

Address

135 Nobbs Street
Berserker
North Rockhampton QLD 4701

Total enrolments

352

Year levels offered

Prep to Year 6

Type of School:

Co-educational

School Overview

St Mary's Catholic Primary School North Rockhampton, founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1900, maintains a strong and proud connection with our founding order. Our school motto 'To Love and Serve' is based on the Mercy charism and provides a living example of how we interact with each other as we build positive relationships, promote school and family partnerships, and ensure close ties with parishioners. We provide a nurturing, supportive, holistic, faith-based education for approximately 350 students from Prep to Year 6, and also provide programs for Outside School Hours and Vacation Care.

As a result of a recent, significant building program, we have state of the art facilities designed to promote learning. Our classrooms have been created to ensure students and teachers have the resources and space they require to maximise learning outcomes. We take pride in our academic, cultural and sporting excellence as well as our students' continual and progressive learning gain. Our staff members are committed to providing the highest quality Catholic education. They dedicate themselves to working with students to achieve academic excellence and are skilled in designing learning for all students and fostering opportunities for all children to achieve to their full potential. Specialist teachers implement Languages (French) and Physical Education programs. Students can participate in instrumental music programs, interschool sport and community events. An essential aspect of student learning development is the relationship between school and home, and we welcome parental support and participation. Our school has a wonderful community atmosphere that is very welcoming of new families.

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

Curriculum Offerings

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

Our underlying belief is that learning experiences will be child-centred and relevant. We strive to create a rich environment in which each child will develop a love of learning, be challenged to improve his/her academic outcome and have a positive growth mindset.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School has fourteen classes from Prep to Year 6. Classes average 25 students. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1900, St Mary's Catholic Primary School maintains a connection with our founding order and highlights the Mercy charism as our religious character. The school is organised so that classes of each year level are located together and closely work with each other. Non-contact time is scheduled so that year level teachers can plan and provide consistency across the year level. Specialist teachers are employed for the areas of Health & Physical Education and Languages Other Than English.

Extra Curricula Activities

All children participate weekly in the Junior (Prep – Year 2), Intermediate (Year 3 & 4) or Senior (Year 5 & 6) choir depending on their year level. Instrumental music tuition in guitar, woodwind, percussion, strings, brass, voice, keyboard and piano is available for children from Prep to Year 6. Children from our Prep through to Year 6 represent our school in the local weekend touch football fixtures. Years 5 and 6 students participate in intraschool sports fixtures - soccer, hockey, rugby league, netball, AFL and basketball. Year 3 and 4 students participate in our intra-school sports fixtures Newcombe Ball, T Ball, Basketball, Diamond Cricket and Netball. Our older students are involved in the annual Challenge Cup Netball and Rugby League competition with other Catholic schools in our Diocese. The Year 6 class participates in the Annual Catholic Schools Touch Football Challenge hosted by St Mary's.

The Year 6 children attend an annual overnight Leadership Camp in Term 1 and a week-long camp in early Term 4. Students also have opportunities to participate in school and community life: school chess competitions; interschool Math Team Challenge, Optiminds competition, University of New South Wales competitions in Mathematics, Science, Spelling, Writing and English.

Throughout the year, the children are involved in a variety of cultural programs including Youth Touring Cultural performances, Life Education, the NAIDOC Week Mass and the Anzac Day Ceremonies, Grandparent's Day, Under Eights Day, Mission fundraising for Caritas and the Catholic Missions and other various community charities. Each year, we Adopt-A-Family through 'Vinnies' and provide Christmas hampers for them as well as supporting the 'Adopt a Student' program. During Catholic Education week, families donate a school item to help disadvantaged children to succeed at school. Our Year 1 classes have a partnership with Leinster Place Aged Care.

Some extra curricula activities had to be curtailed during 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

Teachers throughout our school use technology to enhance learning in different ways according to the age group of children with whom they are working. All classes have access to either interactive whiteboards or Vиви's, laptop computers, chromebooks, iPads, iPods and digital cameras that are used across key learning areas. Classes access on-line learning sites such as Reading Eggs, RAZ Reading, Sound Waves, iMaths, Maths Seeds, Study Ladder and See Saw from school and at home. Probots and Beebots are used in basic coding. Teachers and students access digital libraries.

Social Climate

Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture

While academic development is central to our core business, we also place importance on the development of emotional wellbeing and a positive mindset of our students. A school counsellor is on-site weekly offering a free service for all school families. Our behaviour management policy is based on three basic tenets: Be Responsible, Be Respectful and Be Safe.

Prayer and reflection is an important aspect of our daily life with the whole school beginning the day with prayer, before each break and at the end of the day. All classes take a short 'prayer break' at midday each day. Students are encouraged to pray before school on a weekly basis in the church. Students attend weekly Mass with the parish on a regular basis.

Families are supported when preparing their child for the celebration of the sacraments. When enrolling a student at St Mary's, it is hoped that the whole family feels a sense of belonging to this special community from the first day.

Our community focuses weekly on a virtue based on the gospel for the week. This virtue helps us reflect daily on how we make Jesus present to others by our actions. The virtue of the week is also linked to relevant 'Making Jesus Real' concepts.

Buddy programs between younger and older students and peer groups across all year levels are integrated into the life of the school promoting positive relationships between older and younger students and creating a family-like atmosphere.

Weekly awards, recognising the many positive attributes of students, are presented at weekly assemblies.

Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

Our school has implemented Diocesan Acceptable Use Agreements for students and staff. The school regularly communicates to parents and the school community about cyber safety issues and invites educators from organisations such as Cybersmart to present to parents, children and teachers. We also have appropriate policies in place to deal with the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices. 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. Our school board has reviewed our Behaviour Management program and written guidelines to match the Diocesan Anti-Bullying policy. The Child Safety Curriculum is implemented in all year levels during Term 2.

Strategies for involving parents in their child's education

St Mary's has a reputation as a school community which is open, welcoming, encouraging and accepting. Parents/carers experience a sense of belonging and welcome. Parents are invited to become involved in their child's education through the following groups/activities: School Board and P&F, social gatherings such as our school discos, movie nights, P&F Welcome Dinner, Year 1 Nativity Play and Christmas Concert, Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day events, weekly liturgies and assemblies, sporting carnivals and coaching, classroom and excursion help, helpers and convenors for tuckshop, the Parish Fair, participation in parent education sessions offered by the school. Each class has a parent liaison representative who works with the class teacher to maximise parent engagement in classes.

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

St Mary's has registered as an Earthsmart & Recycling Hero School and completes a waste audit annually with the assistance of the LGAQ Earthsmart representatives. As a result of these audits, a number of initiatives have been sustained over the last two years including: default print settings to optimise paper usage, recycling paper, paperless agendas and reports for as many meetings as possible, electronic distribution of the school newsletter and accounts, increased recycling in the staff room, classrooms and offices. We ask parents to find more environmentally friendly ways to package lunches.

Air conditioners have timers and are only used during the warmer months. To save energy, we have over 300 solar panels to help reduce our carbon footprint and improve our sustainable practices.

Characteristics of the Student Body

St Mary's is a school community of 352 students from 219 families who come from all around the Rockhampton area. Located close to the business district of Rockhampton's Northside, St Mary's has a great reputation in the Rockhampton community, mostly from the word-of-mouth recommendations of parents and staff members. Many people comment on the positive caring community feel of the school and the strong family atmosphere. We have many second and even third generation family members in our community.

St Mary's has students from a range of cultural and language backgrounds. Countries represented are: the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, USA, Brazil, New Zealand, England, Latvia, Ireland, France, Sweden and Vietnam. Students who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders comprise almost 9% of our student population.

In recent years, the annual turnover in our student population has remained below 5%. We have a waiting list for most classes. Our families come from most areas of North Rockhampton, South Rockhampton, Yeppoon, Gracemere, along the Emu Park Road and Cawarral and from suburbs on the highway to the north.

Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2020 was 95.97%.

Management of non-attendance

Parents are asked to contact the school providing reasons for non-attendance. An electronic roll is marked twice daily, and a text sent to families if unexplained absences are detected. Catholic Education 'Procedures for Managing School Attendance and Absenteeism' provide guidance in addressing instances where non-attendance becomes a concern.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	27.00	18.00	0.00
Full-time equivalents	22.80	11.41	0.00

Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	3.70%
Bachelor Degree	92.59%

Diploma	3.70%
Certificate	

Major Professional Development Initiatives

All our staff participate in induction and PD for Student Protection and Workplace Health & Safety. Our teaching staff also participate in PD for Religious Education, Bishop’s In-service Day and Curriculum. School-supported PD has included: Anaphylaxis training, Teaching and Learning Framework, Google Classrooms, Zoom Meetings, Teaching Online, Data analysis, Diagnostic Reading Assessment, Religious Education (Gospel of Matthew), Spelling and Word Study. Teacher assistants have attended 2 days of professional development at a regional level and several school-based PD sessions. Learning support teachers attended an annual Learning Support Conference. Some teachers attended the ‘Fierce Conversation’ course.

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 \$ 50,200.

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 90.87%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 95.49%.

School Income

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

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

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

Both anecdotal and statistical data from NAPLAN Year 3 & 5 tests support that St. Mary's is providing a very sound education for students enrolled at the school. However, national testing is only a snapshot in the overall picture of holistic education and these results belong within a context. Some year levels will perform better than others due to the cohort of students coming through at that particular time.

At St Mary's, we welcome all who seek a Catholic Education and its values, and therefore our students come from diverse backgrounds with a wide range of abilities. The social, physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions of learning are as equally valued as the academic at our school as we challenge learners of all ages to be reflective and self-directed.

Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

Strategic progress in 2020

The school engaged in the collection and analysis of data across all year levels in the areas of English and Mathematics. Extension of our middle and higher achieving students in the area of writing was a focus as was the extension of students' understanding of word origin and word meanings. Systematically this data was used for planning, teaching and differentiation for learners.

Use of the CeD3 software for the storage and retrieval of student data.

Consolidating whole-school practices with data collection and school wide procedures have been established and are embedded in teacher expectations and highlighted in the staff handbook.

All teachers were trained as Level 1 Profilers and the profiling of colleagues is embedded into the timetable each semester. Data and feedback from profiling was analysed and focus given to consolidating effective pedagogical practices across the whole school.

There has been a continued effort to further develop the data literacy skills of all teachers in order to analyse, discuss and use ongoing student data.

Strategic Priorities for 2021

- to ensure effective pedagogical practices are consistent with St Mary's Teaching and Learning Framework
- to improve student learning outcomes in spelling by enhancing the school-wide analysis and discussion of systematically collected data on student learning and use
- to improve student's ability to integrate and apply knowledge and skills, collaborate and solve problems
- to foster creativity through STEM by providing quality resources and professional development for teachers
- to promote wellbeing, safety and positive relationships

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

St Mary's Catholic Primary School has an excellent reputation within the community and there is a high level of parent satisfaction. St Mary's completed the examination phase of the National School Improvement Tool NSIT in 2017. The feedback in each of the key result areas was overall positive and affirming of what we do on a daily basis and provided direction for the school development plans. Some of the summary commendations were: 'the school has a very welcoming, supportive, harmonious and inclusive environment where respectful relationships are given a high priority; the religion curriculum is embedded in everyday activities in the classroom and wider school community; the teaching staff are very passionate about their roles and work well together in the best interests of the students.' Parent teacher interviews reflect this sense of satisfaction. Functions organised by the P&F are well attended by the parent body and school staff. As a result, the relationship between parents, students and staff is positive and constructive.