

2023



St Patrick's PS

Message from key groups in our community

Principal's Message

The purpose of this 2023 Annual School Report is to give an overview of all aspects and experiences of school life throughout the year, within the context of St Patrick's Primary School Cessnock.

This year 2023, was one of the most stable years that we have had in quite a long time. It was relatively free of any COVID interruptions & limited natural disasters, leading to a year of academic and sporting prosperity with nothing cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

As a Catholic school, we truly appreciate the sense of belonging and all aspects of building community within the context of school life. Our core beliefs centre around our values of Respect, Kindness, Justice, Compassion and Forgiveness. These values are always at the forefront of everything that we endeavour to accomplish. Our Vision Statement echoes this, 'With heads, hearts and hands we walk in harmony with Jesus Christ'.

Our St Patrick's community is very resilient and always demonstrates a spirit of generosity, which will be unveiled further along in this report. As the Principal of St Patrick's Cessnock I have been proud and felt privileged to have led the school during 2023.

Parent Body Message

The Parent Body known as the P & F Association has once again in 2023 achieved some great success in many areas. There were the regular fundraisers such as Mother's & Father's Day stalls and raffles, Athletic's Day BBQ, Pie Drive and the Annual end of year FUN DAY.

The Canteen thankfully opened again three days a week, albeit with limited but very hardworking volunteers. We had a few relentless parents/carers who were charged with overseeing the rosters, stock ordering and general maintenance of the Canteen.

As a school we were very grateful to these volunteers. They have provided an excellent service to the school community throughout the year. On occasions the Canteen did have to close due to lack of volunteers. This is understandable, as many families have to work these days and are hence not always available.

Thanks to the wonderful fundraising efforts of the Parent Body, we were able to purchase half a dozen sporting gazebos that were greatly needed. These will be used at all carnivals, as well as activities undertaken in the school grounds.

Unfortunately the P & F as it presently is, will only function for one more year, then a new model will be introduced by the Diocese.

Student Body Message

As always, it has been a privilege to serve on the St Patrick's 2023 Leadership Team. During this year we have been able to fulfil all of our leadership duties including hosting regular weekly assemblies and helping to organise and be a part of the many school Liturgies and activities that take place throughout the year.

As a Leadership Team, we were able to organise and help run the Athletics and Swimming Carnivals and one of the highlights was attending the local Council's Mayoral Breakfast. At this event there was an inspirational speaker who motivated us as a Leadership Team to understand what it means to be not just a good leader but a great leader.

We thoroughly enjoyed mentoring and helping our new Kin85 0 0 0.75 31nETBT/F3 14.67 Tf0.75 0 0 0.75 3

School Features

St Patrick's is currently a double streamed school catering for students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Our Parish

We belong to the St Joseph's Parish, Cessnock. Our Parish Priest is Fr James Lunn. Due to our geographical position, being a 20 minute walk from our school to the Church, many of our liturgies and masses are celebrated here in the school grounds.

Location

The school has undertaken two major building projects over the past 10 years to expand, renew and enhance the facilities. We are still continually upgrading the school with innovative and contemporary learning spaces including another building works program that was due to start in 2023 but has been delayed.

As a School community we thank the Sister's of St Joseph who have been pioneers of our school and are integral to our school charism of "Never see a need without doing something about it"

Academic and Cultural Achievements

At St Patrick's we value the importance of academic success and cultural enhancement. We always try to encourage our students to always try their very best.

Fortunately in 2023 we were able to offer our students a lot of opportunities to participate in activities and competitions that would benefit them academically and culturally. Students entered the ICAS University tests, Newcastle Permanent Mathematic's Competition, Mathematics and Spelling Bees, NAIDOC, Debating & Public Speaking competitions.

Excursions

During 2023, all grades were able to attend an Excursion. It was also great news that our Grade 5 students were able to visit the Great Aussie Bush Camp and stay for 2 nights. Year 6 were also lucky to visit Canberra for 3 days and enjoy the educational, cultural and social benefits from such a great excursion.

Student Profile

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Years K – 6. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information

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Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2023:

Total number of staff	38

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Summary of professional learning at this school

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific inservices, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Diocese. The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development

The following Inservices were attended either in person or via ZOOM or Teams:

- Learning Support-Differentiating the Curriculum
- CoGAT training & analysis
- BYOD training
- NCCD-update and revision of requirements
- Early Learning and Successful Foundations inservicing
- Collaborative days for Successful Foundations
- Leading Learning Collaborative (LLC) Case Management Meetings for Diocesan Schools
- Peter Sullivan Numeracy days
- K-Language LIFT training
- K-2 English/Mathematics/RE Syllabus training
- 3-6 English/Mathematics/RE Syllabus training
- MN Response training (Critical Incidences/Injury Reporting/Hazard Reporting)
- CPR/Emergency Care Training

The Executive Team also engaged in PD with the following:

- Regional Principal Meetings
- LLC workshops with Dr Lyn Sharratt
- LLC Diocesan Case Management Meetings
- Governance Training
- RE World Youth Day & Pilgrimage to Israel
- RE Assembly days
- Assembly days for Assistant Principal and Primary Coordinators
- Assembly days for Principal
- PM /GEM days

Professional Development Meetings each week (60 minutes):

- Annual inductions and Governance updates
- Inservicing on the 14 Parameters LLC Framework
- Revision of Code of Conduct, Confidentiality, Conflict of Interest, WHS responsibilities
- Agreed Practices re-visited for all areas of the curriculum.

- Anti-Bullying briefings and procedures
- Managing difficult behaviours
- Learning Support updates and briefing on new procedures and proformas
- Early Learning Framework
- Inclusive Training
- Self Review reflection meetings
- Case Management Meetings
- Programming COSI style Meetings
- PLCs and PLTs-programming, assessment & reporting focuses.
- NAPLAN analysis & unpacking
- PAT testing analysis meetings

Qualifications Up-Grade:

- Some Staff completed the RE Diocesan Inservices for Accreditation
- 1 Staff member graduated from her Masters in Theology
- 1 Staff member studying Psychology

Catholic Identity and Mission

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle participate, under the leadership of the Bishop and in partnership with parents and parishes, in the mission of the Church to provide quality education in the context of a living Catholic Christian tradition. Within this context, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle educate from and for vibrant, welcoming and diverse communities with a particular commitment to the poor; for justice, integrity and peace; and with hope for the future.:

At the heart of everything there is always Jesus Christ.

Catholic schools educate:

- From and for the community of faith
- From and for excellence in learning
- In a rigorous, creative and critical pursuit of truth

(Adapted from: The Catholic School's Office Diocesan Vision Statement, 2016)

Within this context, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle aspire to be:
"Communities of living faith where the heart of all we do is Jesus Christ"

As such, at St Patrick's we strive to:

- Be truly Catholic in our identity and life.
- Be centres of the 'new evangelisation'.
- Enable students to achieve high levels of 'Catholic religious literacy'.
- Be led and staffed by people who will contribute to these goals.

The Catholic identity of St Patrick's Cessnock has its foundations in its long association with the Sisters of S521.94 Tm(the)TJETBT/F3 14.67 Tf01n

Our Catholic identity is visually evident in the artworks, crucifixes, sacred spaces and values-based signage that is around the corridors of the school. We have our Mission and Vision Statement proudly placed in our welcome area & our quadrangle area for everyone to see with our values of Respect, Kindness, Compassion, Justice and Forgiveness displayed directly underneath. Our Mission and Vision statement was based on the Josephite Charism. More importantly though, our Catholic identity is visible in the way that we treat each other every day of our lives not just in the school context but always.

Family and Parish Evangelisation

The School and Church came together in solidarity again in 2023, building positive connections and relationships. Together throughout the year the School and Parish worked together on humanitarian projects with our Winter and Christmas Grocery Appeals which were both resounding successes.

At all times Parishioners from our local Parish were extended a warm welcome to attend any events or Liturgies held at the school. Other forms of communication between the School and Parish were in the form of newsletters, bulletins & the school's website.

One of the main highlights that stands out for 2023 was the Commencement & Welcome Liturgy in Catholic School's Week. This was a wonderful occasion as we had many families and parishioners on the school grounds. There was definitely a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Finally, the Staff of the school continued to provide a solid link between the School and the Parish by being part of the Sacramental Team, RCIA program and by participating in various ministries within the Parish/Church.

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

The School provides an educational program based on and taught in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

The Curriculum is structured around the outcomes and content for each learning area and general capabilities for learning across the curriculum including literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology, critical and

St Patrick's aims to provide a fully inclusive mainstream learning environment that reflects the principles of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Disability Standards for Education (2005). All students are included in the activities of the school community and given opportunities and responsibilities that recognise their value to the community and provide positive learning and social experiences.

- Our commitment to the practices of purposeful inclusion reflects the Gospel values of respect, equality and social justice. Within a Christian framework, we provide a learning environment that is supportive and responsive to individual needs and differences and that recognises and celebrates the individual student's abilities and strengths.

WE AIM TO DO THIS BY:

- Identifying individual strengths and needs.
- Individual Goal Setting, Learning Intentions and Success Criteria used in all classrooms
- Providing appropriate interventions where necessary. In fact our MiniLit / MacqLit/ Language LIFT programs continued to be extremely successful during 2023, as well as the CILS government funded intervention program.
- Fostering the growth of student confidence and independence in learning.
- Working collaboratively with parents and other specialists/external providers for the benefit of each student.

St Patrick's is committed to ensuring students transitioning to Kindergarten receive the best possible start to their schooling. Our dedicated Kindergarten teachers and Learning Support Team visit our early learning centres to gain as much information as possible about the students coming into our care.

Our Transition and Orientation programs are family friendly and designed to promote relationships between staff and students. We pride ourselves on providing a multitude of opportunities for our new students to feel comfortable in the formal school setting in the year before they start school. In fact, many Play-Groups and Transition days were undertaken in Term 3 2023 with resounding success.

The Diocesan Early Learning Policy is firmly founded on Six Declarations about the Early Learner in Catholic schools. It is centred on the image of the child and underpins all we do here at St Patrick's. This program continued in 2023 and was very successful. It will continue into Year 1 in 2024.

At St Patrick's, our focus is also on identifying gifted learners and assisting with the process of developing talent by providing specific opportunities for learning, training and practice.

We have high expectations for all students, with an increased focus on gifted learners and their needs. In 2023 our GEM teacher continued to

K-6 CoGAT was implemented with the intention of estimating students' learned reasoning and problem solving abilities through verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal test items. The CoGAT is used with other school data to assess students' learning and to provide guidance around instruction, decisions and strategies.

All students K-6 were CoGAT (Cognitive Abilities test) tested and teachers were upskilled on how to best meet the individual learning styles of the students in their class.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023

Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency

Australia

Reading

Spelling

Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies guidelines and procedures are informed by the [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#).

The Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy 2022 aims to provide a framework for the policies, programs, resources and practices implemented at system and school level with the purpose of supporting and enhancing the wellbeing of students, and all within its school community. It refers to the overall climate of care that exists within a Catholic school.

The environment is designed to be safe and inclusive, one that promotes academic rigour. A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents, and the wellbeing of all.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the

had displayed significant social or behavioural issues. Guest speakers were accessed also via ZOOM during 2023 to help students who were showing signs of anxiety.

We continued with our student Environmental Team who were inserviced with documents such as:

Ladauto Si inspiring them to be 'Stewards of Creation'. All students were taught the importance of respecting and being actively responsible for their environment.

School Improvement

The School implements the system's review cycle of improvement which outlines the processes and benchmarks for creating the culture and practice of continuous improvement with students as the focus. Strategic Improvement Plans are future focused documents that map the School's directions, aimed specifically at improving educational and wellbeing outcomes for all students through the following areas:

- Catholic Identity and Catholic Curriculum
- Learning and Wellbeing

Each year, the School develops a Strategic Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements

Faith Formation in our Staff and students was also an area where we felt that we had started to make some great progress.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

The main areas of focus for 2024 will be to:

- Increase student results in the area of Mathematics especially Year 5 NAPLAN results.
- Continue to implement new strategies, offer more Professional Development opportunities and to consolidate in the areas where progress has already been made in the Numeracy area.
- Continue to build capacity in teachers to teach Numeracy concepts confidently & competently.
- Engage Parents more in students' learning journey.
- Develop individual goal setting and peer-self assessments for students.
- Introduce 3 way teacher/parent/student conferences to initiate Individual Goal setting for students.
- Build professional development around the implementation of the 'Third Teacher' in classrooms.
- Look into an effective Spelling Program that meets the needs of students 3-6 leading to improved NAPLAN results.
- Continue to develop & build capacity in teachers ability to deliver Faith Formation opportunities for their students.
- Construct an Outdoor Learning Space to enhance the Early Learning Framework across K-2. (Capital Works)
- Upgrade the Computer lab replacing 32 stand alone computers and a refurbishment of the area.
- Upgrade Stage 1 and Early Stage 1 furniture to allow for contemporary learning opportunities.
- Replace astro turf to provide a safe area to implement the PD/H/PE syllabus.

Financial Statement

This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

School Financial Information for the 2023 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2023	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$3,807,708
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$1,063,747
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$705,397
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$10,133
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$254,336
Total Income	\$5,841,321

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$92,279
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$4,451,120
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,336,555
Total Expenditure	\$5,879,954

Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
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END OF 2023 REPORT