

# 2023



St Patrick's Primary School



## Message from key groups in our community

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### Principal's Message

St Patrick's Annual School report reflects a snapshot of our school in 2023. We are a proud Catholic school built on Awabakal land. Our school is steeped in tradition and shared beliefs. Founded by the Sisters of St Joseph's, we take great pride in our Josephite heritage. We are committed to creating and fostering a caring community where families, teachers and students work together in mutual support and respect. It is this community aspect of the faith we share that sets the tone of our Catholic school.

Our staff are dedicated, hard-working and professional. We all strive to provide the best environment for our students to grow in all facets of life. Our aim is to encourage lifelong learning and wellbeing, developing in our students, the skills needed to be active, responsible and flourishing citizens of the future.

St Patrick's is a community with a culture of continuous improvement. Our teaching staff demonstrate a deep understanding

The school itself has a variety of avenues in which it communicates with parents regarding the whole school or individual classes and students, which shows their understanding towards the importance of being flexible yet also personal to the different dynamics of the families within the school. It continues to be consistent and organised with their information and always offers involvement or feedback to be received.

### Student Body Message

Throughout 2023, we have been focusing on student wellbeing. We have been given lots of opportunities to grow in confidence and be our best selves. Our school has implemented programs such as Smiling Mind, wellbeing lessons, and regular wellbeing surveys to make sure that the students of St Patricks have a growth mindset for learning. Our school believes in the importance of student voice and through leadership roles we are able to contribute to our school community.

We deeply appreciate all the events that the staff provide for us. This year we have had so much fun on excursions, through sporting events and in our annual colour run. St Patrick's is a great place to grow and learn.



athletics championships. The students also had the opportunity to participate in gala days for soccer, League tag, AFL and a team competed at the NSW Netball Schools Cup.

The school's excursion program is closely aligned with the curriculum outcomes for each class. In 2023, individual classes undertook day trips, including a visit to the Ray and Shark Centre, Murrook Cultural Centre, Buhtabah Cultural Centre, the Purple Pear Farm to look at sustainable farming, a day immersion at Tocal Homestead, and an on-track experience at the V8 Supercars. The Years 5 and 6 students spent three days exploring our nation's capital with a trip to Canberra. In addition, students participated in a 10-week gymnastics program in Term 1 and numerous Sporting in Schools programs throughout the year. As part of our wellbeing focus, students were given the opportunity to participate in guitar and ukulele lessons, drawing, drama, singing, painting clubs, STEM and Lego club.

Students in our primary classes were provided with the opportunity to participate in a variety of ICAS Competitions, the Premier's Reading Challenge and 200 Nights of Reading.

This year we continued to enhance the street presence of the school with new signage. Further landscaping and the painting of a mural depicting the history of our school, saw St Patrick's refreshed, making a proud statement as a Catholic school in the local area.







## Staffing Profile

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### Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2023:

Total number of staff	20
Number of full time teaching staff	7
Number of part time teaching staff	7
Number of non-teaching staff	6

### Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

Teachers at this School are either accredited as conditional, provisional or proficient as defined by the NSW Teacher Accreditation Act 2004. Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher are voluntary. The number of teachers within the Diocesan Schools System (systemic schools) at these levels is as follows:

- Conditional 107 teachers
- Provisional 69 teachers
- Proficient 1887 teachers
- 4 Highly Accomplished teacher
- 1 Lead teacher

Additionally, there are approximately 10 teachers who are currently actively engaged in the submission process at the higher levels of accreditation. Teacher status at individual schools can be sourced directly from the School.

### Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Schools Office

Summary of professional learning at this school

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## Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

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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 creative thinking, ethical behaviour, personal and social competence and intercultural understanding.

St Patrick's is a community with a strong and optimistic commitment to school improvement and student wellbeing. We embrace and initiate change to achieve our core objective – to improve learning outcomes for all students. St Patrick's challenges all students to fulfil their potential in each key learning area. Our school also places a high priority on fostering a love of learning and on assisting children to take responsibility for their own learning. We develop units of work that elicit higher-order thinking skills that cater to the needs of all our students. Our units of work are aimed at providing opportunities for inquiry learning, problem solving, group interaction and decision-making. We also include both independent and cooperative learning. ICT - Information Communication Technology is at the centre of programming and teaching and learning. All programmed units of work and most lessons incorporate the use of Interactive TVs, computers and relevant interactive programs.

We have an established culture of continuous professional improvement where deep understandings of how our students learn is shared. Throughout 2023, we continued our work on Leading Learning Collaborative. Staff received further professional input around how best to improve student achievement and build teacher capacity to learn, teach and lead. Students continued to develop their understanding around what they were learning, why they were learning it and how to improve their learning. Each classroom incorporated Learning Intentions and co-constructed Success Criteria. All staff share responsibility and accountability for student growth and achievement.

St Patrick's is a Successful Foundations school, supporting a positive transition to school for our Kinder students, through their early years of learning. We acknowledge current research and best practice in the field, which respects the rights, capabilities and needs of the Early Learner to achieve success and build the successful foundations to flourish in the

intervention and support. All children in the early years have the opportunity to develop their sensory, cognitive and affective appreciation of the world around them through exploratory and creative learning in the arts and technology. Our Kindergarten teacher and Learning Support teacher visited the preschool settings for the students entering St Patrick's Kindergarten in 2024. This partnership allows our students the best possible start.

At St Patrick's, we continue to provide quality support for students with additional needs. We offer a variety of support programs such as MiniLit and MacqLit and have passionate aids working in classrooms. As a Gifted Education Lead School with a Gifted Education Mentor (GEM), we have been able to identify our gifted learners and implement programs, including a Virtual Academy, to help meet student needs. This year we have focussed on educating students around Growth Mindset to support their social, emotional and academic needs. This year we introduced guitar lessons and a variety of lunch club activities including drumming, painting, STEM and singing to further engage students in their interests and abilities.

Our Year 5 and 6 students are part of our BYOD program (b1 542.04 Tm(their ))TJETBT/F3 14.67 Tf14





NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	93%	64%
	Reading	75%	74%
	Writing	94%	66%
	Spelling	87%	69%
	Numeracy	80%	68%

## Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

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### 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 management of student behaviour are aligned the CSO [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#) and to the [Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion Procedure](#). The dignity and responsibility of each person is promoted at all times along with positive student behaviours whilst ensuring respect for the rights of all students and staff. Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this School. The School does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by School persons and non-School persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the School. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the School's website.

### Anti-Bullying Policy

The Catholic Schools Office has established an [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) which is implemented by our school and all schools in the diocese. It provides a framework for school communities to work together to prevent and address issues of student bullying, in order to build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each person. The CSO monitors the implementation of this policy.

The full text of the Anti-Bullying Policy may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.

## Complaints Handling Policy

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has established a [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the diocese. The rationale for the policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of our contemporary world. CSO monitors the implementation of this policy.

The full text of the [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.

## Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

In 2022, the school community identified six key priority areas for further focus to enhance whole school wellbeing and learning. In 2023, the following strategies were implemented in response to these key areas:

1. Reimagine our whole school approach to wellbeing, drawing on research and best practice.

Further work has been undertaken to produce a Wellbeing and Learning Framework, specific to our school context across a Multi-tiered System of Support.

2. Build social and emotional skills to support students in making and keeping friends and regulating emotions.

We continued the Smiling Mind Primary School Program. This program is an evidence-based approach to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children from 5-12 years old, in the classroom, school, and home environments. Students participate in one lesson each fortnight and practice mindfulness exercises in class approximately 3 times each week.

The introduction of a specific Wellbeing Room, named the MacKillop Room was introduced in 2023. This has functioned as a break-out space for small group and individual support for identified students who require assistance in developing social/emotional skills. This is also a space for students to speak with our School Pastoral Care Worker/Wellbeing Support teacher about concerns, worries or challenges. Our School Psychologist also operates from this space once per week.

3. Inspire opportunities for student voice and leadership.

In 2023, Year 6 introduced suggestion boxes for each classroom. These are to encourage students to have an opportunity to share ideas that would enhance their experiences at school. Year 6 students collect these suggestion boxes once a fortnight and take ideas to Miss Harvey and Staff for further consideration/action.

Students have also been supported in running lunch club activities based around areas of special interests. These have included talent shows, drawing competitions and magic shows.

Students have been supported when taking initiative to organise fundraising opportunities such as selling handmade loomband accessories and guessing competitions.

Year 6 organised and ran whole school events such as a Jump Off Day and Sea Week Activities.

Student surveys have also been implemented K-6 to provide opportunities for students to share their feelings and perspectives about school.

#### 4. Advance student engagement and participation in extra-curricular activities.

This year the school engaged external providers to run a range of extra-curricular programs or incursions. These included: guitar, ukulele, flute and voice (private tuition), after school drama class (private tuition), Creative Writing Workshop run by Australian authors Jess Black and Ed Wright for Years 3-6, KidBiz full day incursion (Year 6), illustrator Kirrilee Lonergan workshop during Book Week, a range of opportunities were provided for sporting engagement.

#### 5. Empower parent engagement, communication, and collaboration as partners in student learning and wellbeing.

Parents were invited to attend a presentation about Student Wellbeing which was well supported. The presentation provided research around the link between wellbeing and learning as well as practical ways schools are incorporating whole school approaches to enhance wellbeing.

Parents were provided with many opportunities to engage with their child's learning and contribute to the school community including Easter and Christmas craft; open days; Triple M Radio Breakfast Show; Book Week/Science Week/Grandparents Day; Mother's Day Father's Day; Spring Fair; Colour Run; Christmas Concert and Movie Night; as well as various liturgical celebrations.

The School P&F was reinstated and were highly successful in running a wide range of fundraisers and community events.

Communication shared via Facebook, Compass and See Saw was boosted.

A survey was conducted to gauge parent interest and ability to volunteer and assist in extra-curricular activities such as lunch clubs.

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## Community Satisfaction

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Consultation with parents, students and teachers is valued and sought. Their feedback contributes to the planning and the achievement of improved outcomes for students. This year, the School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers. The school undertakes extensive surveying of all stakeholder groups annually. This data is shared with the school community and contributes to the priorities for future planning.

### Parent satisfaction

The parents see the small school setting as an advantage because it is able to offer a nurturing environment where the students and their families are known by every staff member. We have received lots of positive feedback and thanks this year, either verbally, via email, or on Facebook for the number of opportunities for social events that have been provided. Our events are well supported in number by parents, carers and extended family members. Parents and grandparents happily volunteer and are seen regularly around the school. Parents also take the time to email appreciation for the care and concern given to the students. In our recent whole school wellbeing survey, 100% of parent respondents felt that student / teacher relationships are respectful, authentic and positive. They also felt that students are happy, valued and included; and that the community is welcoming and respectful; academic, spiritual, social and emotional growth is supported.

### Student satisfaction

Data obtained through the Smiling Mind Student surveys in Terms 3 & 4 indicate growth in student satisfaction between surveys across all areas measured. These surveys were conducted for students from Years 3-6. The satisfaction rate for the data is as follows:

- Connection – growth of +2.95% (above National Average)
- Engagement – growth of +4.28% (above National Average)
- Gratitude – growth of +4.01% (above National Average)
- Happiness – growth of +1.36% (above National Average)
- Mindfulness – growth of +2.17% (at National Average)
- Perseverance – growth of +3.73% (above National Average)

When the data is broken down across gender, the results show that both boys and girls were above the national average in all domains.



In Term 4, students in K-2 completed a survey of 15 questions that aligned with the CSO Wellbeing Together Framework. Their responses as a collective across these areas were as follows:

- I feel safe, supported & included: Mostly - 69.39%, Sometimes - 21.22%, Rarely - 9.39%
- I am creative, connected, engaged: Mostly -70.20%, Sometimes - 22.45%, Rarely -

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## 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 <sup>1</sup>	\$1,895,302
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$498,698
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$307,215
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$13,922
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$113,764
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$2,828,901</b>

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$36,075
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$2,100,366
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$797,476
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$2,933,917</b>

### 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.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.

END OF 2023 REPORT