

2023

St James Primary School

Message from key groups in our community

Principal's Message

We, as a school community acknowledge the Awabakal People as the traditional owners of this land where our learning takes place at St James' school. As a proud Catholic school, founded by the Sisters of Mercy, we take great pride in our Mercy heritage.

Our core values of respect, courage, service, justice, compassion, and hospitality are embedded into our everyday life and formed the basis of our newly implemented Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework.

We are a school with strong connection to our parish of St Philip's and are committed to an inclusive Catholic education. The positive relationships amongst the staff, students and parents are evident in our community and make working alongside each other for the good of our community harmonious and rewarding.

The staff of St James' are dedicated, hardworking professionals who strive to provide a nurturing environment for students to grow in all facets of their life. Considering and attending to their spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive, and physical needs, establishing a solid and broad foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing.

St James' is a community with a strong commitment to school improvement. We embrace change and embed up to date pedagogical practises to improve learning outcomes for all students. We have an established culture of continuous professional improvement among staff and the deep understanding of how students learn is shared. We strive to deliver the curriculum using contemporary pedagogy that is research based. At St James', we provide quality support for students with additional needs. As a Gifted Education Lead School, we have been able to identify our gifted learners and implement programs to help meet student needs. St James' is a 'Successful Foundations' school, implementing the Early Years Framework which focusses on the importance of 'play-based' learning to give our students the best transition to school in kindergarten.

Our school is set among the trees which gives us a point of difference and is uniquely supportive of the natural fauna and flora. Students and educators enjoy lessons and opportunities to learn and grow within our outdoor spaces.

Our Parents and Friends Association is an active group. They provide financial and moral support to our school. 2023 saw the return of the Student Disco, a great success for the students and enjoyed by the adults too. We joined together to celebrate community events such as Grandparents, Mother's, and Father's Day. All that brought that sense of fun, care, and community into our wonderful school.

Reflecting on the past year it is with pride that we saw our students and staff grow and achieve. As we move

It was great participating in our school swimming and athletics carnivals, plus other activities and events throughout the year. A highlight for me personally was being part of the junior drama

School Features

St James' Primary School, Kotara South is a Catholic

Sporting events were just as prominent on our school calendar and included our school cross country, school athletics and swimming carnivals. We regularly represented St Jame's at Regional, Diocesan and Polding level. We also happen to have a State Champion for Swimming among our students. It was wonderful to be able to welcome parents and carers back to these events and to celebrate the talents of the children who excel in this space.

During 2023 we hosted two guitar concerts featuring our resident guitarists who were supported by their tutors from Ricky's Music Tuition. The school Band also performed for us as we welcomed new and existing families on our Open Night in Term 3.

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 describes the student profile for 2023: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
167	173	37	340

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The [Enrolment Policy](#) applies to all school enrolments within the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. School authorities manage local enrolment processes and procedures in a manner consistent with the rationale and guiding principles articulated in this Enrolment Policy and accompanying [Enrolment Procedures](#). It aims to:

- Set direction for school procedures and practices for enrolling students into Catholic primary and secondary schools within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.
- Establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices.
- Assist the system of Catholic schools to:
 - provide schooling, where possible, for children of Catholic families who seek enrolment
 - cater for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources
 - encourage parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in faith.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2023 was 91.89%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2023:

Total number of staff	41
Number of full time teaching staff	13
Number of part time teaching staff	14
Number of non-teaching staff	14

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

Summary of professional learning at this school

Staff at St James participated in a variety of professional learning experiences.

We continued to participate in the Leading Learning Collaboration, LLC professional learning.

Our Pedagogical Mentors continued to support staff in embedding the 14 Parameters and Case Management meetings across all stages.

All staff participated in a Meaningful Mathematics PL facilitated by Mr Rob Vingerhoets. This supported our SIP goal of improving Mathematical practises across the school K-6. The whole staff also began the school year attending the Peter Sullivan professional Learning organised by the Catholic Schools Office.

In 2023 Professional Learning Experiences offered were a combination of face to face and we worked heavily during our Twilight PD's on the two new syllabuses for Mathematics and English.

Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 begun implementing the new Religious Education units. This was supported by our RE and Spirituality team from the Catholic Schools Office.

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, 2016i4c2ky Tmd98N 425.2 440.94)

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

The School provides an educational program based on and taught in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESAs) 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.

Last year a focus for St James' was set around improving student Mathematics skills with a focus on the Number and Algebra strand including understanding the language of Mathematics. The walks and talks conducted focused on this KLA and ensured feedback was given to staff around Learning Intentions and Success Criteria. We also ensured our regular Case Management Meetings and PLT's had a focus on Mathematics and the new Syllabus.

As a school to compare the growth over the 2023 school year we had teachers construct a Number and Algebra assessment that was strongly aligned with the new syllabus outcomes. This was administered at the start of each term and formed and informed our data wall. This ensured time for student improvement to occur and a comparison of scores after the students once again completed the termly test.

Our pedagogical mentors' (PM's) conducted a number of 15-20 minute skill snacks at the start of most staff meetings. Engaging staff in new resources, ideas, pedagogy and time to refine their programs and skills around the science of reading, Mathematics assessment and vocabulary across KLA's.

Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

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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

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

Year 5 Leadership day

We held a Year 5 L6 n6

2023 was full of sporting 'gala' days, representative sport, carnivals, cross countries and clinics held as incursions at school. We sent teams to Netball, Rugby League, Touch Football and entered the Futsal competition where we completed in the Grand final. All children that participated had a wonderful time and parents appreciated attending these days. We also saw several senior students excel in their chosen sports through the pathways provided to them at a school, Regional, Diocesan, Polding **and** State level. St James' also participated in the National Walk Safely to school day and recognised Bike safety awareness week.

We also offered families and students the first afterschool All Stars Rugby league skills clinic. This was taken up by some 90 families and the students had a ball.

PBL

Our school framework for **the** PBL was implemented fully and we initiated the positive reward of the "Kiara" sticker for ~~the~~ those students who were displaying the school values daily. Focusing on our values and the positive behaviours in our school have given students the drive to succeed **and** to be the best version of themselves,

Stage 3 teachers and students worked a lot on the importance of valuing themselves and others when using technology. The students celebrated Internet Safety



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Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

Priority areas for 2024 are:

In Religious Education:

By the end of 2024 staff and students will have a deeper understanding of the Mercy Charism that underpins the culture of St James as evidenced through practice and prayer.

Key Learning Areas:

- At the end of 2024, there will be a student growth of 5% in the Number and Algebra strand of Mathematics.
- Continue to embed the work of Lyn Sharratt through LLC.
- Upskilling teachers and implement PLD K – 4 and reflect on the implementation of this program by analysing data.
- Build teacher capacity and the use of ICT into teaching and learning opportunities.
- Continue with embedding of PBL throughout the St James' community.
- Implementing the Become program for Stage 3.
- St James' will be involved in the well-being MAT program – a combination of martial arts and positive talk for students.
- The introduction of the

Community Satisfaction

Consultation with parents, students and teachers is valued and sought. Their feedback contributes to the planning and the

Student satisfaction

Students involved in the Year 6 Leadership team reported the 2023 school year to be productive, happy and fun. They felt their ability to run assemblies and talk in front of an audience had improved and enjoyed the chance to lead their school. Students in other grades were given surveys via Microsoft

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	\$3,403,748
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$907,251
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$937,573
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$9,551
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$258,338
Total Income	\$5,516,461

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$227,518
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$4,082,086
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,527,991
Total Expenditure	\$5,837,595

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.

