



# 2018

**ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT**

SERVICE. LEADERSHIP. JUSTICE

*Together in Christ*



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## St James Primary School, MUSWELLBROOK

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## About the Annual School Report

St James Primary School is registered by NESAs as a member of the Catholic system in the Diocese of Maitland - Newcastle.

The Annual School Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The Report describes achievement of school development in 2017 and gives information about 2018 priorities.

This Report is a legislative requirement under the Schools Assistance Act, 2008.

The information in this Report is complemented by the Catholic Schools Office website and school websites where other publications and newsletters can be viewed or obtained.

## Messages from Key School Bodies

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### Principal's Message

2018 was my sixth year of principalship of St James' and sadly my last. I took leave from the role in Term 4 to take up principalship of St Catherine's Catholic College, K-12 at Singleton. Ashley Borg, Assistant Principal acted as principal during Term 4. Mr Aaron Moon was appointed as Principal and will take up the position in 2019. I thoroughly enjoyed my tenure at St James' and was well supported by a dedicated staff, beautiful students and willing parents.

This year the whole school community engaged more thoroughly in Visible Wellbeing as part of the Upper Hunter Wellbeing initiative. Staff were given a number of days Professional Development which was of outstanding quality. We acknowledge the fabulous work of 'Where There's a Will' in setting up the PD and providing the financial support through generous community and mining donations. The staff were provided with the tools to better understand wellbeing and how to make it visible in their classrooms and engage their students in wellbeing discussion and learning that will assist them to make good choices and persevere when they come upon challenges in life.

Through the PB4L pillars of Be a Learner, Be Respectful, Be Safe and Be the Spirit of Jesus, we worked together and shared times of success and joy as well as helping each other through the tougher situations. The Hi5 strategy remained in play and was used to great success.

We continued with some major works at school in refurbishment and maintenance. The internal classrooms ceilings have been painted throughout the school and all of the external painting was completed. Four classrooms were refurbished giving students a vibrant space to learn. The Infant's playground saw a complete overhaul with a beautiful hand made fairy garden being built, with resident fairies in the trees within. Sincerre thanks goes to Pat Sharkey from Kurri Kurri for his generous work and superb craftsmanship. Students from Kindergarten to Year 6 love to use the space. A mud kitchen and tee pee have also been installed and the local Men's Shed are to be acknowledged for their work on these items. Work is to be completed on the stages and car tracks as well as the path to the fairy garden bridge.

Our students have been involved in high level competition, many making it to Diocesan and State level for sport and the Diocesan level for Public Speaking. Students performed at Muswellbrook Eisteddfod with great success. Whilst individual endeavour is to be commended and celebrated we aspire to learn collaboratively and share out knowledge and understanding for the betterment of all.

Our relationship with St. James' Parish continues to be strong even though proximity makes it a little difficult. The 'Parish-School' Mass held each term saw a great many families join in the celebration of the Eucharist and fellowship afterwards with BBQ lunch/supper and homemade sweet refreshments courtesy of staff and Father Anthony.

### Parent Body

The St James' P&F Association is a wonderful community of people who support the school in many different ways. Our P & F is pleased to have provided parents with an opportunity to play an active role in their children's education and to strengthen the link between the school and the wider community.

Fundraising is a major role for our P&F. Not only are we contributing to the school, we have a lot of fun along the way.

The School Canteen is run by P&F volunteers. Due to this volunteer contribution, the substantial cost of wages is not borne by the school, therefore, all profit is able to be put directly back into providing for the needs of our school.

The P&F continues to fund the St James' School Band. Music is an essential component of the curriculum, so the P&F see this as a priority to assist the students of St James'.

Major events this year included:

- Pie Drive
- Mother's Day and Father's Day Stalls

- BBQ at school disco
- Mother's Day Afternoon Tea
- Father's Day Campout
- School Colour Explosion Fun Run

Without a doubt, the most fun had by all this year would definitely be the School Colour Explosion Fun Run. The children (and adults) loved getting covered in powder paint and being sprayed by the fire truck. Plans are well underway for this event in 2019.

Our association has some wonderful members who dedicate their time to provide worthwhile activities and opportunities. Their desire and willingness to make a significant contribution is valued greatly.

## Student Body

Extract from the Captain's end of year speech.

"We wish to express our love for this magnificent school. Oh, what experiences we have had at St James'!! We have been very grateful to be this year's school captains. The school has provided many great things for both of us. As we take a new chapter in our lives, but before we flip the last page we are not just captains or in Year 6 we are all family and members of the St James' community.

I felt proud and honoured to represent St James' for you at the ANZAC Day ceremony and the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day memorial service. We have had some amazing, awesome, fantastic, and magnificent teachers and we would like to say a big thanks to all of them.

As Year Six take a new chapter in their lives we would like to thanks the teachers and staff members of St James' community, we will never forget how much you have done for us."

Charlise and Charlie

## SCHOOL FEATURES

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### History of the school

St James' School is a Catholic Parish school within the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. The school is situated on the western fringes of the town, on land first settled by the Wanaruah people.

The school began its existence as a Catholic denominational school in the middle of a developing township in 1862. When government funding was withdrawn in 1883, the Sisters of Mercy took over responsibility for the school. This school continued to provide a valuable Catholic education to the people of the area, until demand for places, brought on by an expansion in mining and power industries, resulted in the need for the construction of a larger school. In 1983, 100 years after the arrival of the Sisters of Mercy, the present Primary School of 14 classrooms, library, chapel and other amenities was opened. The Sisters of Mercy continued their mission in St. James' School until 1972. The Sisters of St. Joseph continued the important task of providing a Catholic education from 1973 until 1991 when the first lay principal was appointed.

St James' School is proud of its dual heritage and encourages students and their families to incorporate the values and ideals of the charisms into daily life.

### Location/Drawing Area

Muswellbrook is a town in the Upper Hunter Region of New South Wales, Australia, about 243 km north of Sydney and 127 km north-west of Newcastle. Muswellbrook had an estimated urban population of 12,723 as at June 2014.

Muswellbrook is located 48 kilometres via the new England Highway from Singleton to the South and 25 km from Scone to the North. The town is predominately reliant on mining for its employment and in the recent mining activity has seen a major shift in housing availability and pricing.

St James' Primary School is situated on an large acreage on Skellatar Stock Route. The parish church is a 5 minute bus ride away as it is situated in the centre of the town.

- Postal code: 2333
- Elevation: 220 m
- Founded: 1833

## Catholic Identity and Mission

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### Catholic Imagination and Spirituality

Religious symbols, both traditional and contemporary, are visible throughout the school environment and each classroom has a prayer focus space. The foyer and staffroom have interactive sacred spaces that reflect the liturgical season. Prayer is a valued part of each day and the children experience formal as well as informal prayer opportunities. Students present a prayer or hymn before each weekly assembly.

The school chapel is used for class Mass and weekly staff prayer. It is a sacred space that is also open for parents and students to use. We celebrate all major feast days and special occasions with Mass, liturgy or prayer in the chapel, courtyard or St James' hall.

The school Mission and Vision Statements reflect our role as a community of witnesses to the Catholic faith. We believe that St James' School community excels in education through living and learning in Christ. We are inspired by the Gospel to be successful learners and informed, engaged global citizens.

### Family, Parish and Diocesan evangelising and catechesis

The Staff of St. James' School has worked closely with the Parish and the wider community during 2018. Prayer and liturgical celebrations are integral to the daily life of the school and also provide a link with the local parish church. In the first weeks of the school year many staff members travelled to the Cathedral in Newcastle to celebrate the Called to Serve Mass with diocesan staff and clergy.

Staff and students attended a Mass/Liturgy with Fr Anthony each Semester. Children were invited to participate in Children's Liturgy at Sunday Mass and other parish functions.

We supported collections for the St Vincent de Paul's Christmas and Winter appeals as well as Caritas and Children's Mission donating over two thousand dollars.

Students in 2018 participated in the CSO Vinnies Sleepout.

Parents were involved in the preparation of their children for the Sacraments of Initiation. The celebration of the Sacraments was an opportunity for the whole school to support the group by attending the celebrations where possible.

During 2018 staff and school families participated in a variety of religious celebrations both at the Church and at school.

### Christian Discipleship

In 2018 St James' staff met weekly for prayer and reflection. The prayer was often led by the REC but each staff member had an opportunity to lead prayer for the staff.

Daily prayer and Christian meditation is experienced in classrooms, all of which have a sacred prayer space or prayer mat focus. Many opportunities are made available for spontaneous prayer and guided meditation.

Teachers and their classes can visit the Chapel for quiet reflection or celebration. Reflection/prayer is included in the fortnightly newsletter. Mission Day is a major event on the yearly calendar where the children raise money for Children's Mission. This raises awareness of the great need to assist others in our world.

Prayer and Reflection opportunities begin all meetings and gatherings for staff and students.

### Religious Education and Curriculum

All teachers are responsible for teaching Religion in their respective classrooms and are formally accredited to teach Religion or are in the process of satisfying the academic requirements needed to apply for accreditation.

St. James' implements the Maitland-Newcastle Diocesan K-12 Religion Syllabus. During the year classes implemented the new units of work which have been introduced to all diocesan schools. Every day each

class has a structured lesson that develops the knowledge and understandings of our Catholic faith as well as a time for meditation. In Term 2 all Year 6 students participated in the Year 6 Religious Education Test, The results were mixed with some students gaining distinction and credit whilst others only participation.

Liturgical, sacramental and prayer celebrations form an important part of the Religious Education curriculum. Regular opportunities are made for the whole school to come together for worship in liturgies and prayer and singing of hymns.

The Catholic perspective is integrated into all Key Learning Areas through discussion and inclusive opportunities for all students.

### Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Our school motto "Living and Learning in Christ" captures the spirit of our school and is a constant reminder of the importance of witness to the values of Jesus Christ in all interactions with each other and to provide an environment where learning is permeated by Gospel values.

Our annual Lenten Caritas project and annual Mission month and Community Day events are the main focus of our social justice program. Families at St James' School are extremely generous and encourage their children to continually consider the needs of others less fortunate.

The continuation of the PB4L pillars, Be a Learner, Be Respectful, Be Safe and Be the Spirit of Jesus held the students together and saw many receive in excess of 100 'Gotchas' during the year. The introduction of the 'Making Jesus Real' gotcha has increased our focus on God moments. The buddy bench was also well utilised for the fourth year running and the Year 6 parting gift will be the second section of the bench. Mini Vinnies were responsible for undertaking many of these initiatives.

## Student Profile

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The table below shows the number of students in each of the categories listed.

LBOTE*	SWD*	Indigenous
25	15	19

\*Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE); Students With Disabilities (SWD)

### Enrolling at a Catholic School

#### Enrolment Policy and Enrolment information

Parents considering a Catholic school for their children are invited to complete the Enrolment Application form. Please contact your primary school of interest or designated secondary school (see Enrolment Boundaries for Secondary Schools on the website at <https://www.mn.catholic.edu.au/enrolment>) to enquire about enrolment procedures.

Please be advised that if schools have reached their full capacity for enrolments they may have to place children on a waiting list.

Completed applications are considered carefully and parent/carers will be informed as quickly as possible regarding acceptance. Finalisation of school fee payments in previous diocesan schools is a condition of enrolment in another diocesan school.

Catholic schools offer a unique educational experience which forms the child as a person of integrity, compassion, faith and wisdom. Catholic schools also work closely with their local parish to enhance in students a capacity to make sense of their world, to make judgements and to recognise the uniqueness of others within a faith community. Above all, they offer a comprehensive religious education program. Catholic schools don't just teach religious studies, they seek to develop spirit, mind, body and character and cultivate Gospel values that support lives filled with joy, endeavour and hope in the future.

To contact your local Catholic school, please visit <https://www.mn.catholic.edu.au/schools/view-full-school-list/>

#### Enrolment Policy and Procedure in Brief

To view the Enrolment Policy and procedures in full please visit

<https://www.mn.catholic.edu.au/media/48207/enrolment-policy-2018.pdf>

<https://www.mn.catholic.edu.au/media/48208/enrolment-procedure-2018.pdf>

### Student Enrolment

Students attending the School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2018. Additional information can be found on My School website.

Actual Enrolments 2018

Scholastic Year	Number of Students
K	41
Year 1	47
Year 2	37
Year 3	42
Year 4	30
Year 5	49
Year 6	48
Total	294

### Student Attendance - K to 6 - PDF

Percentage of student attendance by Year level and school average for 2018

K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	School Average
88	89	89	90	92	91	89	90

### Managing Student Non-attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents' legal responsibility under the NSW Education Act (1990) to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. The new Compass platform enables all stakeholders, inclusive of parents to directly account for and monitor the Attendance of students online.

In doing so, the School, in partnership with parents, under the leadership of the principal:

- provides a caring environment which fosters in students, a sense of wellbeing and belonging, maintains accurate records of student attendance implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address nonattendance issues as and when they arise
- communicates to parents and students, the School's expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non-attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the Principal immediately any unexplained absences, non-attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non-attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the Principal, the CSO and the relevant Department of Education officers where appropriate. Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the School in collaboration with parents, provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible.

The CSO monitors each school's compliance with student attendance and management of non-attendance as part of the system's Continuum of School Improvement (COSI) processes. The School's attendance monitoring procedures are based on the [Guidelines for the Management of Student Attendance 2017](#).

## Pastoral Care and Wellbeing

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### Student Welfare Policy

At St. James' we believe that each person is created in the "image and likeness of God." Our educational policies, programs and practices reflect the reverence of life acknowledging the diversity of individuals and the need to respect those differences. Honouring, valuing and exploring elements of Aboriginal spirituality as well as various other cultural groups is important to the life of St. James'.

Restorative Justice principles have been the underlying process to address student interpersonal relationships throughout the year. These principles are supported through Positive Behaviours for Learning (PB4L) which fosters school community and a sense of belonging and allows children to develop an understanding of school values in an atmosphere of pastoral welfare. PB4L encourages quality learning, respect and safety at St James'.

The Pastoral Care room/Learning Support room is open at lunch times three days per week and this gives students a place in which to feel safe and welcomed. Art Club, Library, Choir and Mini Vinnies are other ways students can spend lunch times.

### Discipline Policy

The Discipline Policy is evaluated regularly and amendments reflect the varying changes to school numbers, parental needs and expectations as well as environmental changes. A feature of the Policy includes the procedural fairness outlined for student behaviour. The Discipline Policy can be obtained from the school.

The full text of the School's Student Discipline Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the administration office.

### Anti-Bullying Policy

Catholic schools have the responsibility to promote cultures of trust, cooperation and respect in the lived experience of the Catholic Christian setting. Bullying in a school mitigates such a culture and inhibits the development of positive relational outcomes for the common good of students, teachers and caregivers. *St James Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy* is reviewed regularly and is available on the school website.

The Anti - Bullying Policy is in place to enhance behaviour management procedures and outline definitions of bullying behaviour. Students are encouraged to use the Hi 5 strategy to deal with minor issues and are expected to bring serious issues to the attention of staff where it will be dealt with promptly.

### Complaints and Grievances

The school has formal written protocols in place to address complaints and grievances. These protocols are in line with the Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy (2013), developed to provide a consistent approach for all Diocesan schools. This policy aims to address the concerns of Parents / Carers and the wider community. These concerns may include children's learning, behaviour and welfare, school organisation and management, student health and safety issues.

A copy of this policy and the informative parent brochure is available from the school office, school website or is available on the Catholic Schools Office website.

## School Improvement

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### School Improvement Plan

#### Area 1: Catholic Formation

Objective: New programs and initiatives that will assist in the formation of staff to be active contributors to the mission of the Church

Strategies: Develop and implement PD programs to enrich the formation of teachers.

#### Area 2: Learning

Objective: A structured approach to the needs of early learners.

Strategies: Implement agreed recommendations from the Early Learning Working Party.

#### Area 3: Leadership

Objective: A school-wide approach to Wellbeing.

Strategies: Continue to teach Bounce Back lessons and use Visible Wellbeing framework. Whole school focus on Visible Wellbeing.

### School Academic Priorities

Key improvements achieved this year	Key improvements for next year
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<p>Area 1: Catholic Formation</p> <p>Objective: New programs and initiatives that will assist in the formation of staff to be active contributors to the mission of the Church</p> <p>Strategies: Develop and implement PD programs to enrich the formation of teachers</p> <p>Encourage staff to attend Aussie Camino: A Walking Pilgrimage (7/4-15/4 &amp; 13/10 – 21/10)</p> <p>Staff focus on MN Learn Baptism. Staff Meeting 14/3/18</p> <p>Staff focus on MN Learn Reconciliation – Making Sense of Sin.</p> <p>Target: Raise awareness that the Aussie Camino is a Saint Mary MacKillop inspired walking pilgrimage from Portland to Penola.</p> <p>Evidence: Two staff members took part in the Camino walk from 13/10/19 to 21/10/19</p> <p>Target: Registered PD through MN Learn. Reflect on material through Discussion posts, readings accompanying articles.</p> <p>Evidence: Staff completed the MN Learn modules.</p>	<p>Area: Learning</p> <p>Objective: A school-wide approach to education of gifted students</p> <p>Strategies: Differentiation</p> <p>Differentiated strategies – In PLTs discuss HOT and critical thinking strategies and incorporate in programs for Maths, English, Science and HSIE. Staff to be updated in LPs and use these to create I can statements, LI and SC.</p> <p>Must do.. Should do.. Could do.... One activity three ways. Mastery, Mastery with greater depth.</p> <p>Who: Lead teachers to demonstrate Term 1-3 2019. Wks 2,3,4,5,7,8</p> <p>When: Science Term 1 Maths Term 2 English Term 3 HSIE Term 4</p> <p>Target: Staff use of HOT/CT in programs and student work samples and assessment tasks.</p> <p>Learning Intentions and Success Criteria to reflect tiered learning including GE</p> <p>Specific Learning Intentions and Success Criteria to provide timely, effective and appropriate feedback, relevant to the student's level of learning used by all teachers in Maths, Eng, Science</p> <p>Evidence: See Wows and Nows</p> <p>LI/SC in class tasks and assessment</p> <p>HML feedback with criteria for improvement.</p> <p>Tracking Progress using Learning progressions</p> <p>LP progression evident in teacher assessment data</p> <p>Cost: Release for 6 days per term per Lead teacher \$22 000</p>
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<p>Area 2: Learning</p> <p>Objective: A structured approach to the needs of early learners.</p> <p>Strategies: Implement agreed recommendations from the Early Learning Working Party.</p> <p>Target: Attend the Early Learning Launch and apply subsequent knowledge and strategies to Early Learning practices and Procedures.</p> <p>Evidence: Principal and yr 1 teacher attended launch. Kinder teachers visited Schools and had meetings with Kim Moroney regarding provocations and EL strategies.</p> <p>Target: Some visible changes to the school play environment as well as classroom practice.</p> <p>Evidence: New Infant's playground constructed, including fairy garden, mud kitchen, tee pee and creative play materials made available.</p>	<p>Area: Learning</p> <p>Objective: Evidence-based approaches to lift the performance of all students.</p> <p>Strategies: High quality and contemporary pedagogical practice that engages students in their learning</p> <p>Organise content into coherent, well-sequenced TL programs.</p> <p>Scope and Sequence FOR Super Six strategies with Writing (Seven Steps and Alison Davis strategies) 2019</p> <p>Problem Solving as a stimulus for Quality Maths Instruction</p> <p>Who: LTs plus other exemplary teachers AMSI/ Lead teacher English and Maths, Lead Teachers WB, Michelle Primary and Eloise Infants</p> <p>When: Term 1 2,4,6,8 On-going</p> <p>Target: Collaborative sharing twice per term of evidence of teaching the strategies and student outcomes and improvements. Visible Well being- To continue the implementation of VWB – Lea Waters and WTAW PD for 2019 in place. Engage the parent community in the journey</p> <p>Evidence: Bounce Back being implemented and.</p> <p>VWB visible in the classroom and playground.</p> <p>Newsletter inserts and parent workshops</p> <p>Cost: Release for 8 days per term. 4 days per WB Leader \$15 000</p>
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<p>Area 3: Leadership</p> <p>Objective: A school-wide approach to Wellbeing.</p> <p>Strategies: Continue to teach Bounce Back lessons and use Visible Wellbeing framework. Whole school focus on Visible Wellbeing.</p> <p>Target: Teachers to have regular PD input regarding Wellbeing. Bounce Back and Visible Wellbeing Framework to be taught explicitly on Friday afternoons.</p> <p>Evidence: Lea Waters provided PD to Teachers, Wellbeing Coordinators and whole of staff over the course of the year. teachers taught BB on Friday Afternoons instead of having assembly.</p> <p>Target: Student data to reflect happier, healthier students with less wellbeing issues than previously captured in the survey data.</p> <p>Evidence: Student data from Toni Noble and Rose Pennington (PHD Thesis) reflected an increase in happiness and vitality of the students since the inception of the Bounce back program.</p>	<p>Area: Service and Governance</p> <p>Objective: Implement a suite of strategies to respond to the identified wellbeing needs of students and staff</p> <p>Strategies: Remain a member of PESA and work with Professor Lea Waters using Pos Ed/ PERMA framework.</p> <p>Continue mentoring conversations with Darren Boyce, our Cluster 2 mentor.</p> <p>Keep contact with Toni Noble from Bounce Back and PROSPER framework and continue to teach weekly lesson material.</p> <p>Target: PESA membership Term 4 renewal each year. Continue to monitor and resource the teaching of BB within the scope and sequence along with MJR and PB4L.</p> <p>Who: PC, Lead teacher WB, Mary Ballard weekly RFF rotation</p> <p>When: Weekly as per timetable and as required</p> <p>Evidence: Minutes of skype meetings and F2F.</p> <p>2019 RFF to be taken for Library and BB lessons Mary Ballard to teach BB K-6</p> <p>Whole school language of Wellbeing and Pos Ed through the use of BB lessons.</p>
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## Academic Achievements

St James' is committed to offering students a wide variety of opportunities to achieve academic success in all areas.

Teachers deliver programs ensuring a sequential development of skills and knowledge throughout the grades from Kindergarten to Year 6. Our detailed Scope and Sequence of all KLAs ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered by each Stage.

*Throughout the year students have had the opportunity to participate in a range of events across each of the KLAs. In the area of Literacy, students participated in the Premier's Reading challenge. All students took part in buddy reading for World Reading Day and again during Literacy and Numeracy week.*

During the year St James' held the annual Spelling Bee and Public Speaking competitions and it's third Maths Mentals Bee in which all students competed. Two of our students competed at the Diocesan Public Speaking finals. All class groups competed at the Upper Hunter Eisteddfod in either Choral Verse Speaking or Reader's Theatre resulting in all classes receiving a place or being highly commended.

In 2018, the School's Debating Team made the Grand Final of the Diocesan Debating Competition, a first for the school.

The NAPLAN assessments are completed by students in Years 3 and 5 early in Term 2 each year. Our results in 2018 were pleasing with improvement and growth in focus areas. The UNSW International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) are offered to students in Years 3 to 6. These assessments provide some practice for students to complete assessments in the style of NAPLAN. They also give students another opportunity for comparison against students from outside of our school. They are offered in English, Mathematics, Science, Computer Skills, Writing and Spelling. Although not many students took this opportunity those that did received a credit average. Year 6 students participate in the Year 6 Religious Education Test and are compared to other students from all NSW Dioceses. Results were sound overall. Year 6 also participate in the Newcastle Permanent Building Society Maths competition with sound results

being tabled.

Incursions from Musicaviva with concerts and workshops as well as establishing the school band and whole class ukulele lessons has taken music to a new level at St James'. Our association with the CSIRO and STEM projects as well as attending the local Science and Engineering Day assisted students to take their learning outside the classroom and work with professionals in these fields. Author visits, Buddy reading at preschools, the reading garden at school and Book Week plays highlight the love that we share for quality literature. The library is a welcoming space for students to read, research or play board games with friends. Learning is fun at St James' and the blue 'gotcha box' is overflowing with awards that recognise student effort and achievement in learning.

### Cultural achievements

All class groups competed at the Upper Hunter Eisteddfod in either Choral Verse Speaking or Reader's Theatre resulting in all classes receiving a place or being highly commended. Individual item scores were as high and we gained many first and second places for our efforts.

The school community came together for a day to celebrate Indigenous literacy and culture. The school's Indigenous Teacher organised guest speakers, bush tucker, dance and other cultural activities for the children to participate in for better understanding of Aboriginal culture and literature. A great book swap was also held during the year.

Students from St James' have had official roles at flag raising ceremonies, ANZAC Day services, RSL sub branch services and Country Women's Association gatherings. Students have read poems, given speeches and researched information to share with others on given topics.

### Sporting achievements

St James' Primary School had another successful year in a variety of sporting fields and participated in a variety of school based sporting activities. Sportsfun was run again by the Year 10 students from St Joseph's Aberdeen enabling Yr 3 to Yr 5 students to discover a variety of different sports.

The Infants children were able to attend Swimming Lessons in sport time which was funded by Sporting Schools Australia. This was beneficial in honing experienced swimmers skills while introducing learn to swim students to the water. St James' had a high number of students represent the school at Regional level and at Diocesan level.

The school had a number students progress from the Regional Athletics Carnival to the Diocesan Carnival. Many of these students were in more than one event.

We had a number of students successfully join Polding teams for various sports throughout the year and go on to represent the Diocese at State level.

## Student Achievements

### Performance in National Testing

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists School planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The School results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2018		% of students in the top 3 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Reading	71.40%	75.70%	9.50%	8.70%
	Writing	69.00%	71.70%	7.10%	10.00%
	Spelling	54.80%	69.60%	23.80%	12.50%
	Grammar	69.00%	73.10%	9.50%	11.30%
	Numeracy	73.80%	66.80%	11.90%	11.50%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2018		% of students in the top 3 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Reading	70.50%	65.50%	18.20%	12.80%
	Writing	34.00%	43.70%	21.30%	23.40%
	Spelling	68.10%	63.90%	8.50%	13.50%
	Grammar	61.70%	64.40%	6.40%	14.30%
	Numeracy	59.10%	57.50%	11.40%	14.10%

## Staffing Profile

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### Teacher Accreditation Status

All teachers employed to teach NSW curriculum in the school are accredited to teach with NESA

Throughout the year teachers have participated in a variety of professional learning including school based, system based and external professional development courses and a school based professional practice and development process.

Qualifications and Experience	Number of Staff
I. Teachers at Graduate/Proficient.	19
II. Teachers at Highly Accomplished/Lead	0

One Staff member has two Master degrees and two staff members hold one Master degree. All teaching staff are fully qualified and are engaging with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers standards. All new career teachers are either accredited or working towards accreditation with AITSL. All teachers are either accredited to teach/lead Religion or are working towards this level of proficiency.

### Workforce Composition

Number of Staff	
Total teaching staff	19
Total non-teaching staff	10
Grand total	30
Percentage of teachers who are indigenous	0

### Teacher Attendance

95%

Teacher attendance at school is high as moral is high. Some teachers suffered from illness during the year and one teacher suffered during her pregnancy and subsequently had many days off school.

Staff want to be at school because there is caring and nurturing atmosphere and everyone's voice counts. Teachers and staff are part of the decision making process and have regular input into school based decisions through their PLTs or whole staff meetings.

The executive is a body of 4 staff that make draft plans and decisions which are often taken to the teams or P&F for ratification. Communication is in many forms, memo, face to face meeting, newsletter and email as well as daily COMPASS alerts and notifications.

### Teacher Retention

100%

Retention from 2017 to 2018 was excellent, the least movement we have had in many years. One teacher retired and was permanently replaced by a temporary staff member. We retained class numbers for two consecutive years and secured a permanent class for 2019, allowing another temporary teacher to gain permanency. A teacher who had taken 12 months leave the previous year resigned giving us another permanent position which was also filled by a temporary staff member. Lastly, a new staff member was temporarily employed, the position belonging to a permanent teacher who was granted further leave to continue another role at the school. All executive positions remained unchanged. The role of lead teacher

Maths was created and given 0.1 release for 2019 through SIP funding. The AP took on this role.

### Professional Learning Undertaken

During 2018 all staff were engaged in professional development with the Visible Wellbeing framework. These whole days were spent learning about the specifics of using the framework to improve wellbeing of self and students. Teachers also had professional reading regarding quality teaching and learning that they were expected to undertake and discuss in an open forum. Most teachers engaged in this process and healthy discussion and sharing took place. Teachers were engaged in professional learning teams and used this time to discuss student learning and create common formative assessments tasks.

Individual teachers have been engaged in professional learning to gain higher qualifications. All staff also attended the Diocesan Teacher's Conference in Term 3. Two staff hosted a wellbeing workshop at this conference which, was well attended.

## Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

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The opinions and ideas of parents, students and staff are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving 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 staff.

### Parent Satisfaction

Parent satisfaction is high. As principal I have many opportunities to speak to parents in many different settings. At times I need to speak to parents in a formal setting at their request to discuss urgent and important matters. We have always been able to resolve these issues and no issues were taken further due to dissatisfaction.

Parents in the informal settings of swimming or athletics carnivals talk openly about the school and express their gratitude and satisfaction with teachers and the school. Parent chat in the playground is very positive and the odd email or card is sent in thanks after an event. Grandparents are more vocal with their praise.

Parents during school P&F meetings also raise concerns and as these are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner satisfaction levels are maintained.

### Student Satisfaction

Students are very satisfied with their school. Students are regularly quizzed by the principal about what they love about their class, their school and their learning journey.

Students invariably highlight their teachers and the many and varied learning opportunities that they are provided with as evidence of their satisfaction. The principal meets with the student leaders each term and discusses student issues. Satisfaction is maintained as during these meetings student voice is heard and acted upon between meetings. Toilets were refurbished and branded with positive sayings to encourage students to think positively. Play areas were constructed and the fairy garden was loved by all - even the Yr 6 boys played in it from time to time.

My farewell from St James' highlighted the high degree of student satisfaction as many students verbally and in written and pictorial form told me how much they loved the school and what I had contributed to it.

I was gifted a most beautiful farewell by staff and students on the night of the end of year concert. The atmosphere created by this event was strong and cohesive and highlighted the wonderful community spirit that is prominent at St James'.

### Staff Satisfaction

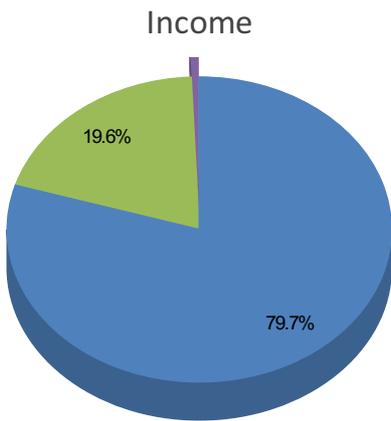
Overall I would rate staff satisfaction high.

Staff satisfaction ebbs and flows depending upon decisions made. It is difficult to make decisions that all staff are satisfied with, however all aspects of concern are duly considered prior to making a decision or taken into account if raised after this process and adjustments made where necessary. Over the course of the year there were a few tense and robust staff meetings regarding changes made/ to be made. Some staff are more vocal than others and some less accommodating than others. Some staff are able to put the outcomes of the students before their own and others have greater difficulty doing that if the impact is personally felt.

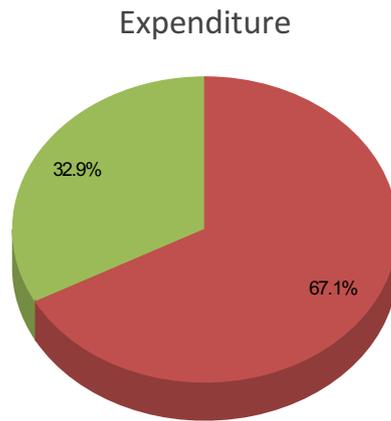
During the year I personally spoke to each staff member regarding their Professional practice and Development (PP&D) and touched base with everyone on a regular basis both on a professional and personal basis. I did not have many issues from within the staff to take care of nor any issues that were not resolved at school level raised by staff.

The cohesion amongst staff was typical, strong when needed but mostly collegial and friendly. Staff worked well in their PLTs and stage groups to deliver outcomes.





- Commonwealth Recurrent Grants (79.7%)
- Government Capital Grants (0%)
- State Recurrent Grants (19.6%)
- Fees and Private Income (0.7%)
- Other Capital Income (0%)



- Capital Expenditure (0%)
- Salaries and Related Expenses (67.1%)
- Non-Salary Expenses (32.9%)

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 2018 year is detailed below:

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$3,315,649
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$817,339
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$28,033
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$49
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$4,161,070</b>

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$339
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$2,784,431
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$1,362,630
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$4,147,061</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.

## Report Access and Publication

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This report is available to members of the school and wider communities. Copies will be supplied to the Catholic Schools Office, NESA, The Parents and Friends Association, the Parish Priest and to all parents.

Copies of this school's Annual School Report are available to the general public. Persons wishing to access a copy of the report should contact:

**St James Primary School**

**MUSWELLBROOK**

**Phone: 6543 3094**

For further information relating to the Diocesan Policy please refer to: <http://mn.catholic.edu.au>