

2019

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

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Together in Christ



St Dominic's CHIC

76 Havelock Street, MAYFIELD 2304

Principal: Mrs Veronica McLoughlin

Web: <http://www.mayfieldsd.catholic.edu.au>



www.mn.catholic.edu.au

About this report

St Dominic's CHIC (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO), Maitland-Newcastle. The CSO as the 'approved authority' for the diocesan registration system formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act (1990), is responsible for monitoring the compliance of member schools in the manner that has been approved by the Minister of Education. The Annual School Report (the 'Report'), provides parents and the wider community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. Additionally, the Report complements and is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

Detailed information about the School's improvement journey is documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which is developed, implemented and evaluated in consultation with key stakeholders. Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can be also be obtained from the My School website.

Message from key groups in our community

Principal's Message

St Dominic's is a systemic Catholic special school, catering for students from K-10 with the following primary diagnoses: deaf or hard of hearing; moderate cognitive delay; Autism Spectrum Disorder (Kindergarten only). In 2019 we had two Autism specific classes, continuing the growth and expansion of our setting.

Our team is inclusive of teachers, learning support assistants and a multi-disciplinary team of occupational therapist, speech therapist and psychologist. The multi-disciplinary team make invaluable contributions to our community in their specialist areas including whole school programs, targeted interventions and liaising with external specialists to establish a repetition of skills learned in therapy.

We continue to retain strong links with the Dominican community who are proud and humbled by the progress St Dominic's is making, This charism is a foundation for all we do within our community and we continue to remain committed to this work.

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle remains singularly committed to providing a quality education for students who have disabilities and St Dominic's is testament to this commitment.

Parent Body Message

Parent Body

We work very closely with our families to keep open, honest and collaborative communication. The parent network is an extremely important aspect of our community. It is where families are able to empathise with and support each other in a way you cannot experience in other schools.

Student Body Message

Student Body

Students feel safe and supported at St Dom's. They are challenged every day to be the best they can be and are given safety nets for when failure happens. We look for teachable moments in all aspects of our school life, ensuring that students feel safe to fail. It is often in these moments that the biggest growth occurs.

School Features

History of the school

St Dominic's has a history built on the traditions of the Centre's founders, the Dominican Sisters. The Dominican Sisters began educating students who were deaf and hard of hearing in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese in 1872. The evolution of St Dominic's has seen it grow and change in many directions. From being a boarding school for up to 250 students, advances in technology has seen a steady decline in enrolments over the years. The school moved to our current site in 1993 and its purpose-built features such as being soundproof benefits other students with sensory needs.

After consultation with the Dominican Sisters, it was affirmed that continued evolution of St Dominic's is supported and encouraged by their community, which has resulted in a strategic expansion of the school in enrolments, facilities and staff resourcing.

Location/Drawing Area

St Dominic's is located in the Mayfield Parish and draws students from a wide geographical area including Port Stephens, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Newcastle areas. Students enrolled at St Dominic's are eligible for assisted travel enabling students who live within 45km of the school to receive travel to and from school. Given that we are a special school we accept students who live outside of our catchment area.

Student Profile

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in K - 10. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2019: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
8	23	1	31

* 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 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 2019 was 87.17%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group										
Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
94.70	87.90	87.50	87.90	0.00	84.90	79.60	85.10	88.60	94.80	80.70

Managing Student Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The School, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, School staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the School community
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented
- documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern
- the Regional Directors of Catholic Schools Office (CSO) or designated CSO officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom the School's strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

Senior Secondary Outcomes

The table below sets out the percentages of students undertaking vocational training in their senior years as well as those attaining the award of Higher School Certificate (or equivalent vocational education and training qualifications).

Senior secondary outcomes 2019	
% of students undertaking vocational training or training in a trade during the senior years of schooling	0% %
% of students attaining the award of Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification	0% %

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2019:

Total number of staff	22
Number of full time teaching staff	5
Number of part time teaching staff	5
Number of non-teaching staff	12

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 260 teachers
- Provisional 136 teachers
- Proficient 2060 teachers

Additionally, there are approximately 3 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 (CSO). 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. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes.

Summary of professional learning at this school

Our 2019 Professional Learning Plan targeted our School Improvement goals of:

- Aboriginal Spirituality
- Implementation of Every Student Framework across all stages
- Learning through play
- Embedding of Structured Teaching across Kindergarten to Year 2
- Positive Behaviour for Learning Framework

Professional learning included:

- MAPA training
- Spiritual Retreat focusing on Aboriginal spirituality
- Online and face to face modules for Structured Teaching

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 aspire to be:

“Communities of living faith where the heart of all we do is Jesus Christ.”

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

As such, they are to:

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

(Catholic Schools at a Crossroads, 2007)

Family, Parish and Diocesan evangelising and catechesis

St Dominic's is a systemic school belonging to the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and maintains close links with the Catholic Schools Office and other Diocesan systemic schools. The school community participates in Diocesan, Regional and Parish celebrations.

Vision Statement:

Gifted by the Holy Spirit St Dominic's Centre celebrates:

- Strength
- Diversity
- Integrity
- In a rigorous, creative and critical pursuit of truth.

Mission Statement:

At St Dominic's Centre, Mayfield our Mission is to:

- Study
- Provide excellence in Individualised Learning.
- Empower Independent learners.
- Nurture each student's spiritual, emotional, academic, social and physical development.
- Prayer.

- Build relationships with God.
- Create reflective practices.
- Provide contemporary religious pedagogy.
- Community
- Foster authentic connections.
- Live their life according to Gospel values
- Create an inclusive environment characterised by mutual honesty, integrity, justice and respect
- Service
- Pursue justice out of love modelled by Jesus.
- Respond to the needs of the wider community.
- Bring hope by sharing our gifts with all we meet.

The school is represented at all Diocesan celebrations and we enjoy a close relationship with the Diocesan Parish Liaison Officer and we are building close links with our Parish Priests. There have been masses and liturgies celebrating the opening of the school year; Mother's Day; International Day for People with a Disability; Grandparents' Day; Holy Week and Christmas. By celebrating our faith together in liturgy and prayer we are consolidating the partnership with Jesus that we nurture and develop among our students.

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

Primary Curriculum

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 Catholic Schools' Office Learning Framework is brings together structures that relate to quality learning and experiences in schools across the Diocese.

The Learning Framework provides a context for the development of learning and its key components, informed by research, are built around five essential elements:

- Continual focus on Leading Learning
- Cultures built on Collaborative Learning
- Rich and purposeful Personalised Learning
- Creating the conditions for Supportive Learning
- Building capacity through Professional Learning

Teaching and Learning

- Continual focus on Leading Learning
- Cultures built on Collaborative Learning
- Rich and purposeful Personalised Learning
- Creating the conditions for Supportive Learning
- Building capacity through Professional Learning

The curriculum at St Dominic's is inclusive of K-6 syllabus outcomes, Years 7-10 Life Skills Outcomes and Content and the Every Student Framework. Each student has a data folder that informs the programming and instruction for each area of learning. Input from the multi-disciplinary team also informs academic goals that are streamlined through the PP process. Through the Professional Practice and Development process staff also set whole school goals, team goals and individual goals that support the continual reflection and improvement of practices and student outcomes.

All of this is then couched in the Positive Behaviour for Learning framework that supports students in emotional regulation, decision making and empowering the individual strengths of each child.

Assessment as, for and of learning is then conducted throughout the term to determine the progress of each student. Feedback to parents is given through email, phone calls, social media, reports and the PP meetings. Parents are invited to two formal planning meetings a

year to review and set goals with the staff and student. This is also the opportunity for families to give feedback from their perspective as to the progression of their child.

Secondary Curriculum

The Secondary Curriculum follows the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabus for each course offered as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990 (NSW) and implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office (CSO). The CSO's Statement on Authentic Learning outlines our beliefs about how students learn. It provides a foundation for teachers, school leaders and system leaders as they aspire to enable learning which engages and empowers students to become lifelong learners, who contribute to society, and the wider world, as active and discerning citizens.

Teaching and Learning

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Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

Eligible students who leave school before receiving their Higher School Certificate will receive the NSW Record of School Achievement (RoSA). The RoSA has been designed to provide grades for all Stage 5 (Year 10) and Stage 6 (Preliminary) courses completed during secondary education. In 2019, the number of students issued with a RoSA was 4.

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 Well being and Pastoral Care Policy.

The Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy 2017, 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.

The Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy for Students can be found at www.mn.catholic.edu.au/about/policies

There were no changes to the policy in 2019.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned the CSO [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 at this link.

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 at this link.

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

St Dominic's is adopts a Positive Behaviour for Learning Framework. A variety of assessment tools are used to gather baseline data across the school in a variety of areas such as social, emotional and behavioural functionality. This data informs goals and targets that are then set for whole school, stages and individuals. Each Tuesday morning a PBL Assembly is held that outlines the next focus area for the school. These skills are explicitly taught to all students, modeled through role plays or clips and then monitored over the next two weeks. This ensures all students have the opportunity to learn and embed the school across different settings in the school.

Our Allied Health Team are integral in the setting and evaluation of these goals. Parents are also offered professional learning and encouraged to implement the strategies at home.

Punitive consequences are not common place, opting instead for a consequence that is relevant to the behaviour.

School Improvement

The School implements the systems 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 Plans and School Improvement Plans are future focused documents that map the School's directions, aimed specifically at improving educational and pastoral outcomes for all students through the following areas:

- Catholic Formation and Mission
- Learning and Teaching
- Leadership
- Wellbeing and Partnerships

Each year, the School develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. A copy of the Strategic Improvement Plan and the Annual Improvement Plan may be obtained from the School administrative office.

Key Improvements Achieved

Catholic Formation

Aboriginal Spirituality Retreat with Catholic Schools Office personnel, including Aboriginal Education Officer and Spirituality Education Officer. This retreat included background learning as well as a visit to a local Aboriginal site. PLMs were used to prepare staff in readings for background knowledge. Our Mission and Vision statement were also reviewed and renewed throughout the year, reflecting the changes that have taken place in recent years. The official launch of this will take place in 2020.

Learning and Teaching

A strong focus on the collation and application of data across all year groups was a key focus for 2019. This included a combination of standardised testing along with assessment as, for and of learning. St Dominic's adopted the Every Student Framework (ESF) across K-10 and this work continued to be embedded in all teacher's planning and practices. Learning through play was extended to facilitated play in break times. Staff were assigned the role of play facilitator with professional learning delivered to ensure a quality program. Our secondary campus adopted an inquiry-based learning framework for their teaching and learning. Common themes and outcomes were identified across several KLAs with cross-curricular teaching and learning achieved through team teaching.

Leadership

Using the PP&D framework staff were supported in setting and working towards individual and team goals. This enabled staff to share ideas, programs and outcomes with their peers. An external service provider was engaged to run executive leadership coaching sessions with the senior leadership team. Attendance at various professional learning opportunities linked to SIP also offered an opportunity to build skills and capacity in leadership.

Wellbeing and Partnerships

Parents continued to be engaged in our community to build valuable and supportive networks. This was achieved through shared experiences that focused on student outcomes and achievements. The staff retreat was a valued time for staff to reflect on their own practices and wellbeing and to take time to nurture relationships with each other. Using Compass we aim to engage parents through the parent portal. In 2019 we worked towards this through education and preparation with the view to opening the portal in 2020. The Executive Coaching support for senior leadership gave clarity and direction to individual leadership journeys.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

- Launch of Mission and Vision Statement
- Exploration of Sacramental Program
- Upskilling of newly recruited staff in Structured Teacch, Every Student Framework and implementation of data
- Embedding strategies from MAPA training

Community Satisfaction

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers 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 teachers. At the beginning of each review phase school's undertakes extensive surveying of all stakeholder groups. This data is shared with the school community and contributes to the priorities for future planning.

Parent satisfaction

"We came to St Dom's over 2 years ago, searching for a place for our children, four children with additional needs. Two were struggling in a mainstream setting, and having raised three other children, knew this setting was not appropriate for the four that followed. We had already hit big crisis points and we came to the St Dom's interview process broken and struggling for our kids

After our first taste of St Dom's we knew that this was the place to not only educate our children but to grow, strengthen , regulate, understand, support and do all the things that are needed (and parents of extra needs kids will understand at a glance what I mean.....it's been a steep learning curve).

The relief at staff just understanding what we meant when we explained our "stuff " and even "knowing " before we spoke what happens for our kids was amazing and lifted such a big burden of our hearts. Fast forward to now and all four are at St Dom's and thriving, not just one or two of them thriving - but all four. Friends and family see the difference and growth.

We love the staff , their professionalism, understanding, skill and compassionand as an added bonus we are so blessed to be a part of a community of other parents who are all at different parts of this journey, to lean on and learn from and laugh with, to celebrate the joy and understand the struggles."

I would like to say that since my grandson started at St Dominic's, he has come out of his shell. He has come in leaps and bounds with his social skills and personal development. I attribute this to the dedication of all the teachers and support staff who put all their time, effort and patience in teaching these wonderful, unique and beautiful kids with their own special needs, gifts and talents.

We as a family are very thankful for all the support we receive from the teachers and staff, and always kept up to date.

This is a wonderful close community that feels more like a close knit family. Thankyou (Grandparent)

Student satisfaction

"My favourite space in the school is the movement room because you can get from the red zone into the green zone. I enjoy school because I get to play with my friends and see my brothers and sisters."

"I like my friends at school. I like painting, drawing and colouring because it's fun and I like putting my work on the wall to decorate the room. I like being part of the liturgies because you get to be together with families. My new classroom is big with open space, with gardens outside where we have lunch.

"St Dom's makes me feel happy because all the people here are nice and kind and they help us with things."

Teacher satisfaction

Primary Teacher

As an educational professional, who has worked at a number of Catholic and DET High and Primary Schools, I can honestly say, St Dominic's ticks all of the boxes!

As a new teacher to the school, I found the staff and school community welcoming and inclusive. From a teaching perspective, I have found support in my professional practices and am very lucky to be involved in a dynamic teaching team.

I feel privileged to be working at such a wonderful school! St Dominic's Centre has a place in my heart that will never be replaced. To have a school prayer that ends with 'And may we always remember to, pray for one another', that says it all...

Secondary Teacher

St Dominic's Secondary classes encourage students to build on their knowledge and skills. Enquiry based learning programs provide a framework for in-depth learning. Students are given the opportunity to apply their skills in a variety of contexts and age appropriate activities. The Secondary team aims to promote student independence and social connections and post school skills integrated within the curriculum. This is delivered in a team teaching environment where students and their families prepare for future beyond school.

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 2019 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2019	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$1245075
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$464128
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$77248
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$21627
Total Income	\$1808078

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2019	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$20380
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$1529013
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$230728
Total Expenditure	\$1780121

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 2019 REPORT