

2020

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE.LEADERSHIP.JUSTICE

Together in Christ



St Columban's Primary School

Church Street, MAYFIELD 2304

Principal: Danielle Reed

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

About this report

St Columban's Primary School (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

I am delighted to present to you the annual school report for St Columban's Catholic Primary School, Mayfield. Our school vision truly encompasses all that we strive to achieve here at St Columban's: 'Inspiring all to reach their full potential, within a diverse community, through the richness and Truth of Christ's message'.

The purpose of this report is to celebrate the many achievements of our school and outline our plans for continued improvement.

Children at St Columban's are welcomed into a small community where their individuality is acknowledged, celebrated and respected. Our strong positive reputation in the local area is built on our approach to pastoral care, social justice, student welfare and striving for excellence in all we do.

Our school continued to build strong, positive relationships within the Parish and our parent community. This was made more difficult by the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions that applied during and after lockdown. We encouraged connection through online platforms and provided home learning to students on a regular basis. The challenge we faced was to keep a balance between the personal lives of staff and their children and our responsibility to our students and families. We look forward to being able to welcome families back into our school grounds and pray this will be the case in 2021.

Our staff, students and parents are proud of the community we have built at St Columban's. We work together to ensure that our students grow into strong, confident, faith-filled contributors to society.

Parent Body Message

The challenges of Covid-19 and home learning gave parents a new appreciation for teachers! We accessed the activities that were provided for our children and appreciated the contact made by their teachers. After a long association with St Columban's, we definitely felt the difference when we could no longer enter the school grounds and participate in activities such as school liturgies and helping in the canteen.

Every family had different circumstances and expectations when it came to home learning and the staggered approach to return to school. We feel that the school provided calm and consistent communication and activities that were achievable. There were also extension links provided if parents needed a little extra to keep their children occupied.

We look forward to being able to come back into the school in 2021.

Student Body Message

Our last year of primary school was very different to our other years at St Columban's. We were looking forward to annual Year 6 excursions, such as camp and our Year 6 Fun Day, but unfortunately due to Covid-19 we were unable to attend those events. As Covid restrictions eased later in the year, we were still lucky enough to have our Year 6 Spirituality Day at the Wetlands Centre and attend a "Surf, Safe, Surf Day" at Newcastle Beach, and have our parents attend our Year 6 farewell.

Our teachers worked hard to provide interesting home learning experiences for us and it made us learn how to work independently. We did most of our learning tasks on-line and had to think very creatively. Though home learning was a unique experience, we were all very happy to come back to school full time. We missed our friends and home learning made us realise how much we enjoy school life.

Though our final year of primary school was very different to what we had expected, we still enjoyed our leadership roles and the extra responsibilities and privileges that come with being in Year 6.

School Features

St Columban's is a K-6 school accepting children from Mayfield, Mayfield East, Mayfield West, Warabrook, Tighes Hill, Islington, Carrington, Wickham and Hamilton North.

Founded by the Dominican sisters in 1917, our school has a deeply embedded history and presence in the local community. Our motto "Truth" is taken from the Latin "Veritas", which is the Dominican ideal. To be true to self, true to others, and true to God. Students are taught to be seekers of truth throughout their lives.

We share this tradition and a strong association with San Clemente High School which is located on the adjacent site. Transition to high school is made much easier for our Year 6 students through this relationship. We offer a well developed Kinder transition program which includes regular visits to the Kinder classroom and a 'buddy' program to assist our youngest students in starting their school journey.

This year our parent body was unable to be part of fundraising activities which were sorely missed for the community connection and school resources they provide.

Where possible, students were still given the opportunity to be involved in many co-curricular activities including Mini Vinnies, debating and public speaking, ICAS external competitions, representative sport, swimming lessons, choir and environmental groups. We are associated with Sporting Schools and receive government grants to offer a variety of sports which have included touch football, soccer, athletics, gymnastics, basketball, netball, lawn bowls and cricket.

We present a bi-annual school musical to showcase the performing arts talents of our community. Our most recent being The Story of Newcastle, which allowed students to collaboratively write a script using knowledge gained from their lessons in local history. The musical was a great success and well received.

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 2020: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
62	89	48	151

* 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 2020 was 92.58%. 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
93.74	92.73	93.13	90.94	93.87	91.42	92.22

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.

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2020:

Total number of staff	20
Number of full time teaching staff	8
Number of part time teaching staff	7
Number of non-teaching staff	5

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

St Columban's staff work in professional learning teams across stages, focusing on continuous cycle of student assessment, planning and goal setting. Professional development in writing for all staff has resulted in a cohesive approach to the teaching of this important skill across the school. Staff are also engaged in setting personal professional development goals and this has resulted in learning across technology, robotics, mathematics, science and environmental education. Staff who complete professional development share their learning with their colleagues.

All staff have recently completed training in supporting students with trauma. One staff member is completing a Master of Educational Leadership degree and two are involved in executive leadership development. Early career teachers are participating in ongoing training. Training in reading assessment has enabled infant's staff to focus on specific areas for improvement in the teaching of reading.

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)

St Columban's has a strong Dominican tradition of over 100 years. Students are able to articulate our charism of using "head, heart and hands" to be the true face of God to others.

Using the four pillars of the Dominican tradition: prayer, study, community and service - we are able to integrate the 800 year old teachings of St Dominic into our modern lives and see the ways in which they are still relevant today.

The pillars are part of all we do and are woven through our normal school activities. Regular prayer, attention to study, belonging to community and service to others. Regular prayer is part of our Catholic identity. The school community prays together each morning and one class attends parish Mass weekly. Regular liturgies celebrate the liturgical year and important days such as feast days, reconciliation week, Mother's and Father's day.

Each October, members of the parish are invited to pray the Rosary with our students each morning.

Attention to study is evidenced in our ongoing commitment to strive for excellence. Religious study is part of the curriculum each day and students engage in units that encompass the history and beliefs of the Church, the life of Jesus and social justice.

We witness to our faith by engaging in social justice activities which teach students about our responsibility as Christians to reach out to the less fortunate. Students are involved in Mini Vinnies to assist our local community. Senior students organise an annual mission day fundraiser and send proceeds to Catholic Mission to give aid to those in poorer nations

around the world. As a broader school community we celebrate St Dominic's Day annually with our local Dominican schools. These activities personify the Dominican pillars of community and service.

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

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

The curriculum at St Columban's endeavours to cater to the needs of all students. Our students come from a wider variety of backgrounds and experiences and we employ support staff to assist teachers in making the curriculum accessible to all.

Our Learning Support Teacher and three Learning Support Assistants give extra help to those students who find learning a challenge. They work closely with teachers to identify, assess, monitor and devise programs for students in literacy, mathematics, physical or social skills to enable them to access the curriculum and experience success.

We are a Gifted Education Lead (GEL) school in the Diocese. All staff have received training in identifying high potential learners and providing extension in their learning. Our Gifted Education Mentor (GEM) supports staff and students by providing strategies and resources to allow these students to reach their full potential. This has included the integration of technology and STEM education along with an Artist in Residence program to extend students who demonstrate developing talent in visual art.

At St Columban's, 44% of students come from a language background other than English. The English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) teacher provides additional support to these students and their families in English language and Australian cultural learning.

Staff are trained in the use of creative and critical thinking strategies and embed opportunities for this learning in their programs. Students are encouraged to develop skills in critical thinking and collaboration as part of learning to be responsible and productive global citizens.

The whole school focus on writing has been very successful, allowing staff to develop cohesive methods to teach and assess writing skills.

15 new laptops were purchased this year to allow further access to technology for all, but especially for Stage 2 students to enhance their skills in preparation for the BYOD (bring your own device) program in Stage 3.

Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

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 the School's planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

Due to the impact of Covid-19 this year, the Education Ministers agreed that NAPLAN would not proceed in 2020. This decision was taken to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education, including potential online and remote learning.

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 2020.

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 Columban's is a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) school. This framework provides consistency for staff and students in behaviour expectations across the school. All students can articulate the PBL goals of being safe, respectful, responsible learners.

PBL is grounded in the concept of 'teach, practice, apply, reward'. Expected behaviours are negotiated, explicitly taught and practiced regularly. Students who demonstrate expected behaviours are rewarded at regular assemblies and can accumulate tokens for specific rewards. The framework underpins our welfare policy as it encompasses our Catholic ethos and allows clear expectations, rewards and consequences.

PBL teaches students to be respectful of others' opinions, personal belongings and right to learn. When applied in conjunction with our Catholic ethos it encompasses both local and global citizenship responsibilities. PBL has been part of the St Columban's welfare policy for nine years and is regularly reviewed and updated. Students collaborate with staff to negotiate appropriate rewards to be presented at PBL assemblies.

The Making Jesus Real (MJR) framework is another initiative that is integrated into our school. This framework encourages students to enact our Dominican charism by being the face of God to others. Through MJR, students can link the qualities of Jesus Christ to those they see in themselves and each other.

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

St Columban's provided home learning opportunities for students during the Covid-19 lockdown and had a smooth transition back to school learning.

We were able to track growth in our students despite this disrupted year of schooling.

As a result of the strategies required for online learning, all staff have increased their skills in accessing and delivering online resources and using platforms. These strategies have been carried on in the classroom as students returned to school, resulting in greater use of our new computers by classes.

Staff participated in regular Professional Learning Team meetings as part of our work with the Diocesan Leading Learning Collaborative. At this time staff set goals, track student progress and discuss individual student need during case management meetings.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

Planned improvements for 2021 include a whole school spirituality day for students and participating in the release of the new RE units of work when they are made available. Also working toward an agreed approach to programming in all Key Learning Areas. The teaching

of reading, comprehension and the tracking of these across the school will be a focus for 2021.

A continued focus on the Leading Learning Collaborative professional learning that is being undertaken by all Diocesan schools. A strengthening of the focus for professional learning team meetings will evolve from this learning.

Revisiting our welfare policy to include PBL, MJR and Positive Education. All staff to complete professional learning in managing students who are at-risk through trauma. Developing wellbeing groups for students of concern is another area for development, including a whole school approach to mindfulness education.

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

Staff have made use of parent feedback following home learning to plan for future use of technology and improve communication between school and home.

The Tell them from Me survey indicated that most parents are satisfied with the teaching and learning happening at school. Over 90% of parents reported that their child feels included, happy and safe at school.

It was a difficult year for including parents directly in their children's learning and this was acknowledged by most parents. This will be a focus for planning in 2021.

Student satisfaction

Students used the Tell Them From Me survey to provide feedback regarding their feelings about learning, friendships and support given at school. The results were very positive across the board, with students stating that they are part of a positive learning climate with high expectations and positive teacher-student relationships.

Students have a strong sense of belonging and feel that friendships are mostly positive. They feel safe at school. Students feel that their lesson time is used well and their schooling is relevant and will have a strong bearing on their future.

Students in Year 6 completed an exit survey. They responded that their time at St Columban's was worthwhile and they felt well prepared for high school. Although Year 6 did not participate in many leadership activities (eg camp, mission days) due to the pandemic, they felt that their final year at primary school was enjoyable.

Teacher satisfaction

Staff satisfaction at St Columban's is high, with scores on the teacher survey being above the Diocesan average. Staff feel supported by their colleagues and the leadership team. They participate in professional development and share their learning with others. Staff feel they can share ideas and suggestions for school improvement openly.

Staff have missed the personal interaction with parents in supporting student learning and are looking forward to strengthening these partnerships next year.

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 2020 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2020	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$1,772,638
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$527,149
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$227,732
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$50,218
Total Income	\$2,577,737

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2020	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$947
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$1,938,491
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$492,989
Total Expenditure	\$2,432,427

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 2020 REPORT