

2021

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE *Together in Christ*



St Benedict's Primary School

839 Main Road, EDGEWORTH 2285

Principal: Mark Hornby-Howell

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

About this report

St Benedict'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

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the 2021 Annual Report for St Benedict's Catholic Primary School, Edgeworth. The purpose of the report is to notify parents and other readers of the nature of the school and its role within the Diocesan System of Schools.

St Benedict's is a Catholic Co-educational, Kindergarten – Year 6 Systemic School in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. Our Catholic identity impacts upon the total curriculum and extra-curricular life of the school. It furthermore embraces the contribution that the Sisters of St Joseph made to the spiritual life of the school and the Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land on which the school is built. As a Catholic school community we actively aim to express Christian values throughout the curriculum and the general life of the school. We are particularly proud of the support we give to the less fortunate and our Mini Vinnies Conference is a group of which we are extremely proud.

Whilst we have had individual and team successes in sporting, cultural and academic endeavours and general success as a school community over the year, by far our greatest achievement is in our students themselves. We at St Benedict's take great pride in the quality of our students and in the high standing they have in the local community.

The overall extent of the school's success will be more evident throughout this report. I commend the St Benedict's Annual Report to you, a copy of which will be distributed to all members of the school community and available from St Benedict's to any other interested parties. Please join with me in celebrating our achievements in 2021/

Parent Body Message

At St Benedict's we are very proud of an active Parents and Friends Association. Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of each month in the school library starting at 7pm and everyone is welcome. Due to Covid restrictions meeting were eventually held by Zoom, Our school Principal attends meetings where possible to represent the teachers and the school community.

The P&F meetings provide an open forum for all parents and members of the local community to air and discuss their concerns and to make suggestions for the continued development of the school and its facilities.

Fundraising to provide resources for the benefit of the students is central to the purpose of the P&F with the first meeting of each year dedicated to planning the fundraising activities for the year ahead.

Close collaboration between the P&F committee and the school executive team ensures that a healthy partnership exists that provides valuable and beneficial support to the children and staff. It is a working partnership and a relationship of which we are proud of.

Student Body Message

The school captains and vice-captains head the student school leadership team and carry out various civic responsibilities such as conducting assemblies, attending official functions that includes a local ANZAC DAY service and Kindergarten Orientation mornings and welcoming visitors. The captains and vice-captains are supported by the sport captains who assist the school's sport coordinator, monitoring the use of sport equipment, helping at the school's Swimming and Athletics Carnivals and setting up school tabloids and class PE lessons.

The Mini Vinnies executive play an important role in organising events to raise money for and awareness of those less fortunate. The school leaders at St Benedict's support the Principal and teachers providing a link between the staff and students and as role models for students.

A Student Representative Council meets twice a term, with the Assistant Principal, to discuss issues raised by the children and to implement initiatives.

School Features

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, the Awabakal people, on which the school now stands. St Benedict's opened in 1962 and was staffed by Sister Cabrini and Sister Anne Mary of the Sisters of St Joseph, Lochinvar. Over sixty children were housed in four wooden buildings transported to the present Edgeworth site from the Greta Migrant Camp; a fifth hut arrived and was opened as the convent in April, 1963. As the area developed, the school population increased and it became necessary to expand.

St Benedict's Primary School is a coeducational Catholic Primary School. It is part of the Maitland- Newcastle Diocese. It is located in the metropolitan location of Edgeworth, New South Wales. Edgeworth is a suburb of Lake Macquarie, New South Wales, Australia, located 18kms west of Newcastle's central business district. It is part of the City of Lake Macquarie local government area.

The school had a total enrolment of 336 students in 2021 with 13 classes (growing to 14 classes in 2022). The school caters for years Kindergarten to Grade 6. The school site now provides a combination of indoor and outdoor learning spaces including 16 classrooms, a library (hub), multipurpose hall and playground facilities such as play equipment, tee pee, sandpit, basketball courts and soccer fields.

St Benedict's provides K-6 schooling based on Christian principles to give an understanding of and a commitment to the Catholic faith and its traditions. Being a faith-based school, the opportunity to celebrate liturgies and Mass together, and to experience prayer in a variety of ways and settings are important aspects of school life at St Benedict's. Our catholic catholicism is visible throughout the school and integrated as a way of life. Our school is an active part of the Parish of Sugarloaf.

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 2021: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
176	150	67	326

* 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 2021 was 94.05%. 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
94.13	94.54	94.37	93.95	94.69	93.78	92.89

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 2021:

Total number of staff	37
Number of full time teaching staff	14
Number of part time teaching staff	12
Number of non-teaching staff	11

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

Curriculum Focus Days

Writing and Spelling - core to communication- Staff focused on using explicit spelling strategies embedded into writing to progress writing data.

Clarity and LLC - Staff unpacked the Clarity Parameters and launched the LLC work within the school. Including the formation of CMM and use of PLTs to unpack strategies/ parameters within classroom (third teacher) and as part of renewed pedagogy.

Faith Formation Experience; Moments of Encounter -This formation experience drew on the Pedagogy of Encounter and the new curriculum documents, scripture and Church teachings. The day allowed the staff an opportunity to have moments of encounter. Through this formation experience teaching staff were better prepared to deliver the new Religious Education Curriculum. ALL staff have the knowledge and understanding that we all as staff within the Catholic School System are responsible for the encounter with Christ for all within our school community.

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 Benedict's provides K-6 schooling based on Christian Values to give an understanding of and a commitment to the Catholic faith and its traditions. Being a faith-based school, the opportunity to celebrate liturgies and Mass together, and to experience prayer in a variety of ways and settings are important aspects of school life at St Benedict's. Our Catholic faith makes us different from other schools and with this we are challenged to reflect gospel values, especially truth, justice, acceptance and forgiveness. The Religious Education of our children and the creation of a Catholic atmosphere is a key priority. We are authentically Catholic and this is visible throughout our school through symbols, in our actions and in our words.

The St Benedict's school community actively participates in the life of Sugarloaf Parish. Regular meetings are held between the school's Religious Education Coordinator and the Parish Priest and Parish Sacramental Team. The Principal attends the Parish Pastoral Team meetings. The dot points below list some of the ways St Benedict's school is an active part of Parish and Diocesan Life.

- Grade Parish Masses are held throughout the year. The school's Religious Education Coordinator is a member of the Sacramental Team. Students from Year 2 prepare in the Parish Reconciliation Program. The Mini Vinnies, coordinated by the school's REC, meets weekly and holds activities each term to promote social justice.
- The school is involved in Parish/Regional/ Diocesan Assemblies. The Parish Priest and members of his team regularly meet with teachers and visit classes.

- The Legion of Mary uses the school's Chapel every Tuesday morning for a Mass. This Mass is facilitated by the Parish Priest. This ceased due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- The School's Religious Education Coordinator is an active member of the Parish Pastoral Council.

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

To improve students achievements, staff used National Literacy and Numeracy Progressions to track students progress, to group students and skills and for differentiating English and Mathematics tasks. Triangulating of student assessment data occurred and it was used to inform teaching instruction and interventions.

To improve school wide pedagogy an uninterrupted English and Mathematics block was continued. Collaboration days were introduced where class teachers met and planned with the Leading Teacher. Modelling and observing teachers in practice occurred.

A computer lab as well as two banks of lab tops are widely used throughout the primary school and technology is embedded in units of work. I-pads are extensively used in the infant grades to support the reading program. A teacher was given the responsibility and allocated time to support staff with utilising technology in the classroom.

There were many Learning Support programs used at St Benedict's. These included:

- MiniLit in Years 1 and 2
- MacqLit Reading Intervention from Years 3-6
- Clicker computer writing program
- Repeated Reading from Years 2-6
- Zones of Regulation operating in small groups for emotional regulation
- Meditation
- Gardening
- Utilising aids to support infant teachers implement Reading Skill Development and Purposeful Practise-Reading Groups

Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

NAPLAN

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia participate in the National Assessment program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The purpose of this test is to provide information to parents and teachers about the achievements of students in aspects of Literacy and Numeracy. The test provides a measure of the student's performance against established standards and against other students in Australia. Each year the results are analysed by the school to inform teaching with a view to improving student performance.

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum acceptable standards for literacy, numeracy, reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling at particular ages. These are referred to as national minimum standards. Student performance in NAPLAN in our school is compared to these standards.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2021		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	59%	54%	4%	11%
	Reading	54%	55%	11%	10%
	Writing	51%	53%	7%	7%
	Spelling	52%	50%	4%	13%
	Numeracy	37%	37%	9%	13%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2021		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	31%	35%	17%	14%
	Reading	38%	41%	14%	11%
	Writing	10%	20%	5%	18%
	Spelling	43%	38%	7%	14%
	Numeracy	14%	29%	5%	14%

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 2021.

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

The importance of respect and responsibility are two characteristics that everyone on staff, students and parents are constantly reminded of, as they are integral to the school's philosophy and purpose. They are both important aspects of the school's manners sheet and statement of agreed practices. Respect and responsibility are fostered by emphasis given to respectful and responsible behaviour and by designating certain classes with the role of gardeners, "buddies" and rubbish monitoring and recycling.

Social Justice is a core value at St. Benedict's. The importance of Social Justice is reflected in the school's vision statement. **"At St. Benedict's Catholic Primary School, we are authentically Josephite and are aspiring to be people of faith, courage and examples of justice for all".**

St Benedict's is a very generous school community where students, parents and staff are keenly aware of the needs of others. As such the school has a very active Mini Vinnies Conference that organised various fundraising activities in support of the work of the senior conference and parish initiatives in both the local parish and overseas communities.

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

Pupil Free Day 1 Writing and Spelling Term 2

SIP GOAL: By the end of the year, teaching staff will be able to demonstrate a knowledge of using specific spelling and Leading Learning Collaborative (LLC) strategies to improve student writing outcomes.

Pupil Free Day T4 Staff Formation and new CSO Syllabus, Pedagogy and units.

Pedagogy of Encounter - Through this formation experience staff will have the opportunity to experience the Pedagogy of Encounter. Through prayer, activity and reflection staff will also encounter the Holy Spirit

Staff meeting Focus

Unpacking the 14 parameters of Lyn Sharrat's Work - Clarity. Participating in LLC meetings to conduct and share PL and establishing CMM for the discussion and analysis of data for students are risk.

Responding to Extended period of home learning in 2022. Establishing Video lessons and providing of learning in an online space.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

Catholic Identity - Pupil Free Day Term 3 Rediscovering Joy. By the end of 2022, the school will have a regularly articulated (by all community members) and fully integrated statement of Catholic Identity that includes the vision, mission, motto, emblem, and values that are drawn from the Josephite Charism, St Benedict as Patron Saint and our Catholic Faith.

Leading Learning (12 hours Professional Learning) - So that students are equipped with skills to become increasingly autonomous in their learning, Learning Intentions, Success criteria, Assessment Rubric and Quality Feedback will be utilised for all English and Maths lessons with some use in other KLAs.

Wellbeing and Positive Behaviours Framework (Pupil Free Day Term 2) So that students are ready to learn in a safe and supportive environment focused on the wellbeing of every child, the school community will launch an integrated and sustained Wellbeing and Behaviour Management framework that encompasses all members of the school community and promotes learning for life and lifelong learning by the end of the year

Implementing Literacy and Numeracy Syllabus(Pupil Free Day 3) - staff will be upskilled and ready to implement (K-2) and trial (3-6) the new English and Mathematics Syllabus

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

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Parent contact and school support during a second extended lock down was well received and feedback proved a positive connection with parents

Student satisfaction

Students understand why there are rules and out of bounds areas and that the school playground has someone there to go to for assistance. Children respond positively to the School Representative Council and contribute many positive initiatives.

Year 6 children reflect on their years at St Benedict's and share this at the school's end of year liturgy. The children are always positive about their experiences.

Students transitioned to extended lockdown and remote learning for the second year in a row. The disjointed nature of the school year had an impact on student interaction, student morale and community identity but the return to school in Term 4 focused on rebuilding this for the students. The student had and appreciated having a voice in what this might look like.

Teacher satisfaction

The staff felt that the school's strengths were the relationships between the teachers and students and among each other, the feeling of being valued and the atmosphere of care as a feature of school life at St Benedict's.

At spirituality days and staff retreats staff regularly express a high amount of satisfaction with being a staff member at St Benedict's.

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 2021 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2021	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$3,263,766
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$966,673
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$486,754
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$4,018
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$201,246
Total Income	\$4,922,457

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2021	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$51,942
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$3,409,746
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,097,965
Total Expenditure	\$4,559,653

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 2021 REPORT