

2024

Annual School Report

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

TOGETHER IN CHRIST



Our Lady of Victories Primary School

15 Lovell Parade, SHORTLAND 2307

Principal: Mr Gerry Vandermaat

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

About this report

Our Lady of Victories Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (CDMN). 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 Strategic 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

Our school has a strong tradition built on the achievements of both students and teachers. Learning occurs in modernised, stimulating and well-resourced classrooms, staffed by talented and proficient teachers. Students at Our Lady of Victories enjoy a rich curriculum and access to programs that cater for a wide range of student abilities. We offer a learning culture that promotes achievement, gospel values and an ordered and respectful environment. Students are encouraged to set high standards, high expectations and to be successful.

In 2024, Our Lady of Victories experienced a slight decline in population mainly due to a number of families moving away from the district. This was countered with a strong effort to attract other families to our school community, and for 2025 we again have a strong cohort to fill in the small class that left at the end of 2024.

After 30 years the school will experience a change in leadership in 2025 with the retirement of our principal. Whilst change can sometimes be daunting, the community is looking forward to the input from its new principal in 2025.

Parent Body Message

Throughout 2024, the school witnessed a significant shift in the approach to parent participation, embracing the new Diocesan model known as FACE – Family and Community Engagement. This model encouraged parents to take an active role in shaping the educational and policy decisions impacting their children's learning experiences. Previously, parental involvement often focussed on fundraising efforts. However, with FACE, the emphasis expanded to include meaningful engagement in school initiatives and decision-making.

As the traditional executive roles, such as Presidents and Treasurers, became increasingly challenging for parents to fill, these demanding positions were dissolved and subsequently managed by the school. This change alleviated the pressure on parents, paving the way for more flexible participation in organizing activities. Parents were empowered to contribute in a manner that suited their availability and interests, without the need to commit to formal roles. This shift in responsibilities aligns seamlessly with the communal ethos of the school, offering promising prospects for OLV to thrive.

One notable step forward in fundraising was the introduction of an online ticketing platform—a first for the school. This approach harnessed the collective enthusiasm of the parent community and enabled the acquisition of impressive prizes. By promoting the initiative to a

broader audience beyond the school family network, the school tapped into new sources of support and expanded its outreach. The FACE model, paired with these collaborative efforts, reflects the growth within the school community and its potential for continued success

Student Body Message

We, the newly elected leaders, wanted to share something special about our incredible school year and also about our amazing Principal, Mr. Vandermaat, as he retires.

This year has been full of wonderful moments that we'll never forget. We've grown so much and learned so many new things. From exciting classroom projects and fun excursions to school carnivals and sports and gala days, it's been a year filled with laughter and teamwork. We've worked hard in class, achieved goals we thought were impossible, and shared heaps of smiles and success with our friends and teachers. Every assembly, every mass, liturgy, and every story read to us, has made this year unforgettable.

Now, we come to a special person who's been with us through so many of these amazing moments—Mr. Vandermaat. It's hard to believe he won't be here with us next year—it feels like he's been part of our school forever! Mr. Vandermaat has been the heart and soul of Our Lady of Victories Catholic Primary School for many years. His dedication, vision, and compassion have shaped not only the school's foundation but also its sense of community. He has been an incredible role model, inspiring us to embrace kindness, strive for excellence, and grow in our faith. Whether it was his thoughtful words at school assemblies, visiting us at camp or his warm presence in the schoolyard, Mr. Vandermaat made every student feel valued and heard.

He was always great at getting us to do jobs, and we will never forget his face when he saw the camp activities, like the giant swing and the mud run. We will miss the Queensland and NSW Rivalry. He will be deeply missed, and his legacy will live on in every corner of our school.

At the same time, we're excited to welcome our new Principal, Mr. David Treloar, who's coming from St. Joseph's Dungog. We can't wait to show him all the awesome things about Our Lady of Victories and learn even more under his guidance.

To Mr. Vandermaat: thank you for all the laughs, the lessons, and the love you've shared with us. We wish you the best retirement ever—you deserve it!

Max Barrett & Pippa Morrissey

School Features

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

Our Lady of Victories Primary School was established by Fr Roley Smyth with three Sisters of Joseph (Mary Cecily, Matthew and Marguerite) originally being named St Joseph's in 1957. It started with an initial enrolment of 81 in a range of classes from Kinder to year 4. It grew steadily over the subsequent years and reached a total of more than 300 in classes Kinder to Year 6 during the sixties.

The spirit of the Sisters of St Joseph is still evident in the school's commitment. Our Lady of Victories School is committed to developing a Catholic Faith Community. In 2007 the school celebrated 50 years of Catholic Education in Shortland. In 2011, a community hall was constructed at Our Lady of Victories with funding from the Federal Government BER program. Major renovations for the classrooms were completed at the end of Term 2 in 2016. Playground upgrades were made during 2018 with the support of Parents & Friends fund raising activities to support the new learning initiatives in Kinder in 2019 as well as widen the playground experiences for the rest of the school.

In 2023 the gardens and entrances to the school were upgraded. A new school sign was also installed which communicates to the wider community the events and happenings at Our Lady of Victories. New solar panels were installed to move the school to a more sustainable resource.

LOCATION/DRAWING AREA

Our Lady of Victories draws from areas within the Parish of Wallsend/Shortland. Children from the suburbs of Shortland, Birmingham Gardens, Wallsend, Fletcher, Maryland and surrounds may be enrolled at Our Lady of Victories. The school caters for all children from Years Kinder to Year 6 After Year 6, families may choose San Clemente High School, Mayfield, to continue their children's Catholic education.

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 2024: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
67	58	40	125

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

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

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

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2024 was 91.93%. 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
95.18	90.15	93.04	92.89	92.22	92.47	87.57

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 Professional Officer for School Enrolment 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 2024:

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 155 teachers
- Provisional 71 teachers
- Proficient 1953 teachers
- 4 Highly Accomplished teacher

Additionally, there are a number of 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.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle participate, under the leadership of the Bishop and in partnership with parents and parishes, in the mission of the Church to provide quality education in the context of a living Catholic Christian tradition. Within this context, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle educate from and for vibrant, welcoming and diverse communities with a particular commitment to the poor; for justice, integrity and peace; and with hope for the future.

At the heart of everything there is always Jesus Christ.

Catholic schools educate:

- From and for the community of faith
- From and for excellence in learning
- In a rigorous, creative and critical pursuit of truth

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

Throughout 2024 all staff participated in Bishop Eugene Hurley "Love in Action" system formation Day. During this day the staff were able to volunteer their time to local services :- St Vincent de Paul Mayfield, St Joseph's Sandgate, Refugee Hub and Zara House. This made teachers aware of local services that we as a school could refer our school community to access.

Over the year Students, Staff and parents unpacked our three mission statements and created a YouTube clip for each mission statement which was published on our school Facebook page.

The following link will give you access to this:

[Our Lady Of Victories Primary School, Shortland - LOVE, SERVE and LIVE the truth of Jesus](#)

This year our Year 2 and 3 class has followed the new Religion units of work that were written by the CSO and have found them very valuable.

We saw a community build up through our Cuppa & Chat where the parents suggested what sort of things they would like to discuss or have further knowledge in.

Throughout the year we celebrated Weekly Monday morning Liturgies, Harmony Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparents' Day, Catholic Schools Week, ANZAC, NAIDOC Week, Our Lady of Victories Feast Day and participated in Friday Parish Masses. We had a lot of interested guest join us in all our wonderful celebrations.

Our School took part in social justice initiatives such as Project Compassion, Vinnies Sleep out, “Socktober” and St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal.

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 and Languages.

The Curriculum is structured around the outcomes and content for each KLA and provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding through assessment. The curriculum incorporates a focus on capabilities and priorities, including literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, critical and creative thinking, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, and personal and social capability.

Curriculum: Consistent Teacher Practice in Teaching Literacy

In response to the implementation of the English K-10 syllabus in 2024, Our Lady of Victories, Shortland committed to upskill teachers in all grades to understand syllabus requirements. This year, our school has prioritised consistency in teaching literacy across all year levels. During whole staff Professional Learning Meetings and grade and stage based Professional Learning Team meetings, teachers focused on the integration of literacy into all key learning areas, with a particular focus on embedding writing instruction within the Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) curriculum. By leveraging inquiry-based learning strategies, teachers guided students to develop their written communication skills through authentic, context-rich tasks that explored historical and geographical topics. Collaborative planning sessions ensured that teaching practices were consistent and underpinned by evidence-based approaches, fostering a cohesive and effective learning environment for all students.

Development of Our Positive Behaviour Framework

This year marked significant progress in the development and implementation of our Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) Framework, which aims to cultivate a supportive and inclusive school culture at Our Lady of Victories. Teachers and staff engaged in professional learning sessions to understand the principles of PB4L and how to apply them consistently across all school settings. Our Expected Behaviour Matrix with aligns to our school Vision and Mission 'Love Serve and Live the truth of Jesus', was created with input from staff, students and parents. The PB4L framework emphasises the use of explicit teaching strategies to model and reinforce the expected behaviours, creating a predictable and respectful environment for learning. During 2024, the school community prioritised the target areas for explicit teaching

and lessons were developed by teachers who are part of our PB4L team which will be taught in 2025.

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).

NAPLAN is a nationwide measure through which parents/carers, teachers, schools, education authorities, governments and the broader community can determine whether or not young Australians are developing critical literacy and numeracy skills. NAPLAN results allow parents/carers and educators to see how students are progressing in literacy and numeracy over time - individually, as part of their school community, and against national standards. NAPLAN is made up of four domains of:

- reading
- writing
- conventions of language (spelling, grammar and punctuation)
- numeracy.

NAPLAN results are reported against proficiency standards with four levels of achievement to give parents and carers, teachers and schools clearer information on how students are performing:

- Exceeding: The student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- Strong: The student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- Developing: The student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- Needs additional support: The student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

The percentage of student achieving at Exceeding and Strong proficiency standards in NAPLAN at Our Lady of Victories Primary School for 2024 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	67%	54%
	Reading	67%	66%
	Writing	83%	77%
	Spelling	56%	61%
	Numeracy	67%	63%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	50%	65%
	Reading	57%	71%
	Writing	64%	67%
	Spelling	64%	68%
	Numeracy	43%	55%

Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies guidelines and procedures are informed by the [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#).

The Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy 2022 aims to provide a framework for the policies, programs, resources and practices implemented at system and school level with the purpose of supporting and enhancing the wellbeing of students, and all within its school community. It refers to the overall climate of care that exists within a Catholic school.

The environment is designed to be safe and inclusive, one that promotes academic rigour. A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents, and the wellbeing of all.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned with the Catholic School's [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#) and to the [Schools Behaviour Management Policy](#). 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.

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.

Community Satisfaction

Consultation with parents, students and teachers is valued and sought. Their feedback contributes to the planning and the achievement of 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. The school undertakes extensive surveying of all stakeholder groups every 2 years. This data is shared with the school community and contributes to the priorities for future planning.

Parent satisfaction

Data from the latest "Tell Them From Me" survey tool indicates that parents were supportive of the Faith life of the children at Our Lady of Victories. They are confident that:

- the school is a safe and supportive place for their children.
- behaviour issues are dealt with in a timely manner.
- the school has good leadership and would recommend the school to others.

Student satisfaction

Data from the latest "Tell Them From Me" survey for the children at OLV indicates that they predominantly feel safe and supported at school. It is strongly agreed by students that they have opportunities to know about Jesus.

Students feel that there is a positive environment and the rules and expectations were clear and understood.

Teacher satisfaction

Data from the latest "Tell Them From Me" survey tool for teachers indicates that the school leadership is supportive and provides feedback to create new learning opportunities for their teaching. There is a strong sense of collaboration. There is a strong sense of a successful learning culture and feedback to students about this is regular and informed by relevant assessment strategies. Teachers feel strongly that Our Lady of Victories is an inclusive school and involves parents in partnership for their children's learning.

The teachers are confident that they present:

- Challenging and visible learning goals for students,
- Plan learning opportunities which involve and intentional transfer of skills and knowledge
- Receive quality feedback

- Provide support for students to overcome obstacles.

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 2024 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2024	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$2,283,853
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$602,288
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$395,955
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$7,147
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$104,655
Total Income	\$3,393,898

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$27,560
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$2,524,401
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,055,417
Total Expenditure	\$3,607,378

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 2024 REPORT