

# 2024

## Annual School Report

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

TOGETHER IN CHRIST



### St Columban's Primary School

Church Street, MAYFIELD 2304

Principal: Ms Penny Banister

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

## About this report

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St Columban's 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

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### Principal's Message

I am excited to present to you the annual school report of St Columban's Catholic Primary School. At St Columban's we strive to achieve: "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 staff focus on building a culture of learning continued with our involvement in the Diocesan Leading Learning Collaborative. This has been a very exciting initiative that has built a common language and increased capacity of both students and teachers.

Our school continued to promote inclusivity building strong, positive relationships within the Parish and our parent community. We are proud of the community we have built at St Columban's. We work foster our students gifts and talents all them time encouraging them to grow into Global Citizens who are strong, confident, sharing their faith with all whom they encounter.

### Parent Body Message

As my eldest child's time at St Columban's is drawing to an end, I have been reflecting on our families experience over the past 7 years and what changes we have seen.

One of the reasons we chose St Columban's was for the sense of community and inclusion. The sports carnival earlier this year was a perfect example of this. The children were encouraged to cheer on their peers whether they were coming first, last, or somewhere in between. It was beautiful to watch the school spirit shine as students who were struggling to finish a race were cheered on as if they were about to win a gold medal at the Olympics. I witnessed this again at the regional athletics carnival where St Columban's truly stood apart from the other schools with their sense of community spirit cheering for each other all day.

A focus this year from the leadership of St Columban's, and in line with the school values, has been embracing the multicultural diversity of the school's students. An example of this was the highly successful Multicultural Day. This was a wonderful day where students were

able to show off their traditions including costumes, dance, singing and the extremely popular foods of their countries.

The buddy program is such a wonderful initiative and something my children have been looking forward to since they had their own buddies when they were in kindergarten, this is such a positive way to introduce the littlest students to an environment where they can feel welcome and safe, providing them with their own person to guide them through their first year of school. Also giving the year 6 students a sense of responsibility and leadership.

There have been many extracurricular activities on offer to students this year, especially for the older students to test their minds and push them out of their comfort zones; these include Virtual Academy, Tournament of Minds, debating, public speaking and creating school podcasts. There have been sports gala days where everyone was welcome to join in and participation was more important than skill. Again, it was so wonderful to see such school spirit with students cheering each other on with great enthusiasm and encouragement.

I look forward to what 2025 will have to offer and believe it will be bigger and better than ever before with such positive leadership and role models from the teaching faculty and staff of St Columban's.

### **Student Body Message**

The study group chose the issue and wrote the lessons for PB4L. For the past term and a half we have worked in conjunction with the teachers to choose the PB4L. We have had a great year teaching, having fun and helping students with the PB4L. On St Columban's day the Study team worked with the classes of each year and some people helped with the community games.

The Prayer Leadership Team had many responsibilities, including setting of the prayer space in the school foyer for every change of the liturgical season. We assisted with school Masses including the setting up of the laptops for the Masses and Liturgies. We were also involved in school events like assisting with organizing the 'Socktober' day, which was great fun for the whole school.

The Community team has had many great opportunities, the main one being the sports shed. Each day two people hand out sports equipment at lunch and recess, we clean and look after this space. We have led multiple different activities during the year like the sports carnival, the Socktober activities, and activities on St Columbans day. For the sports carnival we came up with chants and taught them to the younger people in our colour houses. For the Socktober activities we taught different soccer games to the younger years. On St Columban's day we organised different lunch time activities for the parents and children to play. The Community team is always trying to bring our school together through sport.

The service team have hosted multiple cake stalls over the year. The cupcakes and slices were donated by the rest of the school. The purpose of the cake stall was to raise money for a charity in a country that needed it the most. We hosted the Teddy Bears picnic and organised the events for the St Columbans day afternoon. We were split into different groups in different classrooms to teach students about different types of kindness.

## School Features

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

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 important and valued links with our local Dominican schools who are Corpus Christi at Waratah, St Dominic's Centre, Mayfield and San Clemente at Mayfield, as well as a Dominican connection with St John the Baptist at Maitland and ASC St Mary's Campus, Maitland.

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. Children beginning Kinder spend their first 5 weeks of school participating in the Successful Foundations program, which uses play based learning to ensure a smooth transition to the structured learning environment of school.

Our parent body is actively involved in fundraising and community building within the school. We hold regular Parent Engagement Group (PEG) meetings, where parents are invited to become further engaged in their child's learning by finding out what happens in classrooms and share ideas with the wider school community.

Students are given the opportunity to be involved in many co-curricular activities including Mini Vinnies, debating and public speaking, ICAS external competitions and representative sport. 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 and cricket.

We present a bi-annual Learning Showcase which gives children the opportunity to present their learning in a range of self-nominated interest areas. This included areas such as watercolours, claymation, robotics, drama, dance, puppetry and sculptures.

# 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
84	91	70	175

\* 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 89.64%. 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
91.47	89.89	89.02	90.19	88.73	88.47	89.69

## 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

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### Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2024:

Total number of staff	26
Number of full time teaching staff	7
Number of part time teaching staff	11
Number of non-teaching staff	8

### 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

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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)

St Columban's Primary School has a strong Dominican tradition with over 100 years of history. Students can 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 de Guzman 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 everyday school activities. Regular prayer, attendance to study, belonging to community and service to others. Regular prayer is part of our Catholic identity. the school community pray 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, Harmony Day, Mothers' and Fathers' Day.

On March 21st we celebrate our unique diverse culture and foster inclusivity by encouraging our families to share their culture through song, dance, art and food. This day fosters the importance of uniqueness and celebrates that we are all created in the image of God.

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 learning that encompasses the history and beliefs of the church, the life of Jesus and social justice. We are preparing our students to be lifelong learners - just like St. Dominic.

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. Students engage in whole school spirituality days where there is often a strong theme of social justice and helping those in our wider community, most recently making bags for the Mission to Seafarers.

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

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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.

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 Curriculum is structured around the outcomes and content for each learning area and general capabilities for learning across the curriculum including literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology, critical and creative thinking, ethical behaviour, personal and social competence and intercultural understanding.

We continued to evaluate and refine our practices ensuring that the Leading Learning Collaborative continued to be embedded in the learning of the school. As teachers we continue to help students set goals for their learning and as educators, we too set goals to develop our own teaching practice.

Staff attended Professional learning days:

We attended training focusing on inclusion of students with Speech, Language and Communication needs. This training provided staff with the skills to identify students who needed assistance and then plan activities to assist students to access the curriculum.

We focused on faith formation Liturgy and Prayer with the theme Begin with the Heart: Contemplation for Catholic Educators. Daniel O'Leary's words, "You teach who you are," were a guiding idea for the day, encouraging us to reflect on how our faith shapes the way we teach and interact with others. We focused on seeing God's presence in every moment, person, and thing around us. This helped us explore how to bring more meaning and purpose to our everyday work.

The day allowed us to step back, reflect, and find stillness, which gave us a deeper appreciation for what is good, true, and beautiful in our mission as educators. We all left feeling relaxed, uplifted, and inspired.

We used these same contemplative techniques with our students so they too can experience moments of stillness and reflection. These practices will help students pause, be present, and appreciate the world around them in a deeper way.

We continue to embed Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL). All staff members were involved in writing weekly lessons related to our fortnightly PBL focus. This positive approach continues to support the students social and emotional leads and gives all students a voice.

## Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

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### 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 St Columban's 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	19%	54%
	Reading	44%	66%
	Writing	52%	68%
	Spelling	26%	61%
	Numeracy	41%	63%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	61%	65%
	Reading	71%	71%
	Writing	71%	67%
	Spelling	71%	68%
	Numeracy	61%	68%

## Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

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### 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

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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

Staff have made use of parent feedback to plan for learning and parental involvement in the school. Parents provided feedback via our Parent Engagement Group (PEG) and the Tell Them From Me (TTFM) survey.

The 2024 Tell Them From Me (TTFM) survey indicated that the majority of parents feel welcome and included as part of their child's educational journey. Parents also feel that the school provides high expectations of learning and behaviour and that any difficulties are dealt with promptly and fairly. Overall, the feeling among parents as indicated by the survey is that the school has strong leadership, embedded Catholic culture and a good reputation in the community.

Some parent comments from the survey:

"I do love the close community feel and the strong friendships my child has developed"

"When I ask to meet my child's teacher or asked for feedback they have been more than happy to respond and meet."

"The school is thriving with enthusiasm and more opportunities for the students and community to come together".

"I like the inclusivity and encouragement from teachers to work at your best level".

### Student satisfaction

Students at St Columban's are encouraged to participate in the faith, academic and cultural life of the school. The 2024 TTFM survey indicated that our students feel they have the opportunity to develop positive relationships with their peers and staff. They find their classrooms and curriculum to be interesting and engaging environments where they feel both challenged and supported.

Some student comments from the survey included:

"The things that I really like about this school is that the teachers take care of all of the students fairly and students pay attention in class and which makes this school even better"

"I really like that I have a lot of friends that I can trust and that all the teachers are really caring and helpful with everything and that it's a safe place to learn in and everyone is really kind and caring".

"It tells us about Jesus and that we should follow in his steps and help other people".

### **Teacher satisfaction**

Staff at St Columban's enjoyed continuing their professional learning community through Professional Learning Teams. Staff meet in Stage groups once every 3 weeks to develop strategies and further develop their skills to improve Learning outcomes for their students.

A cooperative culture of sharing learning, ideas and feedback is evident. Staff are encouraged to undertake professional learning and share new initiatives with colleagues.

All staff demonstrate genuine interest in the personal, spiritual and academic growth of the students in our school and care and concern for them and their families.

## 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 <sup>1</sup>	\$2,254,450
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$612,874
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$467,411
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$119,935
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$3,454,670</b>

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$24,522
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$2,577,538
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$1,011,532
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$3,613,592</b>

### Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.

END OF 2024 REPORT