

2024

Annual School Report

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TOGETHER IN CHRIST



St Francis Xavier's Primary School

Ernest Street, BELMONT 2280

Principal: Danielle Reed

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

About this report

St Francis Xavier'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

Principal's Message

It is my pleasure to present the 2024 Annual School Report for St Francis Xavier's Primary School, Belmont. This report outlines the many achievements, as well as the on-going development of St Francis Xavier's School during the 2023 academic school year. St Francis Xavier's Primary School, Belmont is a systemic primary school that values and celebrates the dignity and uniqueness of the individual. Our school is part of Jesus, the Good Shepherd Parish, East Lake Macquarie.

St Francis Xavier's takes pride in providing quality education where Jesus is central to all that we do. We achieve our mission by striving for an active partnership between home, school and parish in a shared responsibility of educating the whole child. Our core values promote an environment where students learn, love and live, developing a deep appreciation of God and all of creation. As a faith community we are committed to equipping students for the contemporary world through our shared faith and witness to God's love in our lives.

As a Catholic school we celebrate our faith traditions, prayer life and actively witness the Gospel. We embrace the dynamic nature of education and provide quality education in a challenging, nurturing environment that caters for and respects the unique needs of each child. We provide education that helps develop values that will enable individuals to contribute positively to the wider community.

The school prides itself on its academic achievements and the quality of its student welfare with the implementation of a whole school approach to Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) and sustained programs such as Kindergarten Buddies, Peer Support and Making Jesus Real. Students are given opportunities to participate in Public Speaking, National Competitions, Rock and Water wellbeing initiative, Incursions and excursions and a wide variety of sporting Competitions, Gala Days and Carnivals.

St Francis Xavier's is truly a place that encourages and empowers individuals to 'Let Their Light Shine' – it is a school community based on quality relationships – staff, parents and students enjoy relationships that are respectful and genuinely caring of each other. The parents at SFX are supportive of the staff and what we do and are appreciative of what is done for their children.

The school offers comprehensive education programs that nurture the development of the whole child. St Francis Xavier's participates in many extra-curricular activities - sporting events, digital technology experiences, enrichment opportunities, Indigenous Education and cultural experiences.

Please enjoy reading this report of our 2024 school year.

Parent Body Message

The focus of the Parents and Friends Association at St Francis Xavier's supports the initiatives and endeavours of both students and staff in creating a quality Catholic educational experience. Meetings held twice per term provide additional channels of communication for parents, staff and the broader school community. Activities organised throughout the year include social and school events, fundraising events as well as managing the Uniform Shop. These activities have strengthened the connections within the school while facilitating improvements and opportunities that aim to enrich the experience for all involved with St Francis Xavier's, Belmont.

2024 saw the ongoing strong commitment from the members of the Parent & Friends Association, overseen by an enthusiastic executive. These sub-committees consisted of a Canteen and Fundraiser groupings. The fundraising that was achieved proved to be successful and raised much needed funds.

A major fundraising achievement this year was the purchase of an online platform for assessment of student writing samples. This has been very useful for staff to target the feedback given to students about their writing in line with NAPLAN marking guidelines.

Student Body Message

Students enjoy coming to school because they know everyone in the community and feel safe and supported at school. Student engagement in school activities is high and the students enjoy the playground and facilities. Students at St Francis Xavier's appreciate the dedication and commitment the staff demonstrate.

Our student leadership team comprises of elected students from Year 6 for the entire year. Our two School Captains conduct daily Morning Assemblies, assist in organising events and special interest days, represent the school at special events and generally help out whenever needed. We have two house leaders for each of our House Groups: Joseph (Red), Xavier (Green) and MacKillop (Blue). These leaders are responsible for leading their teams at swimming and athletics carnivals; maintaining the sports shed and resources, being a positive role model in sporting activities and encouraging others to do their best at sporting events. Other leadership opportunities K-6 are provided through participation in Mini-Vinnies initiatives, Peer Support Leaders and being Kindergarten buddies.

Our Year 5 students also participated in a regional-based Leadership Development Day in Term 4 as they prepared to become senior students. Year 5 students take part in leadership opportunities throughout the year and nominate for School Leadership positions through Term 4. Leaders are commissioned and blessed at the opening school mass each year.

School Features

St Francis Xavier's Primary School is situated close to Belmont Lagoon, an important site for the Awabakal people, traditional owners of the land upon which the school stands.

Familiarising the children with the Awabakal Dreaming Story – When the Moon Cried and Formed Belmont Lagoon – is one way we acknowledge the heritage of this area and cultivate respect for the legacy of the Awabakal people. Each Monday morning and at other significant occasions during the year we begin assemblies with an Acknowledgement of Country read, if possible, by a child of Aboriginal heritage.

The school reflects the ethos of the founding Sisters of St Joseph through our core values of Faith, Dignity, Respect and Responsibility, which are proudly displayed around our school.

The feasts of both St Joseph and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop are observed by the school community each year with special celebrations for the feast of the school patron St Francis Xavier, whilst at Morning Prayer we call upon the intercession of Mary McKillop in the routine of our day.

Our educational focus is based on Gospel values embedded in an inclusive, nurturing environment which encourages all to shine Christ's light.

In 2023 students across the stages participated in excursions to venues such as: Aussie Bush Camp, Newcastle Museum, Hunter Wetlands, ASPIRE performance at Warners Bay, Local pre-schools and the local Library. A number of sporting gala days and clinics were a highlight for the students.

Staff completed training in the Rock and Water program, which focuses on building resilience, self awareness and self confidence. This was delivered to the students in Term 4.

During Term 3 all students participated in a Peer Support Program with a focus on relationships and being a friend to others and we experienced a Brainstorm production focused on Anti- Bullying.

Term 3 also saw significant refurbishments to the school buildings being completed. The Library and new toilet block were officially opened, offering facilities which are modern and cater for the needs of the students.

There are many more great things about going to school at St Francis Xavier's, but in 2023 some of the highlights were:

- Beginning of the School Year Mass
- Easter Hat Parade
- Swimming and Athletics Carnivals

Harmony Day Drumming Group
Holy Week Liturgy
Catholic Schools Week Liturgy and Open Classrooms
Mother's Day Liturgy
St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal- coordinated by our Mini Vinnies Team
Book Week
Weekly guitar sessions
Kindergarten celebrated 100 days of school
Simultaneous Storytime - With visits to local preschools
NAIDOC Week Celebrations
Fathers' Day celebrations
St Francis Xavier Mission Day -Term 4
Whole School Christmas Concert
End of Year Farewell and Graduation Mass

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
75	62	16	137

* 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 91.15%. 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
91.80	91.04	91.64	90.23	92.83	91.18	89.32

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	29
Number of full time teaching staff	7
Number of part time teaching staff	11
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 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)

Our educational focus is based on Gospel values embedded in an inclusive, nurturing environment which encourages all to shine Christ's light.

Our Vision Statement inspires the teachers and staff in the work they do on a daily basis to ensure high levels of student learning and well-being.

Our school Mission Statement describes what our school must become to achieve its vision. It guides the transformations that must occur to move our school closer to making its mission a reality. The School's core values of Faith, Dignity, Respect and Responsibility remain pillars of our school community, as they are integral to who we are - a Catholic school community, following the teachings of Jesus Christ and founded by the Sisters of St Joseph Charism.

Vision Statement: A Catholic community called through the light of Christ to learn, love and serve.

Mission Statement: At St Francis Xavier's Belmont our mission is to:

Learn - Nurture the growth of the whole child, Strive for excellence through quality education, Respond to the needs of all.

Love - Be part of a Christ-centred Catholic community, Value faith, respect and dignity, Encourage positive relationships and celebrate diversity.

Live - Demonstrate faith in action through social justice, Be committed stewards of creation, Develop active community partnerships.

In 2024 we continue to develop our knowledge of the pedagogy of encounter with grades K-3 exploring and consolidating their knowledge and experiences with the new curriculum. Students engagement and responses during Religion lessons have improved dramatically. The Students in K-3 have thoroughly enjoyed the personal choice and play based learning opportunities. We look forward to the Stage 2 units being released in 2025.

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.

During 2024, we continued working on the CSO Leading Learning Collaborative Initiative (LLC). The LLC focuses on 14 parameters (or principles) created by Lynn Sharratt. The framework is growth oriented and concentrates on the progression in learning of every child and on the building of every teacher's capacity.

At St Francis Xavier's, this is maintained through the appointment of a Pedagogical Mentor (PM) who works closely with staff on classroom practices, planning and programming strategies. As a result, St Francis Xavier's is proud to have staff who share common understandings and agreed practices throughout the entire school. The school culture is student centred - where students learn through inquiry, which involves problem solving, collaboration and critical thinking. It has been pleasing to witness the enthusiasm among staff and children talking about their learning, progress and achievements.

Our whole school curriculum focus concentrated on the literacy area of Spelling. Teachers worked in Professional Learning Teams along with the PM to analyse writing tasks completed by students. Each class completed one 'cold write' task per term with all classes using the same visual stimuli. Using the spelling data from these cold writes, students were then placed on a data wall under the NSW Spelling literacy progressions. This was revisited and updated as students demonstrated growth and achievement. Staff worked in collaboration to construct Learning Walls and Bump It Up Walls with a focus on spelling within the whole school writing program. The collaborative staff conversation in these meetings and visible growth of student achievement in regard to spelling is clearly evident on the data wall.

Also, St Francis Xavier's continued to be part of the Diocesan Gifted Education initiative. Our Gifted Education Mentor worked with staff and identified students in the area of Literacy and Numeracy. The students completed a variety of tasks with the major works being project-

based learning tasks and the Maths Olympiad and Maths Explore program. Students enjoyed enrichment opportunities and were challenged by the process.

A group of students from Years 2-6 participated in the Tournament of the Minds challenge. They were exceptional representatives of the school student body and made it to the State finals at the University of New South Wales.

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 St Francis Xavier'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	67%	54%
	Reading	78%	66%
	Writing	89%	68%
	Spelling	72%	61%
	Numeracy	78%	63%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	94%	65%
	Reading	100%	71%
	Writing	94%	67%
	Spelling	94%	68%
	Numeracy	88%	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

At St Francis, Catholic values are embedded across the curriculum and the children learn in a safe and happy environment. The intimate nature of the school makes it family friendly, a fact that is appreciated by the parent community. Teachers and parents work together for the good of all children and as a community we share in their successes.

It was great to have parents and carers on the school site regularly throughout 2023. Parent support remained strong with regular P&F meetings held during the year. Teachers and parents remained in contact meeting face-to-face and using school communication platforms. This year, parents and students participated in Student Led Conferences. Students in all grades had the opportunity to present their learning to their parents, explaining the learning process, what their strengths were and what skills they are still developing. It was wonderful to hear the students able to articulate their learning and their areas for growth to their parents. Parents were surveyed following the conferences and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Overall, parents are very satisfied with what the school achieves and strives toward.

Student satisfaction

St Francis Xavier's has a wonderful student population who personify the key values upon which the school is built. An indicator of their satisfaction is the very low rate of unacceptable behaviour that occurs both within the classroom and the playground. The children demonstrate respect for the staff and the school which is a reflection of how they feel in the learning environment. The students believe that St Francis Xavier's is a great school to belong to and student friendships and their social interactions are extremely positive and highly valued.

All students enjoyed special focus days such as Harmony Day, Grandparents Day, Mother's and Father's Day, and NAIDOC Week. The children engaged enthusiastically in Mini Vinnies

initiatives for various social justice programs. The children have also enjoyed the opportunity to participate in many external sporting gala days this year.

Past students often return to not only visit their past teachers but to catch up with the friendships they have made during their time at St Francis Xavier's. The children at St Francis Xavier's really 'Let their Light Shine'.

Teacher satisfaction

Staff participation in community events and low rate of staff absences are indicators of staff satisfaction at St Francis Xavier's Primary School. The staff are part of the decision-making process through consultation and opportunities for feedback. The staff feel that their opinions and educational experience are highly rated and they are respected by the school community and seen as professionals who can be trusted to provide the best educational opportunities for the students. Teachers are highly committed to effective teaching and learning and engage fully in all aspects of Professional Development, where all learning is shared and professional collaboration and conversations are focused on school improvement initiatives.

Participation in Professional Learning Team meetings is high, with conversation centered on achieving the best possible learning outcomes. Staff believe that we are all responsible for the learning of every student. "We all own all the faces".

The staff enjoy collegial relationships which contribute much to the sense of community at SFX. We share professionally and care personally for all those fortunate enough to call St Francis Xavier's their place of work.

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	\$2,190,179
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$577,149
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$421,115
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$129,502
Total Income	\$3,317,945

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$14,705
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$2,679,721
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$752,757
Total Expenditure	\$3,447,183

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