

# 2024

## Annual School Report

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TOGETHER IN CHRIST

### St James Primary School

Skellatar Stock Route, MUSWELLBROOK 2333

Principal: Aaron Moon

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

## About this report

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St James 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

2024 was a year of significant growth for our school community. We celebrated academic success with all students and supported them on their learning journeys as well as continuing to be involved in a variety of sporting activities. The completion of the Courtyard refurbishment was definitely a highlight. We celebrated Mother's Day, Father's Day, Holy Week, Easter, ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, the Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, NAIDOC Week and Harmony Day. We had Colour Fun Day, Stage 3 had a fabulous time on Camp.

Our school went from strength to strength with all students and staff deepening our understanding and respect for the traditional owners of this land. We maintained our commitment and focus on Information Technology. Our Mini-Vinnies group continued their wonderful work to support those who are less fortunate than we are. Our Year 6 leaders continued to work at our local Vinnies. Our parents and parish community maintained their confidence and trust in the staff of this tremendous school.

### Parent Body Message

During 2024 the parents and friends of St James' Muswellbrook were included in the life of the school in many ways including: the opening and closing Masses for the year, Liturgies, Catholic Schools Week Open Classrooms, Book Week, Cross Country and the Athletics and Swimming Carnivals. This inclusion in the creation of community for our children is one of the many blessings of being associated with SJM! The Parents and Friends Association was able to host many friend-raisers/fundraisers for our school community throughout the year.

### Student Body Message

The Speech from our Captains from Presentation Day.

Good Morning, Mr Moon, teachers and staff, students and parents For those of you that don't know my name is Addison Its already presentation day I can't believe how fast this year has gone I have been so honoured to be called your school captain alongside Jaykob Doran and of course your amazing vice captains Stella and Logan.

Good Morning, as my fellow captain, Addison Ballantyne said, I'm Jaykob. Presentation Day of 2024. This is Year 6's last presentation day at St James. Leaving Primary School makes

me sad but also excited! I get to see some new people and even greet old friends! How has the year gone by so fast? Addison, how was your kinder experience?

I remember starting here in Kindergarten being a little kid at a big school not knowing what was ahead, but I have had the most amazing teachers to guide me through my 7 years here at St James and I can't thank them enough even if some teachers hadn't taught me they have had a huge impact in my school life and that I will take on forever.

Kinder to 3 was a challenge for me, as I was a shy boy in this big school, so I didn't really connect with my friends as much as I do today, and I didn't like leaving my dad to be in this place I didn't know back then, but I managed to adapt to the surroundings. I need to thank Mr. Moon for being the best principal he can, the teachers for teaching us about our subjects, and my friends for supporting me to build into a stronger mindset, I wouldn't be here without them.

I have had an amazing time at SJM there has been so many great opportunities begging with sport such as swimming cross country and athletics netball gala days and so much more.

I have also had the best time here with activities such as Public Speaking, which I mostly loved, Debating, which I REALLY loved and Project Club, which was an opportunity to show my creative skills. I'll be sure to visit on pupil free days, and I really hope to see more of SJM competing in challenges.

We will miss our SJM Family.

But are super excited to begin this new chapter of life at high school.

THANKYOU

## School Features

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St James' School is a Catholic Parish school within the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. The school is situated on the western fringe of the town, on land first settled by the Wanaruah people. The school began its existence as a Catholic denominational school in the middle of a developing township in 1862. When government funding was withdrawn in 1883, the Sisters of Mercy took over responsibility for the school. This school continued to provide a valuable Catholic education to the people of the area, until demand for places, brought on by an expansion in mining and power industries, resulted in the need for the construction of a larger school. In 1983, 100 years after the arrival of the Sisters of Mercy, the present Primary School of 14 classrooms, library and other amenities was opened. The Sisters of Mercy continued their mission in St. James' School until 1972. The Sisters of St. Joseph continued the important task of providing a Catholic education from 1973 until 1991 when the first lay principal was appointed. St James' School is proud of its dual heritage and encourages students and their families to incorporate the values and ideals of the charisms into daily life.

# 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
148	191	38	339

\* 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 88.31%. 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
89.44	87.63	89.97	88.40	89.74	86.42	86.56

## 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	37
Number of full time teaching staff	20
Number of part time teaching staff	5
Number of non-teaching staff	12

### 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)

The school Mission and Vision Statements reflect our role as a community of witnesses to the Catholic faith. We believe that St James' School community excels in education through living and learning in Christ. We are inspired by the Gospel to be successful learners and informed, engaged global citizens. St Joseph's Muswellbrook participates in the life of our Parish. We also have close links with the Parish Sacramental team. The Sacramental program is parish based and includes the School Religious Education Coordinator and the Priest. The Sacramental program is supported by the school curriculum and the parish team is in close communication with the class teachers of the students involved.

Our School is proud to be part of a wider Diocesan community. As such, we attend important Diocesan events. We also support Regional initiatives, including the Regional Teachers Mass and Dinner.

We have implemented the Visible Wellbeing Program with support from the Where There's a Will Foundation.

## 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.

St James' Catholic Primary School promotes equity and excellence.

We:

- Provide challenging and stimulating learning experiences and opportunities that enable all students to explore and build on their talents and abilities.
- Provide students with opportunities to experience success through differentiated educational teaching and learning activities.
- Promote knowledge and understanding of Indigenous culture together with global cultures and religions.
- Encourage students to take an active role in their learning through personal goal setting and self-evaluation.
- Teach the essential skills in Literacy and Numeracy in order to foster informed communication and collaboration.
- Employ best practice in Pedagogy and provide adequate resources to enable creative and productive use of technology to assist in communication and problem solving.
- Develop personal values and attributes so as to have a sense of self-worth and maintain healthy satisfying lives.
- Teach and model Gospel values to maintain healthy relationships and accept responsibilities for their own action.

We are committed to the system's Leading Learning Collaborative with Dr Lyn Sharrat. A highlight of our year was a visit by Lyn to our classrooms.

## 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 James 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	28%	54%
	Reading	47%	66%
	Writing	60%	77%
	Spelling	49%	61%
	Numeracy	51%	63%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	43%	51%
	Reading	59%	71%
	Writing	59%	67%
	Spelling	63%	68%
	Numeracy	57%	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

In 2021 the Diocese implemented the 'Tell Them From Me - Partners in Learning' survey for all Diocesan schools. The 'Partners in Learning' Parent Survey is based on a comprehensive questionnaire covering several aspects of parents' perceptions of their children's experiences at home and school. The survey includes seven separate measures, which were scored on a ten-point scale. The scores for the Likert-format questions (i.e., strongly agree to strongly disagree) have been converted to a 10-point scale, then averaged and reported by question and by topic. A score of 0 indicates strong disagreement; 10 indicates strong agreement;

Parents feel welcome - 7.2

Parents Support Learning at Home - 6.9 (Regional Average 6.8)

School Supports Positive Behaviour - 7.3

### Student satisfaction

Students enjoy their school at St James' Muswellbrook. This is a direct result of their expert teachers and the balanced curriculum that is offered at St James' Muswellbrook. There is a careful mix of academic, sporting and other activities on offer at the school. We cater for the needs of all.

### Teacher satisfaction

In 2022 the Diocese implemented the 'Tell Them From Me - Focus on Learning' teacher survey for all Diocesan schools. The 'Focus on Learning' teacher Survey is a self-evaluation tool for teachers and schools which is based on two complementary research paradigms.

Leadership - 7.6 (Region 7.0)

Collaboration - 8.0 (Region 7.7)

Learning Culture - 8.2 (Region 8.0)

Data Informs Practice - 8.2 (Region 7.9)

Teaching Strategies - 8.3 (Region 7.9)

Inclusive School - 8.7 (Region 8.3)

Parent Involvement - 7.8 (Region 6.7)  
Four Dimensions of Classroom and School Practices  
Challenging & Visible Goals - 8.1 (Region 7.5)  
Planned Learning Opportunities - 7.9 (Region 7.7)  
Quality Feedback - 7.4 (Region 7.2)  
Overcoming Obstacles to Learning - 8.2 (Region 7.8)



## 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>	\$4,594,042
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$1,228,265
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$1,054,913
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$291,479
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$7,168,699</b>

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$149,328
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$4,216,149
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$3,288,532
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$7,654,009</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