

2024

Annual School Report

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

TOGETHER IN CHRIST



St Joseph's Catholic College

Segenhoe Street, ABERDEEN 2336

Principal: Veronica Rolfe

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About this report

St Joseph's Catholic College (the 'High 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 High School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

Detailed information about the High 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 High School directly or by visiting the High School's website. Information can be also be obtained from the My School website.

Message from key groups in our community

Principal's Message

St Joseph's Catholic College's Vision Statement is "A Christ-centred inclusive community, grounded in service and integrity, nurturing the potential in all." Staff are deeply committed to living this vision with a strong focus on Catholic identity and the development of the whole person within a structured and nurturing learning community. We recognise that a student's development has its greatest outcomes when parents, students, and teachers form strong relationships based on mutual respect and trust. St Joseph's excellent standing in the local community and its consistently high academic results are directly attributable to the positive relationships staff form with students. St Joseph's has high expectations of our students, hence, the wearing of school uniform with pride, care of our school environment, and the manner in which we relate to others at school, and in the wider community, are pivotal to the formation of well-rounded and spiritually-centred young people.

Parent Body Message

St Joseph's Parents and Friends Association (P&F) is designed to assist the school in funding projects for the development of both students and the school, as well as coordinating events to promote community amongst families.

Meetings are held every term either face-to-face or online and our ever welcoming and enthusiastic committee continue to be active in all aspects of supporting the school community and families.

It is a great privilege to be involved with St Joseph's community and the P&F would like to thank the Executive Team, staff and volunteers for their continued support.

Student Body Message

St Joseph's Catholic College strives to embody Mary Mackillop's values of "Never see a need without doing something about it." This value aims to empower the student body to display traits and characteristics that frame a successful future based on kindness, compassion, community involvement and integrity.

The students express these traits by engaging and participating in various opportunities such as Community Days, InterACTS and the Red Door Community Kitchen. Such events have been driven by the help of the student body, elected School Captains and Student Representative Council Leaders, alongside teaching faculties. These school-based community events enable students to support, celebrate and understand through empathy. These opportunities created a need to fundraise for charities, school facilities and the student

body, overall, creating a greater sense of belonging and understanding of servant leadership for students.

In 2024, intra-cohort relationships were encouraged and continued through community days, school carnivals and our wellbeing dog, Frankie. These connections were driven through the collaboration between the Student Representative Council, teaching faculties and the Wellbeing Action Team.

School Features

History of the School

St Joseph's Catholic College traces its origins to 1896 when the Upper Hunter's Catholic educational culture began in Aberdeen. Four Josephite sisters from Lochinvar were sent on a mission to the school's current site to begin a primary school. Public transport for students was essentially non-existent, so a small number of boys began boarding at the Convent.

Over time, the boarder population increased, and this required the building of specialised boarding facilities. For most of its history, St Joseph's was a boarding school for primary school-aged boys, and it also served as the local area's Catholic co-educational primary school. 1971 saw the closure of the primary school, and the subsequent transformation of St Joseph's, in 1972, into a regional high school with the brief of serving the educational needs of the Upper Hunter Catholic Community. From this time, St Joseph's has continued to grow and evolve. The school has undergone multiple building programs with an emphasis on information technology and trade training facilities.

Location/Drawing Area

Located in the heart of the Upper Hunter, the school is part of the traditional country of the Wanaruah and Gamilaroi people. Aberdeen is part of the Upper Hunter Shire and the Muswellbrook Parish community. St Joseph's accepts students of both genders from Years 7-12, from areas covered by the Parishes of Denman, Merriwa, Muswellbrook, Scone and Murrurundi. St Joseph's Catholic College is situated within the small town of Aberdeen which is a town of approximately 2000 people. Aberdeen is at the centre of the Upper Hunter region where students travel from Muswellbrook in the south, Murrurundi in the north, and Merriwa in the west. The region is noted for its strong primary industries of cattle, wool, vineyards and horse breeding, as well as coal mining and electricity production.

Student Profile

Student Enrolment

The High School caters for students in Years 7 – 12. Students attending this High 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
340	361	32	701

* 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 86.34%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group					
Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
86.52	85.32	85.96	83.80	86.43	89.99

Managing Student Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The High 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, High School staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

High 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 High 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 High School's strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

Senior Secondary Outcomes

The table below sets out the percentages of students undertaking vocational training in their senior years as well as those attaining the award of Higher School Certificate (or equivalent vocational education and training qualifications).

Senior secondary outcomes 2024	
% of students undertaking vocational training or training in a trade during the senior years of schooling	12 %
% of students attaining the award of Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification	99 %

Post School Destinations

Each year the High School collects destination data relating to the Year 12 student cohort.

The percentage of students and their post-school destination can be broken down into the following categories:

- University - 61%
- Employment - 37%
- TAFE - 1%
- Defence Force - 1%

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2024:

Total number of staff	97
Number of full time teaching staff	58
Number of part time teaching staff	15
Number of non-teaching staff	24

Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

Teachers at this High 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 High 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)

Christian Discipleship

St Joseph's is a Christ-centred inclusive community, grounded in service and integrity, nurturing the potential in all. It encourages the involvement of students, families and wider staff in discipleship opportunities. For example, the Year 7 Reflection Day in Term 1 is followed by a family welcome barbecue and 'Get to Know the Teachers' activity for all new students and their families.

For students in Years 7–10, we provide opportunities for Spiritual Reflection that complements the Religious Education program and community service priorities of the school such as the InterACTS program (students give up a week in the summer school break to work with special needs clients) as well as have several opportunities to support Catholic charities such as Caritas and St Vincent de Paul. Students in Years 11 and 12 participate in three-day Retreat programs concentrating on servant leadership and life beyond the school gates.

Religious Education and Curriculum

The classroom instruction of Religion aims to foster an understanding of Catholic beliefs and practices within the framework of Religious Literacy. This approach integrates content with the same level of demand, creativity, and rigor as other Key Learning Areas. Emphasis is placed on active learning and creative pedagogy, enabling students to engage with the material at various levels and through diverse learning modes.

For students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and Stage 6 Studies in Catholic Thought, a new curriculum has been introduced, focusing on enquiry-based learning. This curriculum provides students with the opportunity to explore their own spirituality and religious beliefs while addressing significant questions throughout their learning journey. The course is designed to empower students to take ownership of their faith journey, with staff providing guidance and support to enhance their learning experiences. Studies of Religion allows students to engage in various areas of religion within our world and students focus on Christianity, Islam and Judaism.

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

Secondary Curriculum

The Secondary Curriculum follows the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabus for each course offered as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990 (NSW) and implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office (CSO).

The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science, Technological and Applied Studies, Human Society and its Environment, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, Creative Arts, Languages, and Vocational Education and Training. 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.

Digital technologies in the classroom have continued to develop as a great learning tool in the classroom and both staff and students further explored the use of these technologies for digital learning. Staff used Compass to deliver lesson plan outlines each day and Microsoft OneNote to collaborate.

Whole staff professional learning in 2024 continued to focus on improving writing skills, using NAPLAN and PAT data as our focal point. Staff learnt how to use data to inform and develop their teaching practice to improve student learning outcomes, particularly in the area of writing. Our Pedagogical Mentor coached staff to look closely at the data and make informed decisions about student improvement.

Our Aboriginal Support Teachers, along with the introduction of an Aboriginal Worker, provided staff and students with the opportunity to develop their understanding of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our local community.

The school curriculum includes a wide range of subjects, such as Religious Studies, Language, Mathematics, Science, Human Society and Its Environment, English, Physical Education and the Arts. These subjects are organised into stage descriptors that outline the knowledge, skills and competencies that students are expected to acquire at each year level.

In addition to the core KLA subjects, St Joseph's offer elective courses, such as Foreign Languages, Music, Drama, Agriculture, Humanities and a variety of technologies in education. These courses allow students to explore their interests and develop additional skills that may be useful in their future careers.

The curriculum also includes various extracurricular activities such as sports teams, debating, public speaking, Enviro Group and agricultural show teams. These activities can help students develop leadership skills, social skills, and a sense of community and belonging.

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs and interests of a diverse student population, with accommodations made for students with additional learning or wellbeing needs. Teachers use a variety of instructional methods and resources, such as textbooks, multimedia materials, and hand-on activities, to engage students and help them achieve their learning goals.

Overall, the school curriculum aims to provide students with a well-rounded education that prepares them for university, careers and lifelong learning.

Several students completed work-placed traineeships in conjunction with their Higher School Certificate in the areas of Electrical Apprenticeship, Early Childhood, Manufacturing and Fabrication, Human Services and Beauty Services. Students also completed external TAFE courses in Electrotechnology, Automotive and Animal Care as part of their Higher School Certificate study pathway.

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 Joseph's Catholic College for 2024 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 7	Grammar and Punctuation	50%	61%
	Reading	60%	67%
	Writing	54%	65%
	Spelling	64%	72%
	Numeracy	57%	67%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 9	Grammar and Punctuation	51%	55%
	Reading	57%	63%
	Writing	57%	61%
	Spelling	67%	72%
	Numeracy	64%	63%

Higher School Certificate (HSC) Diocese

The results of the High School's Higher School Certificate (HSC) candidature are reported for particular subjects. The table provided shows the percentage of students who achieved in the top two bands and shows comparison with results from previous years.

NB: A number of new syllabuses were implemented this year which means there was a change in either subject name and/or course number. For this reason, results from previous years may appear as 0%. Some courses no longer run and therefore will show as 0%.

Students in Year 12 2024 had great success overall, with three students achieving 90+ ATARs. Eleven students were recognised on the Distinguished Achievers List with 17 Band 6's between them. Several students successfully completed School Based Traineeships in conjunction with their Higher School Certificate. Overall, the 2024 cohort produced consistent results of previous years' students. The success could possibly be attributed to the grouping of the top 32 students in the cohort each year since commencing Year 7.

Higher School Certificate	Percentage of students in the top 2 bands (Bands 5 and 6)					
	2022		2023		2024	
	School	State	School	State	School	State
Agriculture	75 %	26 %	0 %	31 %	75 %	31 %
Community & Family Studie	53 %	33 %	45 %	36 %	56 %	36 %
English Extension 1	-	-	100 %	94 %	100 %	96 %
Legal Studies	25 %	41 %	38 %	43 %	80 %	44 %
Mathematics Extension 2	-	-	-	-	100 %	86 %
Music 1	100 %	70 %	100 %	69 %	100 %	68 %
Personal Dev,Health & PE	23 %	26 %	20 %	31 %	53 %	35 %
Studies of Religion I	38 %	41 %	100 %	49 %	69 %	44 %

Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

Pastoral Care Policy

The High 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 High 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 High School. The High School does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by High School persons and non-High School persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the High School. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the High 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 High 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 High 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 High School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the High 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

St Joseph's Catholic College strives to maintain a close relationship with its parent community. The college organises a number of parent information evenings and other formal meetings to advise parents of issues such as assessment and policy consultations. Parents are invited to visit the college to meet with teachers and leaders.

Parents had the opportunity to meet with their child's teachers, attend P&F meetings and events, award ceremonies etc at school. The consistent message from parents is that they feel welcomed at St Joseph's and are provided with opportunities to express their opinions and assist in the organisation of the school. This is reflected in the level of school enrolments which continues to rise steadily.

Student satisfaction

Student satisfaction is highly valued at St Joseph's Catholic College and can be measured through opportunities and events given to the student body by teachers and student leaders.

In 2024, St Joseph's Catholic College continued to prioritise student satisfaction, ensuring active involvement between student leaders and their peers. Student leadership remains a cornerstone of the school's motto and values, providing opportunities to hold, host and participate in a diverse array of events tailored to cater to the interests of its student body; from Community Days, Outward Bound, DioSounds performances, Science and Engineering Challenges, and a myriad of sporting competitions.

One notable event in 2024, was the St Vincent de Paul Sleepout. The Year 12 cohort spent a night in the School Hall to raise funds and awareness for the homeless and those less fortunate. The enthusiastic participation of students filtered down into the junior year groups with the whole school supporting and getting involved. Student satisfaction is often met through enjoyment of fundraising activities promoting awareness, as well as the exploration of their character strengths.

Teacher satisfaction

As highlighted previously, a number of key strengths have continued to shine through with the introduction of new staff and changing roles/responsibilities.

1. Positive Attitudes Toward Leadership: Anecdotally, teachers reported strong satisfaction with the leadership at St Joseph's. The Leadership Team were acknowledged for their approachability, clear communication, and commitment to providing support. Teachers felt valued and recognised for their contributions.

2. Supportive Working Environment: Staff members expressed a positive attitude toward their colleagues, highlighting a strong sense of teamwork and collaboration. Teachers reported that they felt supported by one another, fostering a nurturing and positive school climate.

3. Adequate Resources and Professional Development: Teachers indicated that they had access to the necessary resources to effectively perform their duties.

4. Work-Life Balance: The school's efforts to support work-life balance were also recognised by the staff. Teachers appreciated, where possible, the flexible scheduling and the school's commitment to reducing unnecessary workloads, which contributed to overall job satisfaction.

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	\$10,170,105
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$2,658,707
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$3,537,209
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$823,782
Total Income	\$17,189,803

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$3,270,169
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$12,534,189
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$5,671,618
Total Expenditure	\$21,475,976

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