

2024

Annual School Report

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TOGETHER IN CHRIST



St Joseph's Primary School

Shelton Street, CHARLESTOWN 2290

Principal: Kate Drake

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

About this report

St Joseph'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

This report reflects on the progress St Joseph's has made over the past year. We remain committed to providing a high-quality Catholic education that nurtures the faith, academic, personal, and social growth of every student. By fostering a positive and inclusive environment, we strive to ensure that all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Situated within the MacKillop Parish, St. Joseph's remains dedicated to providing a Catholic education distinguished by excellence in teaching and learning, spanning from Kindergarten to Year 6. Rooted in the tradition of the Sisters of St. Joseph, we take great pride in upholding the Josephite charism. Our foundational values of Striving High, Living Like Jesus, and Care for the Environment continue to shape our daily actions.

Our students have made significant strides in their learning. We continue to enhance our teaching practices and curriculum to cater to a wide range of learning styles and abilities. With a focus on engaging and relevant teaching and learning, we aim to create a dynamic educational experience that prepares students for future challenges while supporting their individual needs.

The involvement of our school community has been vital to our success. We greatly value the strong partnerships we have with parents and local organisations, which help enrich the student experience. Volunteers and collaborative efforts with local community have created meaningful opportunities for students, reinforcing our commitment to a well-rounded education.

Looking ahead, we will continue to build on this year's achievements by expanding educational programs and providing additional support for students' well-being. Strengthening communication and collaboration with parents will remain a priority, as we work together to ensure that our school remains a place where every student can thrive.

Parent Body Message

The parent community has continued to play a vital role in supporting the school throughout 2024. The strong partnership between parents, staff, and students has been central to the success of the school's initiatives and events. Parent involvement has remained a key factor in enriching the educational experience, with many parents contributing their time and resources to support a variety of school activities, including the canteen, fundraisers and uniform shop.

From volunteering at events to supporting fundraising efforts, parents have shown unwavering dedication to the school. Their generosity has helped make a significant impact on numerous initiatives, whether through organising community events, supporting the P & F committee, or engaging with teachers and staff to help improve the school environment. These contributions are deeply appreciated and reflect the commitment to creating the best possible experience for all students.

The annual Easter raffle, Mother's Day and Father's Day initiatives were again coordinated by our P&F and each proved to be a great success. They also assisted in organising the St Joey's Gr8 Race, which was another successful event. The P & F contributed significant funds to upgrade the laptops in the Learning Hub, supported students and their families to attend representative sporting events, purchased literacy resources and sports equipment and have made a commitment to supporting the build of a Ninja fitness circuit for the playground.

The collaboration between parents and staff has allowed the school to continue fostering a positive and supportive learning environment for students. Together, the school and parent community have worked to ensure that students receive the support they need academically, socially, and emotionally. This ongoing partnership has been instrumental in the school's continued growth and success.

The school encourages all parents to stay engaged and continue contributing to the community. The collective efforts of parents and staff help create an environment where every child can thrive. The school remains grateful for the continued support of the parent body and looks forward to further strengthening this important relationship in the coming year.

Student Body Message

The Student Leadership Team, elected each year by students from Years 2 to 5 and staff, continued to play an integral role in school life throughout 2024. All Year 5 students were given the opportunity to nominate and apply for leadership positions, fostering a sense of responsibility and involvement. The School Councillors took the lead in organising and facilitating weekly school assemblies, while also working closely with the Mini Vinnies team to plan and execute a range of fundraising events for various charitable causes, including Project Compassion, the SVDP Winter Appeal, and Catholic Mission.

Year 6 students were recognised as leaders within the school, taking on roles as peer mentors during key events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Harmony Day. They also demonstrated exceptional leadership as buddies to new Kindergarten students, showing kindness, generosity, and attentiveness. Beyond these activities, Year 6 students consistently supported teaching staff with daily classroom responsibilities and

sporting events, further exemplifying their commitment to the school community and their position as role models for younger students.

School Features

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, nestled in the heart of the MacKillop Parish, welcomes students from Kindergarten to Year 6. Established in 1927 by the sisters of St Joseph, our school began its journey on Milson St. in Charlestown, adjacent to the parish church and Josephite convent. As the Charlestown area expanded, so did our school's need for space, leading to a relocation in 1975 to a picturesque bushland setting.

Proud of our rich Josephite heritage, St. Joseph's Primary remains committed to embodying the charism of the Josephite order. Located on Shelton St., on the eastern side of the Pacific Highway, we are an integral part of the Lakes Region of Catholic schools, serving as a feeder for St. Mary's Catholic College in Gateshead.

Surrounded by lush bushland, our school provides a stimulating environment where children can thrive both academically and socially. Equipped with modern facilities and engaging learning environments, we deliver a comprehensive curriculum tailored to meet the individual needs of each student.

At St. Joseph's, we prioritise the partnership between home and school, working closely with parents to ensure every child reaches their full potential. Our custom-built school fosters collaboration and personalised learning, with teachers embracing contemporary teaching methods to meet the evolving needs of students.

We integrate learning technologies seamlessly into all aspects of our curriculum, providing students with access to cutting-edge resources such as interactive SMART Boards, iPads, laptops, and wireless internet. Years 5 and 6 participate in a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program, enhancing their learning experiences across the Stage 3 curriculum

In addition to academic excellence, St. Joseph's offers a diverse range of sports and extracurricular activities. From internal sports programs to external competitions, students have the opportunity to excel in various sports at representative levels. Our comprehensive arts program allows students to explore and develop their creative talents through music, drama, and public speaking opportunities.

Through programs like ASPIRE, band, choir, chess and debating, students can showcase their talents not only within the school but also in the wider community. At St. Joseph's, we are dedicated to nurturing well-rounded individuals who are prepared to succeed in all aspects of 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
155	175	35	330

* 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 90.39%. 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
90.40	91.24	90.22	90.92	92.35	89.81	87.79

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	40
Number of full time teaching staff	11
Number of part time teaching staff	16
Number of non-teaching staff	13

Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

Teachers at this School are either accredited as conditional, provisional or proficient as defined by the NSW Teacher Accreditation Act 2004. Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher are voluntary. The number of teachers within the Diocesan Schools System (systemic schools) at these levels is as follows:

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

Additionally, there are a number of teachers who are currently actively engaged in the submission process at the higher levels of accreditation. Teacher status at individual schools can be sourced directly from the School.

Catholic Identity and Mission

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

At the heart of everything there is always Jesus Christ.

Catholic schools educate:

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

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

In consultation with the Catholic Schools RE team in 2024, it was decided to shift our focus to the area of Religious Education. Our SIP goal was to increase staff capacity and self efficacy when teaching religious education to create positive learning experiences when teaching religion as reported by self report data and observation. Professional learning experiences were focused on looking at the Religion teaching units more closely and aligning teaching practices to incorporate Religion based vocabulary word walls and Co-teaching strategies to enhance learning experiences for the students and collective efficacy of teachers.

2024 saw the culmination of involvement in the Parish Exuberant Praise and Worship event which was held on October 27th with significant participation from young people from combined parishes in the Diocese.

At school, the St Joseph's community held large liturgical celebrations for occasions such as Ash Wednesday, St Joseph's Feast Day, Grandparents Day, Mother's Day, Holy Week and Christmas with many parents and grandparents in attendance.

St Joseph's stage 3 students were also actively involved in a school based Mini Vinnies group. Throughout the year they encouraged the school community to collect resources such as money, food and clothing for Caritas, the SVDP Winter Appeal, Catholic Care and the Christmas Appeal.

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

The School provides an educational program based on and taught in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education and Languages.

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

In 2024, St Joseph's entered its second year of a dedicated focus on Mathematics improvement, with a particular emphasis on place value. This refined approach allowed us to target one critical area of Numeracy, enabling deeper analysis and more impactful teaching strategies. Staff engaged in professional learning facilitated by the Numeracy Teachers Association, building their capacity to deliver targeted, data-driven instruction.

This year also marked the introduction of our first Professional Learning Team (PLT) teachers. These dedicated roles allowed for the release of classroom teachers to focus on our School Improvement Goals, providing essential time for collaboration, planning, and professional growth. This release time played a pivotal role in supporting the implementation of new practices and ensuring alignment with our school's vision.

St Joseph's hosted Dr. Lyn Sharratt, who worked with staff to showcase our progress in the Lead, Learning, Collaborative journey. Her visit reinforced the importance of collaborative leadership and deepened our commitment to evidence-based practices that drive student growth.

2024 also saw the continuation of strong partnerships within our community. Our school hosted our second highly successful Writing Fair, which demonstrated the strength of our school-parent partnerships and our collaboration with St Mary's High School. The event highlighted student learning, showcased writing achievements, and celebrated the collective efforts of staff, families, and our broader school community.

Our Numeracy journey in 2024 built on the collaborative inquiry model we established during our previous three years of focus on Writing improvement. This foundation enabled us to refine our processes, practices, and shared understandings. The leadership team and Pedagogical Mentor teachers frequently unpacked research models, ensuring their effective application to our context. Strategies such as learning walks and talks, high-impact teaching

practices, and the establishment of data-driven goals have become hallmarks of our professional practice. As part of our professional learning journey, we were privileged to host Peter Sullivan, who demonstrated mathematics lessons aligned with the "Launch, Explore, Summarise" teaching model. These lessons provided hands-on opportunities for staff to observe and discuss effective instructional strategies.

St Joseph's is proud to continue building on this foundation of collaboration, research-based practices, and strong community partnerships as we strive for excellence in teaching and learning.

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 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	71%	54%
	Reading	80%	66%
	Writing	98%	77%
	Spelling	76%	61%
	Numeracy	84%	63%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	80%	65%
	Reading	91%	71%
	Writing	80%	67%
	Spelling	78%	68%
	Numeracy	78%	68%

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 Joseph's, consultation with parents, students, and teachers is vital to achieving improved outcomes. Feedback is actively sought and shapes our planning and continuous improvement efforts.

In 2024, our second annual Writing Fair celebrated student progress and creativity, drawing many families and fostering community pride. Communication remained a focus, with the sharing of student work, goals, and Learning Overviews keeping parents informed and engaged.

Our P&F Committee strengthened community ties through events like the school disco, Mother's Day and Father's Day celebrations, the Welcome BBQ, and the Colour Run Fundraiser. These events brought families together while raising valuable funds for school initiatives.

Parent/Teacher interviews continued to support positive relationships, offering opportunities to discuss student goals. Responding to parent feedback, St Joseph's expanded participation in sporting gala days, enriching students' experiences and encouraging teamwork.

By prioritising collaboration, communication, and engagement, St Joseph's builds strong partnerships that support student success.

Student satisfaction

At St. Joseph's, student voice is highly valued and actively encouraged. Our students feel deeply connected to their school, knowing that every staff member is committed to supporting them in achieving their full potential. They take pride in their learning environment and appreciate the expansive and natural playground spaces available to them. Representing St. Joseph's at events brings them great joy, and they enjoy showcasing our school to visitors, who often comment on the welcoming, inclusive, and cheerful atmosphere created by our students.

Students consistently share that they feel safe, supported, and connected within our school community. They are enthusiastic learners who embrace the many sporting, cultural, and leadership opportunities offered throughout the year. This supportive and engaging environment nurtures their academic, social, and personal development, ensuring they flourish during their time at St. Joseph's.

Teacher satisfaction

In 2024, St. Joseph's continues to thrive with a team of skilled and dedicated teaching staff who consistently demonstrate their commitment to excellence. Collaborating effectively, they create a learning environment that caters to the unique needs of every student, driving positive outcomes across all areas. Throughout the year, staff engage in diverse professional learning opportunities, sharing their insights to enhance teaching practices and improve student success. Their active involvement in extracurricular events and school improvements highlights their dedication to the school community.

Staff at St. Joseph's prioritise collaboration, foster a positive learning culture, and utilise data-driven strategies to strengthen teaching effectiveness. They value the school's inclusive approach and its commitment to meeting diverse student needs. Technology integration remains a focus for growth, with new laptops set to further enhance teaching and learning.

The professionalism and care of St. Joseph's staff are highly respected, creating a vibrant, supportive environment where both students and colleagues can thrive.

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	\$3,370,324
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$884,410
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$975,389
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$267,406
Total Income	\$5,497,529

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$947,271
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$4,007,955
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,674,347
Total Expenditure	\$6,629,573

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