

2024

Annual School Report

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TOGETHER IN CHRIST



St Joseph's PS

49 Brown Street, DUNGOG 2420

Principal: Mrs Lisa McNeilly

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

About this report

St Joseph's PS (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

Welcome to the St Joseph's Dungog Annual Report for 2024.

In 2024, the students were provided with extensive opportunity to participate in a variety of learning, sporting and cultural experiences. All students were involved in Book Week activities and dressing up, school spelling and maths Bees, community Christmas carols performance, Bowling with Grandparents, school discos and a variety of excursions and incursions. Our Diocesan pathway sports continued with students participating in swimming, cross country, athletics and for those interested in Years 5 and 6 both Winter and Summer sports trials. Several of our students representing at Diocesan level and one student making it through to Polding. Stage Two and Stage Three students attended soccer and netball gala days. Stage One participated in a Tag gala. School sport opportunities for volleyball, netball and touch were supported with accredited coaches delivering the programs to our students. For 2024 we had the good fortune to have access to an artistic staff member who co-ordinated our end of year art show. An experienced choir teacher worked with our whole school culminating with their performance in the Dungog Street Fair. The students also enjoyed a cultural incursion of "Musica Viva" exploring the connection between our moods and emotions and music-performance was titled Two Wheeled time machine. Our celebration of NAIDOC Week came on the second last day of Term 2 with a whole school celebration to explore elements of local Aboriginal culture. Kinder to Year 4 classes attended a Magic Water Show -all about water conservation performed by the Hunter local land service. In November Years 5 and 6 went on a 2-day excursion exploring our Nation's capital and all its highlights, including the perennial favourite, Questacon. Our Kindergarten and Year 1 classes went to the Maitland Regional Art Gallery for an immersive art experience. Stage 2 enjoyed a visit to the movies to celebrate the end of the school year. Our continued SIP priority in 2024 (2nd year into our 3-year SIP focus) was to embed and improve the quality of teaching and student learning in mathematics - with a particular focus on Agreed Practices, Learning Intentions, co-constructed Success criteria and descriptive feedback for students. Staff embraced the opportunity to attend PD to develop their skills and transfer knowledge to the classroom setting. I would like to thank all involved in the St Joseph's community in 2024 and look forward to the 2025 school year with all the opportunities available to enhance curriculum delivery, student engagement and provide opportunities for combined local community activities.

Parent Body Message

The school population again increased in 2024 which continues the single stream for classes. In 2024 the PEG (Parent Engagement Group) model continued. A parent volunteer continued to operate the Uniform shop. This is a very helpful service and is very helpful to the whole school. Our meetings during the year were consistently attended by a handful of parents keen to support the school and learn about the educational focus and strategies used at school. The options for continued parent engagement were co-ordinating the Mother's Day High Tea, the Father's Day lunch and discussing and voting on the releasing of funds for resource purchases for the school including decodable readers, speech pathology sessions each week for kindergarten, sports equipment and transport to LARA for end of year carolling. We were kept informed of school happenings by the principal's report tabled at the PEG meeting and then pushed out in COMPASS with the minutes of the PEG meeting. For non-PEG related information, we were kept informed through the fortnightly Parent Journal and the school newspaper. We were also very glad to have many opportunities to engage with our children at school through open classroom opportunities, morning teas, a book parade, sporting events, class liturgies and masses and Sunday Parish masses. Our school canteen was also open again and volunteers assisted with the preparation of lunches several times each term and the sale of ice blocks at lunchtime.

Student Body Message

In 2024 we had two new teachers at the school and lots of events planned. We had fun excursions to go to, even an overnight camp for Years 5 and 6. The whole school went by bus to LARA aged Care Facility to spread Christmas cheer and entertain the residents with a concert. We also got to go to the Dungog show- we saw some of the students from our school riding in the horse events and our artwork was on display in the pavilion. Some people even entered the produce section with crazy carrots and vegetables on display. We had a teacher just for choir if we were interested and we put on an Art Show at the end of the year. We even sung after school in the main street at the Dowling Street Christmas fair. Our families came along to watch. We got to meet our buddies and have mornings with them in Term 4. Our school captains led our assemblies and went to the ANZAC DAY and Remembrance Day ceremonies at the RSL. We finished the year with our end of year awards and had our Year 6 farewell with a great dinner and then we were joined by the whole school for a disco. It was lots of fun. We would like to thank the teachers for all the great times we had at St Joseph's, and we are all looking forward to high school in 2025.

School Features

St Joseph's school has been in existence for over 130 years. The sisters of St Joseph (four in total) arrived in Lochinvar in 1883 from Bathurst where they were founded in 1875. Within the next few years, the sisters had established convents throughout the whole Diocese including Dungog in 1888. On Saturday 24 November of that year, four Sisters of the Order of St Joseph's arrived in Dungog. Catholic schooling commenced here just two days later. Catholic schooling has continued for 130 years since these founding Sisters began all those years ago. Since its foundation in the 1880's, the St Joseph's School has grown at a steady pace. Additions and renovations to the present site were made in 1913, 1923, 1952, 1976 and more recently major renovations were completed in 2007/8 and in 2010. In 2020, 2021 and 2022 further renovations and remodelling occurred. The Sisters of St Joseph concluded their teaching presence in the school at the conclusion of the 1986 school year. However, the school maintains close links with the Sisters and with the traditions that were woven into the very fabric of the school for all those years. Historical memorabilia, artistic presentations and photographs are on display in both the school and in the adjacent St Mary's Parish Hall. Current School Features St Joseph's is a single stream school with excellent classroom and playground facilities. All classrooms feature up to date technology including student laptops, interactive televisions and hover cams to assist with curriculum delivery. Furniture is modern, fresh carpets and wet areas all air conditioned for effective climate control. Our playground is extensive offering many different play spaces; fields for running and ball games, full sized basketball court, covered play equipment area, large, covered sand pit, mud kitchen zone, dry creek bed exploration area and passive game and shaded quiet zones. In addition we have a well stocked library and attached withdrawal room. In conjunction with the Parish we also make use of the beautiful Parish hall for incursions, assemblies and book fairs.

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
79	64	5	143

* 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 90.22%. 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
92.65	86.91	91.23	89.43	91.31	91.62	88.36

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	17
Number of full time teaching staff	7
Number of part time teaching staff	5
Number of non-teaching staff	5

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)

The Catholic Identity of St Joseph's has been promoted through a variety of prayerful and liturgical activities- with the recital of our School Prayer and School Vision Statement at the start of each week (also included in the Family Engagement handbook) and with the praying of appropriate classroom prayers during the school day. In 2023 the school was able to celebrate the Opening School Mass with the whole school community. We were also able to gather and celebrate together for class/Parish masses, Holy Week, Easter, Sunday school/ Parish Masses, Advent and Christmas. We finished the year with the end of Year Mass and passing of the light ritual for Year 6.

During 2024 the opportunity to forge strong links with the Parish were enhanced with open classroom opportunities, student attendance at Friday Mass, sharing of school newspaper with the Parish community and Parish Priest regular presence at school and staff functions. Many of the local parishioners are extended family members of our students and they were able to witness our liturgy and prayer times through attendance at and viewing images in our school newspaper and in our COMPASS feeds sent to our family groups. In 2024 Sacramental Programs were offered in an online format by our Parish Priest Father Andrew Doohan.

The school acknowledges the importance of Religious and faith development programmes for both staff and students. All members of the St Joseph's staff participated in a Formation day in Term 3 exploring our Catholic Faith. The improvement agenda in 2024 continued with the incorporation of a common understanding of core KLA practices and the use of common strategies such as Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, Descriptive feedback and case management meetings. These common understandings provide teachers with the necessary

scaffold to provide informed, differentiated and challenging teaching to learners who are better informed and able to articulate their understanding of learning.

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.

The school took part in a number of competitions beyond the school designed to extend and challenge all students involved. Quite a number of students took part in the Premier's Reading Challenge and senior students took part in the annual Newcastle Permanent Mathematics Competition. School based competitions such as science design challenges and environmental sustainability projects in our Stage 2 and 3 classes were also popular and produced innovation and creative thinking. These challenges took many different forms from video to physical prototype. In 2024 our school continued to foster a greater student awareness of stewardship of the earth with students maintaining the school composting and food propagation stations. Students continue to show environmental responsibility by reducing their lunch box packaging, caring for our outside environment by planting and weeding in our gardens and using water sparingly. The opportunity for external Debating and Public Speaking competitions across our Lower Hunter Cluster continued in 2024. Our students were involved in Spelling and Maths Bees challenges as well as in their own classrooms with class presentations demanding an oral component. This challenged students with support and showed great talent amongst our students several being successful at regional level and competing at the diocesan level. A directed whole school focus on sustained and continuous student improvement continues in 2024. Using the work of Lynn Sharrett "Clarity" and with the guidance of the school Pedagogical Mentor we implemented the 14 parameters of system and school improvement. We began unpacking parameters 1, 14, and 6. This focused us on our shared beliefs and understandings, the shared responsibility and accountability and the case management approach specific to the teaching and learning in our school. We revised the parameters and continue to embed learning Intentions, Success Criteria, and descriptive feedback to enhance student achievement across the Key Learning Areas of English, Mathematics and Religion. In 2024 we also continued with case management meetings as regular components of our staff meeting time with a set process for initial and follow up discussion.

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 PS 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	33%	43%
	Reading	41%	66%
	Writing	81%	77%
	Spelling	37%	45%
	Numeracy	52%	63%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	56%	65%
	Reading	61%	71%
	Writing	67%	67%
	Spelling	56%	68%
	Numeracy	39%	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

The school received a great deal of positive feedback during the year from the parent body of the school. Annual School visit observations also parent survey and the Tell Them From Me Survey conducted in 2024.(TTFM) indicated that students were supported, well looked after and challenged. Parents and carers also appreciated the high expectations that were being set at the school and they saw the school as a safe, happy and inclusive learning environment for their children. They also indicated that parent/teacher communication was effective and two way. Our Kindergarten intake for 2024 was 20 students, another large Kindergarten intake for our school. Many new families to the area chose St Joseph's on the advice and recommendation of friends and acquaintances in the local community. Connections of home and school link by sending videos of school happenings to parents via the COMPASS app. Communication is made available through the fortnightly parent Journal and school newspaper which is sent to each family electronically. We also welcomed five new families during the 2024 school year citing our reputation as a major reason for choosing to enrol their children at our school.

Student satisfaction

The students expressed their appreciation of the Pastoral Care and support offered to them at St Joseph's. Students indicated they were thankful for the opportunities to take part in our open classroom opportunities, our sporting events and the involvement of qualified coaches, our excursions and incursions. Also popular are our special canteen lunches, tabloid afternoons and the new playground feature- playground game markings. Our students also enjoyed the opportunity to dress up for Book Week and have student voice in Student Parliament and through the suggestion box on the playground. Students also commented that they feel safe at our school and know who they can go to for support if they need it. Students understand that they are the priority in our school and their opinions are valued and most importantly that they have the power to make positive changes in their own lives, their local community and the world at large.

Teacher satisfaction

Our 2024 TTFM survey and our 2024 annual school visit report revealed that teachers and staff in general are happy that the school has direction and a clear plan for educational and pastoral focuses. Teacher attendance is very high- a strong indication of workplace satisfaction and community inclusion. The staff regularly get together to celebrate and share a meal after school hours. Father Andrew is also an honorary staff member regularly socialising with us both at school and outside of it. Several of the teachers play touch football and netball together outside of school. At the end of 2023, seven members of our staff all participated in gaining their Bronze Medallion qualifications together. The motivation for this was so we could run an aquatics program for our students- an area we felt needed attention. Support for each other is also evident in the positive relationships the staff share among each other. During the holidays, board game evenings and movies out are a frequent feature. Our staff is a mix of experience and youthful enthusiasm making it a dynamic and blessed place to work and be.

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	\$1,818,574
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$497,600
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$379,960
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$6,415
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$131,119
Total Income	\$2,833,668

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$39,161
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$2,150,346
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$783,127
Total Expenditure	\$2,972,634

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