

# 2024

## Annual School Report

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TOGETHER IN CHRIST



### St Mary's Primary School

12 Short Street, SCONE 2337

Principal: Kim Wilson

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

## About this report

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St Mary'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

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### Principal's Message

St Mary's Primary School is a wonderful rural school offering outstanding educational opportunities to its students, staff and parents. The school operates seven classes for approximately 140 students.

St Mary's motto is: 'Teach Us Wisdom, Teach Us Love'. In everything we do in the school, the achievement of this motto is paramount. The school seeks to bring lived Catholic values and teachings to all who seek a Christian Education in the Catholic tradition.

The school believes that parents are the primary educators in the faith of their children and that faith formation is a lifelong process. The model for faith formation is where children learn about faith by putting it into action. Care for all in the school community through a strong Pastoral Care presence is central to the environment within St Mary's School.

The school seeks to assist all children to become life-long learners. Numeracy and Literacy is a strong focus. The school actively seeks to meet individual differences in classrooms by employing teaching strategies that ensure all children are catered for through a differentiated curriculum. Excellence in education is a high priority in the school.

Social and emotional learning is highly valued and the positive education program supports children's social and emotional development.

St Mary's School is a school that seeks to instill pride, commitment and respect in the children in its care. The children are challenged to achieve their best in an accepting, supportive and friendly environment.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

### Parent Body Message

The parent body of St May's continued its positive role within the school community for 202 . The close relationship between the parents and the school management led to the promotion of a few new social events for parents to build community as well as some fundraising activities. The parents also continued the school's involvement in community activities and celebrations.

In 2022 the school moved from a P&F Association to adopt the new Diocesan model of a Parent Engagement Group PEG model. This model is hoping to engage parents more in the educational activities of their children's learning and participation in school events other than just fundraising. During 2024 we held meetings concerning support for reading, cybersafety, hands on maths activities and unpacking the Tell Them From Me Survey results.

The PEG continues to help fund the employment of a Groundsman, the purchase of new books for the Library, some new bubblers and furniture, the running of the school canteen and clothing pool. The strong partnership between the school and PEG is certainly a strength in our community.

### **Student Body Message**

The school's Student Leadership Team led the school student body extremely well in 2024. It was the second year of adopting our new Student Leadership Policy which gave more students the opportunity to lead a facet of the school. Our school and vice captains also participated as members of the Upper Hunter Shire Council Youth Council, which continued to meet throughout the year and represented our students in the Upper Hunter community.

The school's Student Representative Council operated effectively during 2024. Meetings were held under the supervision of the Assistant Principal. Students held their class positions for one term, thereby enabling a large number of students the opportunity to experience leadership. All students had the opportunity to present their ideas through class meetings and these views were conveyed to their Student Representative Council member, who presented these to council meetings.

The Student Representative Council conducted formal assemblies each term, giving children opportunities to improve public speaking, present reports and have greater ownership over student centered programs.

During 2024, the Student Representative Council took part in and promoted the following programs and activities that raised the profile of St Mary's in the local community:

- National Walk Safely to Schools Day
- Project Compassion – Caritas Australia
- Catholic Missions Appeal
- Assistance to children in Cambodia
- Scone Horse Week Festival
- Anzac Day and Remembrance Day celebrations
- Parish community building events and activities
- Christmas celebrations

We held another successful Leaders Retreat in 2024 in which staff worked with students to prepare them for the many facets of student leadership at St Mary's.

## School Features

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St Mary's is a co-educational K-6 primary school in the rural town of Scone, in the Upper Hunter Valley of NSW. It draws students from Scone and the surrounding towns and properties, extending to Murrurundi, Aberdeen, Gundy, Bunnan, Moonan and Ellerston.

St Mary's students continue their Catholic Education at St Joseph's High School, Aberdeen.

Throughout 2024, St Mary's continued its journey in Play Based Learning in our purpose-built kindergarten classroom with covered deck and outdoor learning space. It has been a fabulous addition to the school and is a treasured learning space. We have continued to work on developing other outdoor learning spaces in our school to extend the learning areas.

The existing Out of School Hours service became a part of St Nicholas early learning in July 2021. It continues to offer care for primary school aged students before and after school, and during some school holiday periods.

St Mary's has:

- school hall, with kitchen and attached music room (piano, drums, ukeleles, percussion).
- learning hub, incorporating:
- STEM project area - maker space and robotics, including Lego, Edison and BeeBot robots.
- Gifted Education space, including for use by students involved in Virtual Academy (highly gifted program) and those working with the Gifted Education Mentor teacher.
- A library with a well-stocked collection of fiction, non-fiction and junior fiction titles and staffed by a teacher and assistants.
- A new model of P&F, the Parent Engagement Group seeking to build community, knowledge and support the school's fundraising.
- A variety of computing devices and technology, including robotics (Lego WeDo, Edison and BeeBot), interactive screens, laptops, ipads, Virtual Conferencing.
- Individualised learning support - Aboriginal Education Teacher, English as an Additional Language or Dialect Teacher, Learning Support Teacher and Assistants working with students with identified (NCCD) needs, a Gifted Education Mentor supporting staff to identify and cater for gifted learners.
- Pastoral care through a Pastoral Care Worker, school counsellor and support from the Catholic Schools Office and agencies.

These facilities and opportunities support the provision of a quality education K-6 continuing the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy. We seek to continue their work in reaching out to our community to be the Face of God to those in need, through:

- sister school to SIMS Cambodia
- annual learning about and fundraising for Catholic Missions, Caritas and St Vincent de Paul
- student visits to the local nursing homes
- involvement in the local Youth Council
- mini-Vinnies promoting awareness and action.

We welcome the support of families and community interested in advancing our vision 'to educate in the Mercy tradition of faith in action'

## Student Profile

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### 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
65	70	11	135

\* Language Background Other than English

### Enrolment Policy

The [Enrolment Policy](#) applies to all school enrolments within the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. School authorities manage local enrolment processes and procedures in a manner consistent with the rationale and guiding principles articulated in this Enrolment Policy and accompanying [Enrolment Procedures](#). It aims to:

- Set direction for school procedures and practices for enrolling students into Catholic primary and secondary schools within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.
- Establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices.
- Assist the system of Catholic schools to:
  - provide schooling, where possible, for children of Catholic families who seek enrolment
  - cater for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources
  - encourage parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in faith.

### Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2024 was 91.09%. 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
92.82	91.28	92.17	91.26	90.89	89.65	89.58

## 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	24
Number of full time teaching staff	7
Number of part time teaching staff	9
Number of non-teaching staff	8

### 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)

At St Mary's, Scone, we educate in the Mercy tradition of faith in action through:

- compassion
- hospitality
- service
- courage
- respect
- justice to nurture the wellbeing of all.

We live our vision daily to ensure we build the school our founders and our community deserve. We live our Mercy values through our charitable works raising awareness, funds and undertaking practical actions to support those in need. We partner with SIMS Cambodia, Catholic Missions, Caritas, Where There's a Will and Hunter New England Health Good for Kids, Good for Life. We undertake actions in our local community, supporting local events through participation and volunteer work, visiting the local nursing homes and inviting the broader community to participate in open days.

We value our Catholic Identity and maintain a strong relationship with our local parish community the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Peace, Scone. We celebrate mass as a whole school with our parish at least once a term and celebrate mass in class groups weekly. Liturgies are held within the school to acknowledge important feast days, holy days and events.

In recognising the importance of family, St Mary's honours our community through liturgies and activities for Mothers', Fathers' and Grandparents' Day. Celebrated annually, Grandparents' Day is our peak open day where we welcome grandparents and family from all over Australia to give thanks to God for the gift of grandparents who guide us in our faith.

We share with them our learning and our time.

As a Catholic community, St Mary's works with Catholic Care, St Vincent de Paul society, Catholic Missions and the diocesan support agencies for the mutual support of our families and our community. We seek each day to be the Face of God in our world.

St Mary's Primary School, Scone: A community called to learn, serve and belong with Christ.

## 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.

Staff of St Mary's work collaboratively in Professional Learning Teams to provide deep analyses of data in Literacy and Numeracy to improve student outcomes across K–6. Case Management Meetings form part of the strategic whole school approach to improve student outcomes, taking professional learning from a whole school level to an individual teacher's 'point-of-need'. The continuation of Successful Foundations in Year K - 2 gives children opportunities to show the infinite ways they express their interests, capabilities, needs, thoughts, feelings and imaginings by allowing students to explore, discover, negotiate, take risks, create meaning and solve problems – all the important foundations for developing literacy, numeracy and social skills.

The school has continued its partnership with Where There's a Will in embedding Visible Wellbeing as part of the teachers' pedagogy. A committee of staff members continue to work together as the Positive Education implementation team organising wellbeing activities for staff and students. The assistant principal has supported staff in developing the use of wellbeing practices to embed a culture of wellbeing across the whole school community.

Students again participated in the many diagnostic and standardised assessments such as PAT testing, the Maths Olympiad and Newcastle Permanent Maths Test. The school also held its annual Spelling and Maths Bees and Public Speaking and Debating Competitions.

Students were able to access tutoring from the Conservatorium of Music. The school held a very successful Drama night with all children participating in the performance which was shared with the whole school community.

The school's Aboriginal Education Teacher has continued to increase awareness of Aboriginal culture of students within the school. All students have been involved in celebrating NAIDOC week and Harmony Day to further improve the value of inclusiveness our school.

Students undertook a cohesive sporting program with the support of external providers through the Sporting Schools Project. Students participated in swimming, athletics, cross country, gymnastics and lawn bowls. Students continue to participate in regional sporting gala days and competitions.

## 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 Mary'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	40%	54%
	Reading	50%	66%
	Writing	80%	77%
	Spelling	35%	61%
	Numeracy	50%	53%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	54%	65%
	Reading	69%	71%
	Writing	81%	67%
	Spelling	65%	68%
	Numeracy	58%	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

Feedback from the TTFM parent survey in 2024 indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the school.

- Three key learning areas for celebration include:
- The school is above regional mean in all areas of the survey
- 100% of parents think that their students are always treated fairly.
- The catholic culture, formation and mission and justice areas of the school have risen dramatically over the last 4 years.

The School mean is above Diocesan mean in all areas of the survey which is very pleasing.

### Student satisfaction

Feedback from the TTFM student survey in 2024 indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the school.

Three key learning areas for celebration include:

- Students have an increased sense of belonging and decreased bullying
- A great majority of the students continue to value schooling
- Students' opportunity for formation experiences was greatly increased

### Teacher satisfaction

Feedback from the TTFM staff survey in 2024 indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the school.

Four key learning areas for celebration include:

- Above regional average for Leadership, parent involvement and technology
- Parent involvement has been a focus and continues to increase each year.

- Technology resources and their use has continued to increase each year. We are very well resourced.
- Feedback that staff are providing to students is improving.

## 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>	\$2,066,948
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$563,941
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$426,448
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$104,810
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$3,162,147</b>

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$30,173
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$2,447,695
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$901,841
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$3,379,709</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