

# 2024

## Annual School Report

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TOGETHER IN CHRIST



### St Paul's PS

90A Gillies Street, RUTHERFORD 2320

Principal: Stacey Mullin

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

## About this report

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St Paul'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

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### Principal's Message

Our community is built on relationships with staff, students, parents and our parishioners. This helps us to remain student centred to create a resilient and positive community of learners.

Both the parent body and school staff created many opportunities for connections with family, parish and our broader local groups throughout the year. Our Breakfast club creates a great connection between students and parish as our volunteer network grew to 6 ladies, 2 days a week and a rotation of 20 students from the mini vinnies team supporting this endeavour - serving toast and cereal for any student hungry when they arrive at school. This was supported by larger companies and our local area businesses to provide a good start to the school day for students.

The students have been involved in discos, out of uniform days and fundraising activities where the funds went to many worthwhile causes both here and abroad. Our Mini-Vinnies team also participate in the intergenerational program, visiting the residents at Opal Care in Rutherford - this has had benefits for both the residents and our students.

Having a faith community centred in the person of Jesus, keeps the school focus on our values of Learn, Love and Serve. When we LOVE, we are respectful of all people, when we SERVE, we show responsibility to our community and the wider world and we all LEARN together as we grow as young and older human beings.

St Paul's Rutherford offers students a quality Catholic education to families from Telarah, Rutherford, Aberglasslyn and Farley areas. We strive to provide a welcoming atmosphere with many families coming from diverse backgrounds to enrich our community. Our school celebrates diversity and promotes inclusion across all grades and various community and school events. During our Kindergarten orientation sessions, parents were invited for a social meet and greet to meet the staff and each other while their children got to know the school and make new friends.

St Paul's is a family-oriented school promoting strong ties with families to create a genuine partnership in the ongoing growth and development of each and every student. We foster a commitment to the individual person and provide many opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. During 2024, our sporting fields were once again full and competition for teams was high. It was great for students to demonstrate their vast array of talents academically, artistically, culturally and in sporting arenas within our school environment.

## **Parent Body Message**

The school P and F committee set goals in greater connections to the school and review our possibilities for fundraising efforts. Our meetings continued both in person and online to support families at home. We facilitated and hosted the Easter Raffle, Mother's Day Stall, Father's Day stall and 2 school discos which were a great success. We broadened our fundraising with a pie drive which provided us with extra incentives for the next student event.

In 2024 we combined the disco with the schools carols night and small food market. There was a great sense of community for the evening.

With the efforts of the whole community, the P&F have contributed to many improvements around the school. We contributed to new readers in the infants grades, the addition of softfall on the infants eating area and a bright new bubbler at the end of the basketball court for students to access during playtime.

The P&F have also started planning for their final year in 2025 to transition into Family And Community Engagement (FACE) within our school, still wanting to maintain committees to be involved in school events. We remain supportive of the uniform shop for 2024 and 2025 until our transition to the next phase of family engagement.

## **Student Body Message**

During 2024, we loved to represent the school in our community at various events. We were proud to march on ANZAC day and lay the wreath to remember those who fought for us, we attended the cathedral to celebrate mass with other schools and hosted many assemblies as we led the school in our School Song and prayer. This year all leaders supported the assemblies both on Monday and Fridays to highlight our PBL fortnightly focus.

We have great responsibilities of putting up the flags, writing the birthday cards for Monday mornings, locking the gates and also the basement at the end of the day. We met with Mrs Mullin over lunch to discuss things we would like to achieve as leaders and what improvements we would like to see. We waited for the climbing equipment to be completed for the primary playground - it was a huge success!

We were lucky to connect with our Kindergarten buddies as they settled into the routines of school and being on the playground as a group. We increased the time we spent with our buddies in the peer support program meeting fortnightly to discuss friendships and how to communicate better with our student body.

We are excited and terrified to go into yr 7 next year and have already set up a time we can come back and help at St Paul's in 2025.

## School Features

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Founded by the order of the Sisters of Mercy, the school began with 64 children enrolled from K-6. In 1965 the Infants school relocated to Monte Pio at Campbell's Hill and remained there until 1981 when it returned to the Rutherford site. The school has had three major building constructions and expansions and more recently we have remodelled both the infants and primary green space areas to create an inviting and inclusive area ready for imaginative and physical play on the new primary climbing structure.

St Paul's is located in the Hunter Valley, forty kilometres from Newcastle and services Maitland's western suburbs of Telarah, Rutherford, Aberglasslyn, McKeachie's Run, Anambah and Farley. The socio-demographic is 'fairly typical of developing urban fringe areas, with established young families who are relatively time poor and thus require conveniently located facilities'. St Paul's is currently a two stream school with fourteen straight class groups from Kindergarten to Year 6.

St Paul's students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of academic, cultural and sporting pursuits at local, regional and state levels. During 2024, we participated across regions in sporting ventures, cultural meetings, public speaking and Tournament of Minds building the collaborative and team skills of our students. Virtual opportunities were presented to students in The Uni of Newcastle and Greater Maths competitions with great results from all grades. During 2024 we hosted Virtual Academy for 4 of our students supported by our Gifted Education Mentor.

The use of learning intentions and success criteria remains a key element of our teaching and learning approach. These practices are now embedded across classrooms, with evidence in english, maths and religious education. The use of "bump it up walls" has proven to be a valuable tool in supporting students to align their work with clearly defined success criteria, enhancing both teacher clarity and student understanding. This approach enables teachers to accurately identify learning needs and provides students with targeted opportunities and feedback to refine their work.

In 2024, we commenced implementing Michael McDowell's framework of surface, deep, and transfer learning, supported by targeted professional learning. This evidence-informed approach is shaping our instructional practices and will remain a key focus throughout 2025 as we embed it more deeply to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

As a school, we have begun collecting, tracking, and analysing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) data, which will continue into 2025. Teachers use this data to support and cater to the needs of their students, ensuring targeted interventions and strategies that promote student wellbeing and engagement.

## 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
189	180	49	369

\* 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 89.42%. 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
91.28	89.75	89.14	88.43	90.81	88.16	88.40

## 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	39
Number of full time teaching staff	16
Number of part time teaching staff	8
Number of non-teaching staff	15

### Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

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

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

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



## Catholic Identity and Mission

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

At the heart of everything there is always Jesus Christ.

Catholic schools educate:

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

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

The 2024 school year at St Paul's began with an Opening Mass where Kindergarten students were welcomed and school leaders were badged. This celebration reflected the Diocesan theme, "Follow Me", setting the tone for a year grounded in faith and community.

Early in Term 1, staff and Mini Vinnies leaders were commissioned at a Sunday Parish Mass, reinforcing our strong partnership with the parish and shared commitment to living out the Gospel.

Significant liturgical and community events such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparents' Day, and the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul were celebrated with great success, thanks to the efforts of staff led by the Liturgy Team.

Guided by the Catholic Schools Office, we continued to implement the new Religious Education curriculum through the Pedagogy of Encounter, encouraging deeper student engagement with faith. This focus was reflected in the Religious Literacy Assessment, with St Paul's showing strong growth, including one student achieving a top score across the Diocese.

Our School Improvement Plan's focus on Formation led to a 30% increase in positive student feedback in the Tell Them From Me survey. In response, we expanded our student faith formation opportunities by introducing two student Formation Days: one for Year 4 and another for Year 6. These days, grounded in our school values, provided students with time for spiritual reflection, service, and community-building. We aim to build on this momentum by establishing annual formation experiences across all year levels from Year 1 to Year 6.

Our school vision—"With Faith in Jesus Christ, we Learn, Love and Serve"—remained central to all we do. Staff voted to embed these values into our Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) matrix, which will be relaunched in 2025 into a refreshed Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) matrix. This re-imagining, will ensure consistency between our behaviour expectations and our Catholic values, helping students to live out the vision in daily school life.

The Mini Vinnies team had an outstanding year, running regular Breakfast Clubs, fundraising events, and visiting Rutherford Park Community Care. Their efforts were recognised in the Diocesan Aurora Magazine, with St Paul's featured on the cover of the Summer edition.

As we look to 2025, we remain committed to living our vision daily and deepening our connection with our parish and wider community.

## 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.

In 2024, St Paul's focused on improving student writing by revisiting our agreed practices and expectations for writing success. This helped strengthen our Professional Learning Teams, allowing them to refine essential learning and success criteria for students. We began the year with a Whole School Write to assess students' writing levels. Teachers then used formative assessments, work samples, and diagnostic data to develop common formative assessments, provide targeted feedback, and implement timely, practical interventions.

As a staff we have used progressions to monitor students writing skills. During our grade meetings we have analysed this data to strategically identify and plan for student needs. A collaborative and transparent approach ensures that all staff can access and utilise the data to inform next steps. This process considers the diverse needs of all students including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, English as an Additional Language or Dialect EALD learners, our students requiring extra support as well as our Gifted and High Potential students.

In 2024, a key priority at St Paul's has been the implementation of the new Mathematics and English syllabus across Years 3-6. As a staff, we have developed a deeper understanding of these changes through NESA professional learning and have built upon this throughout the year. This ongoing professional development has ensured we are well-equipped to effectively integrate the updated syllabus into our teaching practices, supporting improved student outcomes for the growth of every student.

## 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 Paul'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	41%	54%
	Reading	53%	66%
	Writing	80%	77%
	Spelling	39%	61%
	Numeracy	59%	63%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	41%	65%
	Reading	37%	71%
	Writing	61%	67%
	Spelling	49%	68%
	Numeracy	46%	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

Our parent community were involved in many celebrations at St Paul's - our community Mother's Day, Father's day and Christmas celebrations are extremely well attended by our families. Surveys from families highlighted that although their children are engaged in learning, parents would like greater information throughout the learning process of progress being made and of any concerns for behaviours in the classroom.

Student goal setting in parent/teacher meetings has been a more collaborative process between school and home. Parents fed back they understood the semester reports as they became more focused on areas of success and improvement - preferring this style of comment.

Our students faced many social challenges in 2024, reflected in the data from the parents, noting that online bullying behaviours had increased since the previous survey. While the students felt safe at school, parents brought attention to pockets of name calling and friendship issues needing support from our school.

St Paul's remains committed to monitoring wellbeing, enhancing communication and involvement using the Tell Them From Me (TTFM) data to strengthen relationships between the school and community.

### Student satisfaction

Our students voiced their appreciation and concerns in the Tell them From me data in 2024. Initiatives and events that students want to see continue at St Paul's Rutherford included; The Colour Run fundraiser, school discos, gala days, wellbeing week activities and the Peer Support program.

They sighted positive relationships with friends and staff at St Paul's and 80% identified themselves as having positive behaviours at school. It is concerning that we have only 54%



of students who are interested and motivated within our school community and has driven a shift for our school improvement plan to student engagement.

Social-emotional outcomes have been a focus for St Paul's in 2023-2024. The students are becoming very aware of their ability to regulate their emotions. Bullying behaviours of some students are impacting our students online, with school following up with students and parents to support intervention. Students see teachers as those help keep them safe at school with 85% saying they would report to a teacher for themselves or their friends.

Students see their faith life as living like Jesus and that their small contribution can make a big difference in the world.

### **Teacher satisfaction**

Our staff asked for greater leadership involvement in classroom teaching, feedback and learning. Our pedagogical mentor and gifted education mentor continued their work across classrooms to provide support in pedagogical practice, behaviour management and differentiation for students.

Staff are feeling overwhelmed with the preparation of the new syllabus documents in 2024. We have provided time and professional learning to support their planning and unpacking of English, with exemplar programs in Mathematics for teachers as a starting point. Our professional learning teams have been utilised to help support this planning.

Teachers have a strong learning culture with data driving intervention and success criteria supporting feedback for students improvements. Since the previous survey in 2022, teachers are becoming more confident using technology for learning with their students.

Teachers have provided feedback to the leadership for stronger emphasis on positive behaviour for learning that has clear procedures for all. This is a focus for renewal in 2025.

## Financial Statement

This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

School Financial Information for the 2024 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2024	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$4,336,500
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$1,150,671
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$1,008,689
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$9,018
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$299,398
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$6,804,276</b>

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$34,501
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$4,750,792
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$2,277,836
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$7,063,129</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