

2025

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

TOGETHER IN CHRIST



St Patrick's PS

155 Wollombi Road, CESSNOCK 2325

Principal: Dennis Nolan

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

About this report

St Patrick's PS (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (CDMN) which forms part of the broader system of schools governed by Catholic Schools NSW. 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

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School is located in Cessnock NSW and is part of the Diocese of Maitland- Newcastle. The school was founded on the traditions and strong foundations of the Sisters of St Joseph in 1887.

Our school is an integral part of the St Joseph's Parish church community of Cessnock, deeply committed to the faith development of students and staff. Together we are committed to deepening each students' knowledge of the Catholic story and teachings, modelling Christian values and providing opportunities for prayer, liturgy and service to others.

At St Patrick's we pride ourselves on our culture of inclusion. Everyone is welcome, respected and cared for. Everyone has their needs met. Everyone belongs! All teachers and support staff at St Patrick's Primary School, Cessnock embrace the gift that Catholic education offers - to be the face of Christ in all of our interactions.

Parent Body Message

It has been a positive year with many parent engagement opportunities. Activities have included Mass, liturgy and prayer, School walk-a-thon, Art show, Mother's Day and Father's Day breakfast and stalls, Grandparent's Day, Catholic Schools Week open classrooms, Book week celebrations, Christmas craft volunteering and family Christmas concert. Funds raised through our school walk-a-thon have supported the purchasing of resources for our school library.

The Canteen continues to function with the support of our canteen supervisor and parents as volunteers. Our canteen supervisor supports the coordination of our volunteers and the canteen operation. Pleasingly there was enough support to operate our canteen 3 days a week. This is a wonderful support service for our families.

Thank you to the wonderful support of our families throughout the year.

Student Body Message

At St Patrick's, student leadership is about motivating, influencing and directing people to work together to achieve goals in accordance with the school's values and beliefs. It is important for students to experience school leadership opportunities in order to learn how to build relationships, define their identity and achieve tasks effectively. Student leadership provides an opportunity to learn to identify and display effective communication and interpersonal skills. Our School Leaders take an active role in all aspects of the school

community and work with others to achieve the best possible outcomes. Our school leaders represent the school body at Diocesan and community events and are positive role models for all students with regards to behaviour and presentation.

During this year we have been able to fulfil all of our leadership duties including hosting regular weekly assemblies and helping to organise and be a part of the many school Liturgies and activities that take place throughout the year. As a Leadership Team, we were able to organise and help run the Athletics and Swimming Carnivals. We also enjoyed welcoming our new Kinder buddies in 2025 and we tried to be the best role models for them. As a Student Leadership Team, we worked closely with our Year 6 teachers to implement the values of our School Vision & Mission statement, that forms the basis of our core Christian beliefs of kindness, compassion, forgiveness, justice and respect.

School Features

In response to the perceived need of the Catholic community of Cessnock, the first Catholic school commenced in January 1887 by the Sisters of St Joseph's. St Patrick's Church at Nulkaba was used for this purpose.

A new church was built in 1893 and the Church-School was now fitted with permanent fixtures and the building converted to St Patrick's school. On 15 July 1906, a hall measuring 50ft by 20ft was moved to the High Street site and furnished as a school. It also served as a temporary Church. It was known as St Joseph's Church-School.

In 1936, a new brick Mt St Joseph's School on Bridge's Hill replaced the old hall. This served as a primary school and later as a junior secondary school for girls. There was also a Catholic school at Bellbird from 1937 to 1958.

In 1937, St Patrick's school was relocated from Nulkaba to Wollombi Road. The 1970's saw the completion of a new brick complex at St Patrick's.

In 1996, the new administration building was opened with a much larger library. The staff room was also refurbished.

In 2008, new administration, canteen and meeting facilities were opened. The pioneers of the school were the Sisters of St Joseph's. We recall with gratitude the faith and dedication of the pioneer priests, sisters, teachers and parents of the Catholic community who laboured tirelessly to establish the faith and Christian traditions we espouse and value today. 2012 saw the opening of new facilities funded by Building the Education Revolution grant. On completion of the works, the school was delivered a new school library, three classrooms, a multi-purpose room, office and storage space.

We have also had our toilet block renovated, a lift put in connecting the ground floor to the first storey and the old St Joseph's Convent that was located right next to our school was demolished freeing up a large parcel of land to become an extension of our playground. We are grateful to the Catholic Schools Office for purchasing this land for us as the extra playground space was very much needed.

In 2024 a new outdoor learning space was completed behind our Kinder rooms for our Infant classes. This space boasts a large deck, grass areas, play equipment and a sandpit. This area also serves as an amphitheater space. This space allows for outdoor learning and creative play in a safe environment.

In 2025, nine of our classrooms spaces have been renovated with new wall linings and much needed painting. These new learning spaces are fresh and inviting. A school meeting room

and staff meeting space has also been created next to our library. This has been a positive addition to St Patrick's.

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 2025: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
161	186	37	347

* 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.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2025 was 89.19%. 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
90.06	90.27	90.93	89.91	88.23	89.86	85.08

Managing Student Non-Attendance

All schools maintain an accurate register of their student's attendance. Any absences (part or full day) from school are recorded on this register and appropriate intervention strategies are implemented if required.

While parents/carers are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their child at school, school staff, as part of their duty of care, play a vital role in providing a continuum of active support including universal, targeted, and individualised strategies when supporting students with attendance concerns. Documented attendance plans may be developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern.

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

Note: The data presented reflects the most current information available at the time of reporting. Variations in data currency may occur where staff updates are pending. Differences between tables are due to variations in staff inclusion criteria; therefore, minor discrepancies in reported numbers may occur.

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2025:

Total number of staff	53
Number of full time teaching staff	16
Number of part time teaching staff	14
Number of non-teaching staff	23

Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

Teachers are either accredited as conditional, provisional or proficient as defined by the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004 (NSW). Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher is voluntary.

The following table describes the accreditation status of teachers at St Patrick's PS in 2025:

Conditional Teachers	1
Provisional Teachers	1
Proficient Teachers	27

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)

St Patrick's Primary School lives out our school Vision and Mission statement every day. Our Vision and Mission statement was carefully discerned and created by our staff to reflect our Josephite Charism and shared beliefs.

The Vision of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Cessnock is with heads, hearts and hands, St Patrick's walks in harmony with Jesus Christ.

Based on the Josephite tradition, our mission is to foster a love of learning and a sense of community based on the values of kindness, compassion, forgiveness, justice and respect. All staff and students know and understand what this means and what it looks like at school every day. Our Vision and Mission was formally launched to our wider community and importantly has the endorsement and support of our Parish Priests.

Students explore the Josephite Charism and each value of our mission through explicitly taught lessons and practical activities. Students proclaim our Vision and Mission each week at school assemblies and are acknowledged through awards based these values.

We value our strong Catholic identity here at Cessnock and the partnerships we have with our local parish and wider community. Our staff and students are proud of our culture which is evidenced by the way they witness their faith each day.

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 embeds capabilities and priorities within curriculum content points in all KLAs. These include literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, critical and creative thinking, ethical understanding, intercultural understanding, and personal and social capability.

Religious Education is an integral part of learning and our school policy and implementation reflects the Diocesan K-12 syllabus. Religious Education is given priority in programming and teaching.

Our teachers have a shared vision for curriculum practice, providing rich opportunities for all students to develop a deep understanding of concepts and big ideas within learning areas. The continued integration of the Early Years Learning Framework through our participation in the Successful Foundations Action Research project is an essential part of our curriculum development, with infants' staff increasing their repertoire of strategies and pedagogical approaches, which include purposefully framed provocations connected to syllabus content. The school's technology base and ICT teaching programs are further developed with the Bring Your Own Device program for students in Years 5 and 6. Further integration of technology, using laptops and iPads from Kindergarten to Year 4, similarly develops students' computer literacy.

The role of Gifted Education Mentor supports students identified as gifted in an area of learning. These students participate in enriched classroom experiences, with consideration given to enrolment in the diocesan established Virtual Academy. Staff develop well-planned and articulated programs utilising a variety of pedagogical approaches appropriate to student needs, including differentiated and tiered tasks as well as project-based learning.

Children who need assistance in an area of learning are identified by both norm-referenced tests and teacher-constructed assessments. Selected students are given assistance on an individual and/or small group basis within the cohort. Students with special needs are supported, both in classrooms and on the playground, and provided with various opportunities to develop their potential.

Co-curricular events, linked to and enhancing the curriculum, include overnight excursions to Canberra and The Great Aussie Bush Camp; participation in inter-school public speaking, debating initiatives, spelling bee and maths bee and opportunities to represent the school in creative arts pursuits such as eisteddfods and ASPIRE. Students also engage in sporting pursuits that include gala days, athletics, cross-country, running and swimming. Families can avail themselves to before and after-school care with transport to and from community based services being available.

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 Patrick's PS for 2025 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2025		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	57%	54%
	Reading	69%	66%
	Writing	87%	76%
	Spelling	62%	62%
	Numeracy	60%	64%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2025		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	61%	63%
	Reading	80%	73%
	Writing	80%	65%
	Spelling	78%	69%
	Numeracy	63%	69%

Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

Pastoral Care Policy

The School's approach to pastoral care and wellbeing is guided by the [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#).

This policy provides a framework for the development and implementation of policies, programs, resources, and practices at all school levels. Its purpose is to support and enhance the wellbeing of students and all members of the school community, fostering a climate of care within a Catholic educational context.

The School is committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and academically rigorous environment. A strong emphasis is placed on nurturing and maintaining positive, respectful relationships among staff, students, and parents, with the wellbeing of all at the forefront.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's behaviour management and student discipline procedures align with the Catholic School's [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#) and to the [Schools Behaviour Management Policy](#). These policies uphold the dignity and responsibility of each individual, promote positive student behaviour, and ensure respect for the rights of all students and staff. Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited at the School. The School does not permit or condone the use of corporal punishment by any School personnel or non-School individuals, including parents, as a means of discipline in the School. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the School's website.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The School implements the Catholic Schools [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) which is adopted by all schools within the Diocese. This policy provides a framework for school communities to collaboratively prevent and address bullying, fostering respectful relationships and responding to individual needs with sensitivity and care. The Catholic Schools Leadership team 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 on the Catholic Schools Maitland-Newcastle website.

Complaints Handling Policy

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) is implemented by the School and all schools in the diocese. This policy acknowledges that misunderstandings and differences of opinion may arise and provides a structured process for resolving such matters respectfully and constructively. By addressing concerns within a framework of dignity, respect and truth, the policy reflects the values of the Catholic faith and offers opportunities to model the love of Christ in contemporary contexts. The Catholic Schools Leadership team monitors the implementation of this policy in our schools.

The full text of the [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or on the Catholic Schools Maitland-Newcastle 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

During 2025 the overall feedback from the school community was one of gratitude. Many parents/carers at interview time and other times expressed to staff how thankful they were for the care and consideration that had been given to their child throughout 2025. The school community was happy at the various opportunities that were provided for their children to learn and grow, as well as the social gatherings that were orchestrated to build a sense of community. Key points to note are:

- Student wellbeing at school is viewed as important by parents.
- Parents understand student wellbeing and its impact on learning and development.
- The school environment is welcoming, inclusive and respectful for students.
- Parents acknowledge that their child/ children feel safe at school.

We have appreciated both the positive affirmation from our Parent Community as well as any constructive feedback that has been offered on occasions.

Student satisfaction

We love our school! The teachers are very nice and supportive, and everyone is friendly, kind, and welcoming. Everybody is compassionate so nobody is left out. There are many fun things to do at St Patrick's, especially at lunch times where we have 9 square, play equipment, sporting fields, lunch club and even lego club. We are all active citizens of the school and the community. All students have a voice at St Patrick's when it comes to issues concerning student wellbeing, social justice, and the environment. This year we continued our garden projects and recycling our plastic bottles at return and earn to help the environment and buy plants for our gardens. Our school provides lots of opportunities for us to learn. This year, we loved participating in sports across the school, as well as lots of excursions and incursions. We have had opportunities to be part of different groups within the school, such as the choir, leadership teams, sporting teams, debating, public speaking, spelling bee, mathematics bee and culture club. We had a fun year playing with our friends

and participating in activities, such as colouring in competitions, school excursions and camps!

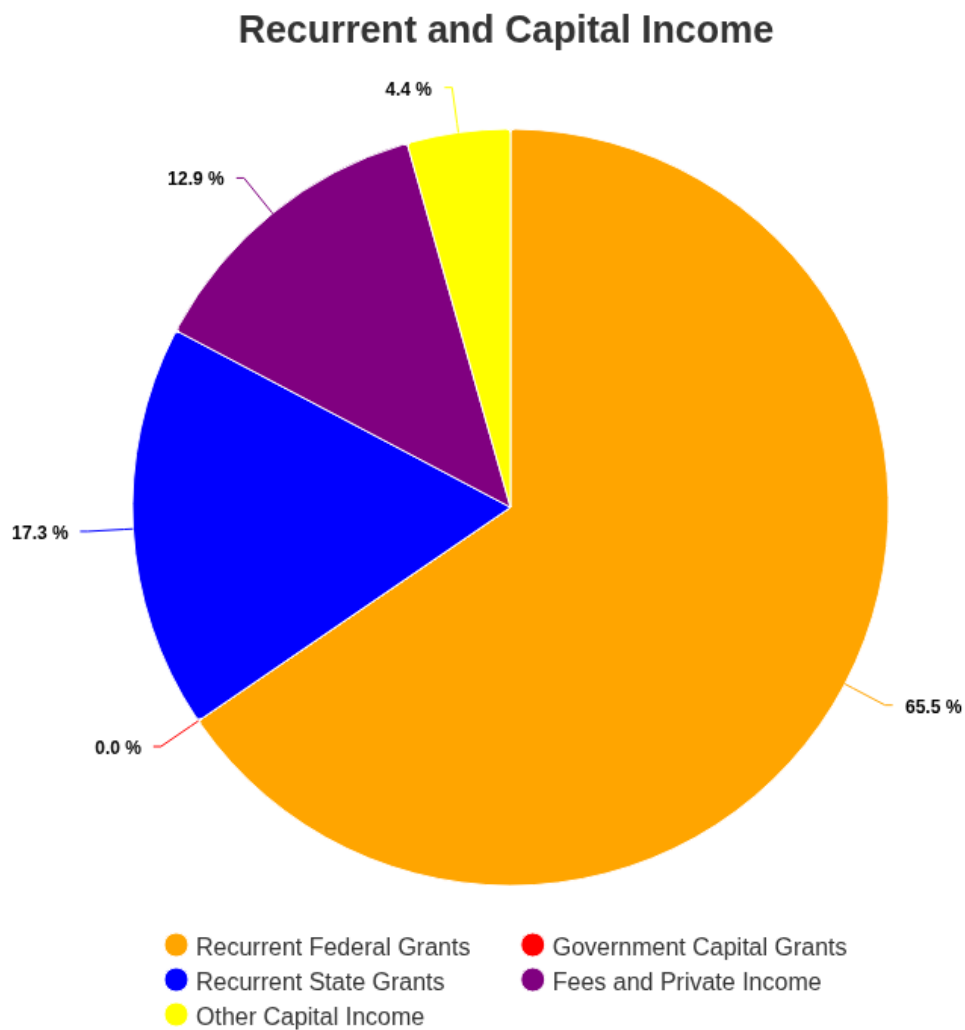
Teacher satisfaction

Teaching at St Patrick's is a happy and vibrant environment. All staff work together to benefit each student in our school. Our school is a highly supportive environment to ensure each teacher not only understands their role, but to feel a sense of community through our families and parish. Many teachers participate willingly in numerous community, cultural and sporting events. The meaning of being in a Catholic school is really epitomised here at St Patrick's and we pride ourselves on this each year. St Patrick's is a true community.

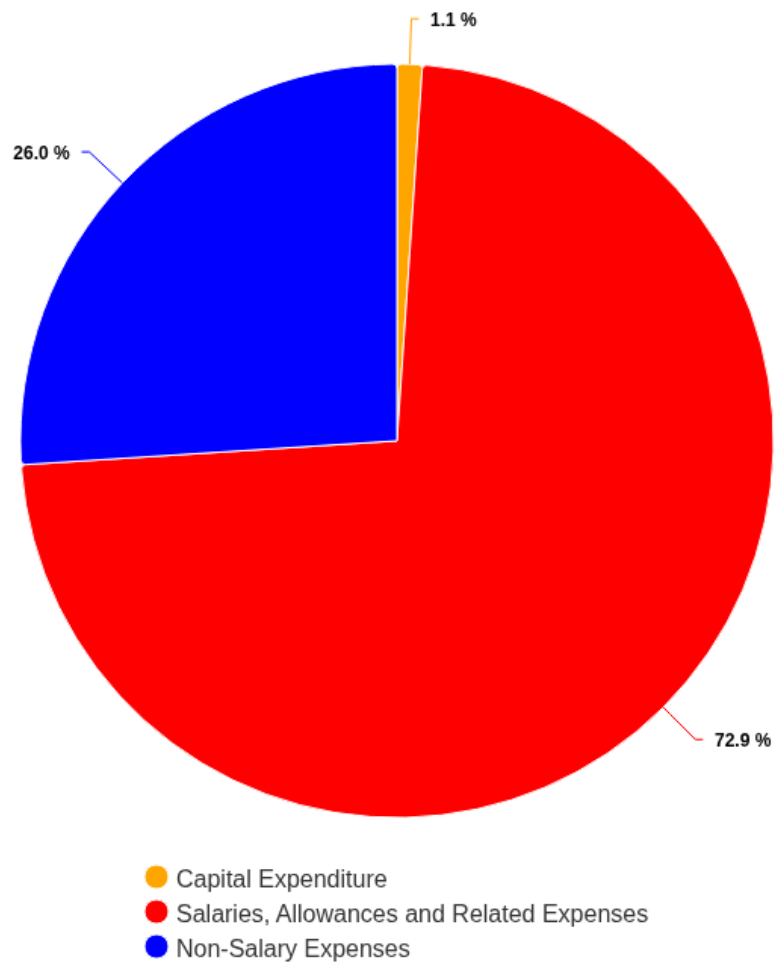
Financial Statement

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 2025 year is detailed below:



Recurrent and Capital Expenditure



END OF 2025 REPORT