

2022



About this report

St >cgYd\lg' Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO), Maitland-Newcastle. The CSO as the 'approved authority' for the diocesan registration system formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act (1990), is responsible for monitoring the compliance of member schools in the manner that has been approved by the Minister of Education. The Annual School Report (the 'Report'), provides parents and the wider community with

Message from key groups in our community

Principal's Message

It is with great pride that I present the 2022 Annual School Report, as Principal. Our school is St Joseph's Primary School, a small, rural school situated in the Upper Hunter back block of Merriwa. Demographically, we are the furthest school from the Diocesan offices, but our students are never left behind.

Our mission is to provide an environment of Catholic faith where the uniqueness of each child is nurtured and valued; where students are empowered and challenged to become confident learners with optimism and hope for the future.

Students this year have achieved academically, with placings in the Diocesan Public Speaking, as well as representing the school in the Regional Spelling and 'A' Writing Bee and the Regional Debating Competition. This year saw our first student working within

Throughout the year, P&F volunteers in conjunction with the staff of the School have facilitated the A ch Yfŷg and : U h Yfŷg Day 66E ŷgž the school canteen and much needed refrigerator upgrade, running the uniform shop, supporting the school sporting events and contributing towards technology upgrades in Wŷggfcca g"

We have tried to minimise the time impacts to busy schedules throughout the year, and the time and effort in supporting the running of our annual Campdraft and Fete, cleaning of the Aberdeen Bus, and supporting daily activities of the School are not only acknowledged, but appreciated. '5' strategy to develop ownership of events to

Excursion opportunities included Kindergarten to Year 4 going to the Hunter Valley Zoo.

School Features

History of the school

St >cgYd\Íg Primary School was founded in 1883 by the St 5bbYÍg Catholic Parish Merriwa. In 1885 the Sisters of St Joseph took up residence in Merriwa and assumed responsibility for the education of the children at the school. They were the first Foundation formed from Lochinvar, which had come into existence only two years earlier in 1883. The Sisters of St Joseph continued a teaching presence at the school until the early 1990s.

In 1886, the total enrolment was 77 - 39 girls and 38 boys. On 25th November, 1928, Bishop Dwyer blessed the new school in Marquet Street. In 1954, Bishop Toohey blessed the new >cgYd\Íg classroom and in 1961, blessed the new school building of three classrooms. Secondary classes operated at St >cgYd\Íg Merriwa from the early %) \$Íg to 1968. In 2008 the Honourable Joel Fitzgibbon opened and Fr Des Harrigan blessed the new Kindergarten classroom giving the school a total of four classrooms.

In 2016 the school gained a new library which boasts state of the art facilities. In 2019 the total refurbishment of the student toilet blocks was completed. In 2020, the belltower was lovingly restored after significant damage. In 2021, the new playground shelter was constructed, giving students a safe place to play in all conditions.

For over 130 years, St >cgYd\Íg Catholic School has provided quality education to the children of the Merriwa district.

Location/Drawing Area

St >cgYd\Íg School is located in the rural township of Merriwa in the New South Wales Upper Hunter Shire Council area. It is the most western school in the Maitlau.24 439.19 TmTJETi1555 0 00.75 20

Student Profile

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Years K Ë 6. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2022: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
21	27	0	48

* 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:

- ï Set direction for school procedures and practices for enrolling students into Catholic primary and secondary schools within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.
- ï Establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices.
- ï 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 2022 was 89.13%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown

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 Regional Directors of Catholic Schools Office (CSO) or designated CSO officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is identified.

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2022:

Total number of staff	15
Number of full time teaching staff	4
Number of part time teaching staff	4
Number of non-teaching staff	7

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 101 teachers
- ; Provisional 50 teachers
- ; Proficient 1862 teachers
- ; 1 Highly Accomplished teacher
- ; 1 Lead teacher

Additionally, there are approximately 4 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.

Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO). The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes.

Summary of professional learning at this school

Staff at St Joseph's Primary School Merriwa continued to engage in relevant and meaningful Professional Learning, which built upon and aligned closely with the School's Improvement Plan for 2022.

Professional Learning Highlights

- Lenten Program held weekly over Lent for a period of 6 weeks, which nurtured staff
- Working closely with a phonics specialist Katie Edwards from the TAP program to create a scope and sequence and resources to implement the new

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Catholic Identity and Mission

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle participate, under the

The learning intentions were:

A positive relationship between the school and Parish continues to be a high priority at St >cgYd\lg'school. During Catholic Schools Week students and teachers prepared displays for the main street to highlight the Catholic identity of the school. A school parish dinner is also held during this week. 'H\Y' fortnightly school newsletter was placed in the church and emailed to parents and friends. Also social media is used to build awareness of significant religious events and feast days. The school supported the local St Vincent de Paul Society through its appeals. The Parish Priest maintains a good relationship with the Principal, REC and others.

The REC works closely with the parish priest and the children preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation.

Christian Discipleship

Prayer and reflection begin all meetings, gatherings and the parent newsletter. In each prayer there is a call to action. At the end of the school year, Year 6 students participated in a retreat. During this retreat, the Year 6 students took time to reflect on their years at school and what direction they see themselves and their friends going and what special gifts they are to themselves and others. Our weekly liturgy provides opportunities for students, staff and parents to reflect on the message of the Gospel. A relevant hymn/song is also used at times to help staff and students fully understand the Gospel message of the week.

Throughout the teaching of Religion, students are given the opportunity to reflect and participate in meditations which allows for the formation and development of their own spirituality. Each classroom and the staffroom have a sacred space designed and refreshed regularly.

Religion lessons at St >cgYd\lg follow the curriculum set by the A UjhUbXÊ Newcastle Diocese.

All class teachers are responsible for the teaching of Religious Education in their classes and are formally accredited to teach Religious Education or are in the process of satisfying the academic requirements needed for accreditation. Each structured lesson develops the knowledge and understandings of Catholic faith. Class and school liturgical, sacramental and prayer celebrations form an important aspect of the Religious Education curriculum.

Religious literacy is a priority in the classroom with added resources and support given to teachers and students particularly a focus of Religious Literacy vocabulary- which directly link stucationup with the units

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.

The Curriculum is structured around the outcomes and content for each learning area and general capabilities for learning across the curriculum including literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, personal and social competence and intercultural understanding.

Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO). The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student learning.

Summary of professional learning at this school

Staff development was mainly focused in delivering a whole school phonics and spelling scope and sequence, plus reading which was developed by the school's Pedagogical Mentor along with the Literacy and Numeracy Hub.

The main aspect of this approach was to build teacher capacity in the areas of spelling, writing and reading.

Teachers completed extensive professional learning in the writing and reading progressions, phonemic awareness, teaching phonics (K-2) and spelling (3-6) working with teachers on improving the consistency of the teaching of all aspects plus, consistent teacher judgement in the classroom.

In addition to this, scope and sequences were reviewed and adjusted to meet the requirements of NESA as well as to better align with the newer teacher philosophy in the school. This approach required teachers to utilise collaboration time and significant funds were used to release teachers to do this work. The benefits of this work should be seen in the coming years with a more consistent approach to the teaching of phonics, reading, and spelling, all of which are encompassed in the School Improvement Plan and Strategic Planning of St George's.

Positive Behaviour For Learning (PB4L) continues to be a focus at St Joseph's This continued awareness and approach to the behavioural outcomes for students has seen continued good behaviour at school, m.n48.67 Tf0.75 0 0 0.75 116.11 745.04 Tm[BehaTf0.75 0 0 0.Wnlm]

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). The purpose of this test is to provide information to parents and teachers about the achievements of students in aspects of Literacy and Numeracy. This test provides a measure of the general performance against established standards and against other students in Australia. Each year the results are analysed by the school to inform teaching with a view to improving student performance.

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum acceptable standards for literacy, numeracy, reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling at particular ages. These are referred to as national minimum standards. Student performance in NAPLAN in our school is compared to these standards.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2022		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	60%	52%	20%	12%
	Reading	60%	54%	0%	11%
	Writing	40%	50%	0%	7%
	Spelling	60%	48%	20%	15%
	Numeracy	60%	34%	0%	15%
NAPLAN RESULTS 2022		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	20%	31%	40%	14%
	Reading	40%	39%	40%	11%
	Writing	0%	25%	50%	18%
	Spelling	40%	37%	60%	14%
	Numeracy	20%	25%	40%	16%

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

Complaints Handling Policy

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has established a [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) which is

In 2022, our Pastoral Care Worker funding continued. Our PCW worked diligently to provide services such as a Science Club, Gardening Club, breakfast club and provided meaningful and local support for students and families where bYVggUfm'

School Improvement

The School implements the system's review cycle of improvement which outlines the processes and benchmarks for creating the culture and practice of continuous improvement with students as the focus. Strategic Improvement Plans are future focused documents that map the School's directions, aimed specifically at improving educational and wellbeing outcomes for all students through the following areas:

- i Catholic Culture and Mission
- i Learning

Each year, the School develops a Strategic Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. A copy of the school's Strategic Improvement Plan may be obtained from the School administrative office.

Key Improvements Achieved

Catholic Formation and Mission

Staff completed the Lenten program with members of the St Anne's Parish. Our Parish Priest and parishioners commented on the wonderful and frank nature of the conversation. The Acting REC completed qualifications in Religious Education through ACU.

Learning and Teaching

Staff continued success in using Learning Intentions and Success Criteria in Key Learning Area of Reading and Writing and developed Learning Intentions and Success Criteria across other KLAs.

Staff have continued to use the Acadience reading assessment which helps identify children with specific reading skills to target through instructional support.

Staff have been engaged in the Lwith

2. "Who can you go to for help?"
3. "Who can you improve?"
4. "Who are you going?"
5. "Who do you know?"

Leadership

The Executive Team (REC and Principal), attended Executive Leadership training courses, provided by the Catholic Schools Office and run externally, during 2022.

Wellbeing and Partnerships

Community partnership continued to be an important part of the school, through creating Christmas cards for the sick and elderly at St. Vincent's Place and Merriwa Multipurpose Centre and also singing when allowed. Our partnership with the local Newsagency, who sponsor our "Spirit of St Joseph" award, was continued.

Wellbeing is an important aspect and focus at St. Vincent's with a continued focus on the Wellbeing of both students and staff. Each term we have a designated Wellbeing week where the focus is on building relationships, enjoying each other's company, and taking time out to look after ourselves.

The school has a behaviour matrix to address all behaviours, celebrating positive behaviour is a focus with Gotchas being given out for students who demonstrate: right

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- i To refine and enhance our daily and weekly focus points in the teaching of phonics and spelling.
- i To diminish cognitive load, create repetitive and sustainable practices and match them to resources.

Leadership

- i To continue to enhance the quality of the Principal and REC and their leadership capacity.
- i Continuation of Mentoring and Observation of teachers throughout the school, including Instructional Walks and Talks, to enhance leadership capacity and build teacher capacity.

Wellbeing and Partnerships

- i Continue to enhance, review, and implement the PB4L program throughout St Joseph's.
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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 annually. This data is shared with the school community and contributes to the priorities for future planning.

Parent satisfaction

According to the Tell Them From Me Survey for Parents in 2022:

- Parents felt very welcomed in the school, could easily speak with their child's teachers and the Principal about any matters.
- They were well informed and were given appropriate and immediate feedback about their child or school events.
- Parents believed the school supports positive behaviour and students are cle. su4rut

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- i Staff felt they have clear expectations for classroom behaviour
- i Teachers wish to continue to improve their skills in engaging with feedback at the school.
- i All teachers felt that leadership was strong and effective, as well as their belief that the school was highly regarded in the local Merriwa community.



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