

2022

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

Together in Christ



St James' Primary School
MUSWELLBROOK

St James Primary School

Skellatar Stock Route, MUSWELLBROOK 2333

Principal: Aaron Moon

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

About this report

St James 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 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

2022 was a year of significant growth for our school community. We celebrated academic success with all students and supported them on their learning journeys as well as continuing to be involved in a variety of sporting activities. The garden project remained vibrant and developed in size, including the acquisition of a boat. We celebrated Mother's Day, Father's Day, Holy Week, Easter, ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day, the Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, NAIDOC Week and Harmony Day. We had Colour Fun Day, Stage 3 had a fabulous time on Camp - their first in a while.

Our school went from strength to strength with all students and staff deepening our understanding and respect for the traditional owners of this land. We maintained our commitment and focus on Information Technology and we went Facebook live at the beginning of the year. Our Mini-Vinnies group continued their wonderful work to support those who are less fortunate than we are. Our parents and parish community maintained their confidence and trust in the staff of this tremendous school.

A highlight of the year was our school being awarded the 2021 Diocesan Emmaus Award for Community.

Parent Body Message

During 2022 the parents and friends of St James' Muswellbrook were included in the life of the school in many ways including: the opening and closing Masses for the year, Liturgies, Catholic Schools Week Open Classrooms, Book Week, Cross Country and the Athletics and Swimming Carnivals. This inclusion in the creation of community for our children is one of the many blessings of being associated with SJM! The Parents and Friends Association was able to host many friend-raisers/fundraisers for our school community throughout the year.

Student Body Message

In 2022 we had lots of different things happen. We were happy to get back to school when we were allowed to. After that we had normal classes and got to be buddies to our Kinder friends and take on responsibility. Our school captains did a great job leading our assemblies.

Our excursion to The Great Aussie Bush Camp was definitely a highlight! We would like to thank the teachers for all the great times we had at St James' and we are all looking forward to the high school in 2023.

School Features

St James' School is a Catholic Parish school within the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. The school is situated on the western fringe of the town, on land first settled by the Wanaruah people.

The school began its existence as a Catholic denominational school in the middle of a developing township in 1862. When government funding was withdrawn in 1883, the Sisters of Mercy took over responsibility for the school. This school continued to provide a valuable Catholic education to the people of the area, until demand for places, brought on by an expansion in mining and power industries, resulted in the need for the construction of a larger school. In 1983, 100 years after the arrival of the Sisters of Mercy, the present Primary School of 14 classrooms, library and other amenities was opened. The Sisters of Mercy continued their mission in St. James' School until 1972.

The Sisters of St. Joseph continued the important task of providing a Catholic education from 1973 until 1991 when the first lay principal was appointed.

St James' School is proud of its dual heritage and encourages students and their families to incorporate the values and ideals of the charisms into daily life.

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 2022: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
117	177	22	294

* 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 2022 was 86.27%. 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
87.07	85.58	88.08	85.75	86.38	83.96	87.04

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 an issue and for whom the School's strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2022:

Total number of staff	30
Number of full time teaching staff	16
Number of part time teaching staff	4
Number of non-teaching staff	10

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

There were three main focuses for Professional Learning this year, including our continued work with Lyn Sharratt. The executive worked with Lyn Sharratt again over two days and then shared this information with staff in another Pupil Free Day. The focus of this was the assessment waterfall.

Our spirituality day was again based on the Pope's encyclical 'Laudato Si', which was a focus for the school staff.

Catholic Identity and Mission

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

At the heart of everything there is always Jesus Christ.

Catholic schools educate:

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

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

The school Mission and Vision Statements reflect our role as a community of witnesses to the Catholic faith. We believe that St James' School community excels in education through living and learning in Christ. We are inspired by the Gospel to be successful learners and informed, engaged global citizens.

St Joseph's Muswellbrook participates in the life of our Parish. We also have close links with the Parish Sacramental team. This has been affected by COVID restrictions again in 2022. The Sacramental program is parish based and includes the School Religious Education Coordinator and the Priest. The Sacramental program is supported by the school curriculum and the parish team is in close communication with the class teachers of the students involved.

Our School is proud to be part of a wider Diocesan community. As such, we attend important Diocesan events. We also support Regional initiatives, including the Regional Teachers Mass and Dinner.

We have implemented the Visible Wellbeing Program with support from the Where There's a Will Foundation.

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, information and communication technology, critical and creative thinking, ethical behaviour, personal and social competence and intercultural understanding.

St James' Catholic Primary School promotes equity and excellence.

We:

- Provide challenging and stimulating learning experiences and opportunities that enable all students to explore and build on their talents and abilities.
- Provide students with opportunities to experience success through differentiated educational teaching and learning activities.
- Promote knowledge and understanding of Indigenous culture together with global cultures and religions.
- Encourage students to take an active role in their learning through personal goal setting and self-evaluation.
- Teach the essential skills in Literacy and Numeracy in order to foster informed communication and collaboration.
- Employ best practice in Pedagogy and provide adequate resources to enable creative and productive use of technology to assist in communication and problem solving.
- Develop personal values and attributes so as to have a sense of self-worth and maintain healthy satisfying lives.
- Teach and model Gospel values to maintain healthy relationships and accept responsibilities for their own action.

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. The test provides a measure of the student's 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%	9%	12%
	Reading	50%	54%	8%	11%
	Writing	56%	50%	4%	7%
	Spelling	49%	48%	6%	15%
	Numeracy	34%	34%	9%	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	29%	31%	11%	14%
	Reading	37%	39%	6%	11%
	Writing	16%	25%	28%	18%
	Spelling	29%	37%	26%	14%
	Numeracy	23%	25%	13%	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 high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents, and the wellbeing of all.

There were changes to the policy in 2022.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned the CSO [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#) and to the [Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion Procedure](#). 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.

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

At St James', Positive Education is at the centre of our Living and Learning with Jesus at the Heart of all we do.

Again, we have funded a Leader of Positive Education at SJM. This leader was instrumental in driving Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Our Leader of Positive Education is teaching Wellbeing as part of the PDHPE syllabus each fortnight to classes through RFF. This is a significant shift in how we teach Wellbeing to our students.

SJM liaised with the 'Where There's A Will' Foundation to promote positive health and mental well being in our communities.

We have a major focus on Character strengths; the identification of them and also assisting students to unlock their strengths.

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:

- Catholic Culture and Mission
- 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

We have successfully attained these goals from our 2022 School Improvement Plan:

- To nurture sacramental Catholic School communities which are joyful expressions of Christ's love, witnessed as faith in action.
- To ensure every student is known as a person and learner and demonstrates growth in their learning every year.
- To build the capacity of every teacher, every leader and every school through collaborative professionalism and relevant, contemporary professional learning.
- To nurture a culture of learning that is adaptive, innovative and continuously improving.

Our School also undertook our School External Review in 2022. Affirmations included:

- The Catholic Culture of the school and the school's authentically Catholic nature and engagement in mission and service.
- The practices that have been adopted that are associated with the diocesan Leading Learning Collaborative (LLC).
- The school's use of data to inform the writing focus and the focus on wellbeing.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

From our External Review we will do the following:

- Embed the Leading Learning Collaborative Framework.

- Co-construct and implement a new Staff Formation Framework 2023-2025 and Student Formation Framework 2023-2025 that will articulate and outline an intentional program of formation experiences that include our unique culture, identity and charisms.
- Help each learner to understand where, when and how they work best, and be empowered to participate in decision-making about their learning and wellbeing.
- Build the capacity of educators to ensure that all students are known, their strengths are recognised and accommodated, diversity is celebrated, and each learner demonstrates growth.
- Equip learners with the analytical, cognitive, digital, and social competencies that enables them to fully engage with and contribute to our changing world.
- Build a cohesive culture that is inclusive of all students, with transparent academic and wellbeing structures that support and inspire their resilience and self-awareness.

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

In 2020 the Diocese implemented the 'Tell Them From Me - Partners in Learning' survey for all Diocesan schools. The 'Partners in Learning' Parent Survey is based on a comprehensive questionnaire covering several aspects of parents' perceptions of their children's experiences at home and school.

The survey includes seven separate measures, which were scored on a ten-point scale. The scores for the Likert-format questions (i.e., strongly agree to strongly disagree) have been converted to a 10-point scale, then averaged and reported by question and by topic. A score of 0 indicates strong disagreement; 10 indicates strong agreement;

Two Way Communication with Parents

Parents feel welcome - 7.8 (Region 7.1)

Parents are informed - 6.8 (Region 6.3)

Parents Support Learning at Home - 7.2 (Region - 6.6)

School Supports Learning - 7.6 (Region 7.0)

School Supports Positive Behaviour - 7.9 (Region 7.3)

Safety at School - 8.1 (Region 7.6)

Inclusive School - 7.6 (Region 6.6)

Student satisfaction

Students enjoy their school at St James' Muswellbrook. This is a direct result of their expert teachers and the balanced curriculum that is offered at St James' Muswellbrook. There is a careful mix of academic, sporting and other activities on offer at the school. We cater for the needs of all.

Teacher satisfaction

In 2021 the Diocese implemented the 'Tell Them From Me - Focus on Learning' teacher survey for all Diocesan schools. The 'Focus on Learning' teacher Survey is a self-evaluation tool for teachers and schools which is based on two complementary research paradigms.

Eight Drivers of Student Learning

Leadership - 7.2 (Region 7.0)

Collaboration - 8.2 (Region 7.7)

Learning Culture - 8.4 (Region 8.0)

Data Informs Practice - 8.9 (Region 8.0)

Teaching Strategies 8.2 (Region 8.0)

Technology - 6.3 (Region 6.8)

Inclusive School - 9.0 (Region 8.4)

Parent Involvement - 7.9 (Region 6.8)

Four Dimensions of Classroom and School Practices

Challenging & Visible Goals - 8.0 (Region 7.6)

Planned Learning Opportunities 8.2 (Region 7.7)

Quality Feedback - 7.6 (Region 7.3)

Overcoming Obstacles to Learning - 8.2 (Region 7.8)

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 2022 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2022	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$3,125,343
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$943,958
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$682,853
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$241,353
Total Income	\$4,993,507

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2022	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$125,476
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$3,229,766
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,585,580
Total Expenditure	\$4,940,822

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 2022 REPORT