

# 2023

## ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

*Together in Christ*



### St Patrick's Primary School

213 Northcote Avenue, SWANSEA 2281

Principal: Miss Lucy Harvey

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

## About this report

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St Patrick's Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO), Maitland-Newcastle. The Annual School Report (the 'Report'), provides parents and the wider community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. Additionally, the Report complements and is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

Detailed information about the School's improvement journey is documented in the Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP) which is developed, implemented and evaluated in consultation with key stakeholders. Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can be also be obtained from the My School website.

## Message from key groups in our community

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### Principal's Message

St Patrick's Annual School report reflects a snapshot of our school in 2023. We are a proud Catholic school built on Awabakal land. Our school is steeped in tradition and shared beliefs. Founded by the Sisters of St Joseph's, we take great pride in our Josephite heritage. We are committed to creating and fostering a caring community where families, teachers and students work together in mutual support and respect. It is this community aspect of the faith we share that sets the tone of our Catholic school.

Our staff are dedicated, hard-working and professional. We all strive to provide the best environment for our students to grow in all facets of life. Our aim is to encourage lifelong learning and wellbeing, developing in our students, the skills needed to be active, responsible and flourishing citizens of the future.

St Patrick's is a community with a culture of continuous improvement. Our teaching staff demonstrate a deep understanding of how students learn. Our classrooms are inviting, and active learning is evident. Our children are engaged and encouraged to express themselves and share their skills, passions and knowledge with one another. We strive to create critical and creative thinkers.

Our focus in 2023 was to further build connections and relationships with and among our parent body. Throughout the year, we provided numerous opportunities for our families to connect through a variety of school events. Such events included Father's Day, Mother's Day, Grandparent's Day and Book Week activities, Colour Run and Christmas Concert. Two big highlights for our school community were hosting the Triple M Breakfast Show with Tanya and Steve and opening our school up for a Spring Fair. We look forward to continuing the strong relationships present at St Patrick's, knowing that together we are living our mission, vision and values.

### Parent Body Message

Being a member of the St Patrick's community this year has been both rewarding & joyous with the exciting new formation of an enthusiastic P&F committee initiating or partnering in events and fundraisers both at home and at school. The relationship between St Patrick's and families of the school has gone from strength to strength in 2023 and this year has seen a handful of new events added to the school calendar including an Easter Hat Parade & Egg Raffle, Pie Drive and our Spring Fair all of which have raised an impressive amount of money which will be contributed towards new items for the school.

The school itself has a variety of avenues in which it communicates with parents regarding the whole school or individual classes and students, which shows their understanding towards the importance of being flexible yet also personal to the different dynamics of the families within the school. It continues to be consistent and organised with their information and always offers involvement or feedback to be received.

### **Student Body Message**

Throughout 2023, we have been focusing on student wellbeing. We have been given lots of opportunities to grow in confidence and be our best selves. Our school has implemented programs such as Smiling Mind, wellbeing lessons, and regular wellbeing surveys to make sure that the students of St Patricks have a growth mindset for learning. Our school believes in the importance of student voice and through leadership roles we are able to contribute to our school community.

We deeply appreciate all the events that the staff provide for us. This year we have had so much fun on excursions, through sporting events and in our annual colour run. St Patrick's is a great place to grow and learn.

## School Features

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St Patrick's is a Catholic co-educational Kindergarten to Year 6 systemic school in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. It is one of three schools within the Parish of Jesus the Good Shepherd, East Lake Macquarie. Our other parish schools are St Francis Xavier's Belmont and St Pius X Windale. Most of the school's students transition to high school at St Mary's Catholic College, Gateshead.

The Sisters of St Joseph opened St Patrick's Primary School, Swansea, on Tuesday 29 January 1952, with 30 students in attendance on the site in Wood Street where McDonalds now stands. The founding principal was Sister Virgilius Perkins. In 1971, the school was rebuilt on the original site at McDonalds. In 1977-78, the school was relocated to its present site on the shore of Black Ned's Bay. The church, classrooms and cottages were transported on large trucks from the original site. Sr Ellen Shanahan was the principal at the time of this move. It was Sr Ellen who developed our present school logo and school motto, "Grow in Hope". In 2006, the school was demolished to make way for the buildings we currently occupy. Bishop Michael Malone blessed and officially opened the new school on 23 February 2007. The words of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop have a powerful resonance for us at St Patrick's:

"Gratitude is the memory of the heart ... Be full of hope in God who has been good to us all."

Indeed, we owe a great debt of gratitude to the Sisters of St Joseph and the early parishioners of Swansea, who saw a need for a Catholic school and allowed it to grow. The Gospel message calls us to "Grow in Hope". With a rich tradition of Josephite education, the future of our students is filled with hope.

During 2022, the parent community voted to re-establish the P&F and 2023 has seen a very proactive parental involvement in the life of St Patrick's. We are blessed to have parents who actively volunteer to run the canteen and uniform shop as well as organise events for the school community. Our parents and grandparents are happy to help out with reading groups and sporting activities and to work collaboratively with the staff to achieve the best outcomes for the students.

The students have many opportunities to represent in a variety of academic and sporting endeavours. In 2023, our students competed in the Regional Catholic Schools Public Speaking competition with two students successfully competing at the Diocesan Public Speaking. The students represented the school at Regional, Diocesan and Polding levels in a diverse range of sports including swimming, athletics, cross country, netball, soccer, cricket, touch football, softball, hockey and tennis. Four students proudly represented at Polding level, for the Junior Girls Relay team in athletics, progressing to the NSW PSSA state

athletics championships. The students also had the opportunity to participate in gala days for soccer, League tag, AFL and a team competed at the NSW Netball Schools Cup.

The school's excursion program is closely aligned with the curriculum outcomes for each class. In 2023, individual classes undertook day trips, including a visit to the Ray and Shark Centre, Murrook Cultural Centre, Buhtabah Cultural Centre, the Purple Pear Farm to look at sustainable farming, a day immersion at Tocal Homestead, and an on-track experience at the V8 Supercars. The Years 5 and 6 students spent three days exploring our nation's capital with a trip to Canberra. In addition, students participated in a 10-week gymnastics program in Term 1 and numerous Sporting in Schools programs throughout the year. As part of our wellbeing focus, students were given the opportunity to participate in guitar and ukulele lessons, drawing, drama, singing, painting clubs, STEM and Lego club.

Students in our primary classes were provided with the opportunity to participate in a variety of ICAS Competitions, the Premier's Reading Challenge and 200 Nights of Reading.

This year we continued to enhance the street presence of the school with new signage. Further landscaping and the painting of a mural depicting the history of our school, saw St Patrick's refreshed, making a proud statement as a Catholic school in the local area.

# 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 2023: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
72	53	8	125

\* 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 2023 was 89.12%. 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
87.42	88.34	90.65	91.36	89.75	88.32	87.99

## 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 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

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## Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2023:

Total number of staff	20
Number of full time teaching staff	7
Number of part time teaching staff	7
Number of non-teaching staff	6

### 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 107 teachers
- Provisional 69 teachers
- Proficient 1887 teachers
- 4 Highly Accomplished teacher
- 1 Lead teacher

Additionally, there are approximately 10 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

Professional learning during staff meetings and PLTs was grounded largely in the research of Dr Lyn Sharratt ('Clarity: What Matters Most in Learning, Teaching and Leading'). The focus was on the 14 parameters which underpin our Diocesan wide framework, Leading Learning Collaborative, and our school improvement agenda on improving pedagogy in Numeracy.

Professional Learning was undertaken to further develop staff knowledge and skills in embedding Wellbeing practices to support learning and behaviour. This included an Introduction to Neuroscience and Growth Mindset facilitated by our Wellbeing Support Teacher. All teaching staff also completed a 90-minute course in Mindfulness Foundations through Smiling Mind. Additionally, a two-hour twilight session was run for all staff facilitated by the CSO Education Officer for Behaviour Support, to upskill staff in Positive Behaviours for Learning principles and practices. Staff also attended a cyber-safety seminar run by ThinkUKnow to educate teachers about the prevention of child sexual exploitation online.

The staff had the opportunity to participate in a faith formation session each term which was planned and facilitated by our Religious Education Coordinator and Education Officer for RE and Spirituality from the CSO.

### **Throughout the year, the staff participated in professional learning around:**

- LIFT – Peter Sullivan (Mathematics)
- Case Management Meetings
- Co-constructing a whole school data wall – Representing Whole Numbers K-2/Whole Number 3-6
- Using the classroom as the Third Teacher – co-constructing Maths anchor charts with students
- Data analysis using a Collaborative Inquiry model
- Unpacking the new 3-6 English and Mathematics syllabuses
- Planning new scope and sequences and programming templates for English and Mathematics aligned to the new syllabuses
- Developing curriculum maps for each grade
- MN Response training (Fire Awareness training, Safe Food Handling, Anaphylaxis and Asthma)
- Pedagogy of Encounter

### **The Executive Team also engaged in PD with the following:**

- Regional and Diocesan Principal Meetings
- LLC workshops with Dr Lyn Sharratt
- LLC Diocesan Case Management Meetings
- Governance Training
- AP and REC Assembly days

- AP Study Tour – Armidale diocese
- Pedagogical Mentor networking sessions
- Gifted Education Mentor Days
- Edge Institute Leading for Learning Impact
- Holy Land Pilgrimage – Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus

### **Qualifications Up-Grade**

- All Staff up-graded their CPR / First Aid, Anaphylaxis and Asthma training
- 1 Staff member participated in Doorways as part of their Faith Formation
- 1 Staff member completed study in Post Graduate Certificate in Educational Wellbeing.

## 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)

Our focus for 2023 was to re-engage our school and parish community in the liturgical life of our school and build the sense of community at St Patrick's Swansea. We placed a greater emphasis on promoting our liturgical celebrations, placing the value of forming all members of community in the Catholic faith.

Our Opening School Mass saw the induction of our 2023 school leaders and the Call to Serve ceremony of our staff. The school's celebration for the Feast of St Patrick was a significant community building occasion with our newly appointed Year 6 Leaders of Mission leading the school community in liturgy. This year, our Holy Week reflection focused on the stations of the cross and the meaning that these events have on the modern world. The Resurrection liturgy was a celebration of the rising of Jesus.

In continuing to building the parish connections, the three parish primary schools gathered to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption at St Francis Xavier Church Belmont. This event has been a steppingstone in initiating further events and build connections among the parish primary schools.

Other liturgical events throughout the year that were celebrated included Ash Wednesday, Catholic Schools Week, NAIDOC and Reconciliation Week, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop,

Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparents Day, Advent/Christmas, and our Rite of Passage Liturgy

The St Patrick's community is a very caring and just group and show great importance to social justice initiatives. This year the school strongly supported the organisations of Caritas, Catholic Mission and St Vincent de Paul. All these social justice initiatives were generously supported by the community.

Our 2023 Annual Strategic Improvement goal directed the school's focus towards the formation needs of the staff and students. Data collected, identified the area of prayer as a focus area for our staff formation. Through our professional learnings and formation experiences, the staff have participated in a number of opportunities to explore prayer and how these experiences can be used in the classroom in assisting the students to encounter Christ in their lives.

## 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.

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 Patrick's is a community with a strong and optimistic commitment to school improvement and student wellbeing. We embrace and initiate change to achieve our core objective – to improve learning outcomes for all students. St Patrick's challenges all students to fulfil their potential in each key learning area. Our school also places a high priority on fostering a love of learning and on assisting children to take responsibility for their own learning. We develop units of work that elicit higher-order thinking skills that cater to the needs of all our students. Our units of work are aimed at providing opportunities for inquiry learning, problem solving, group interaction and decision-making. We also include both independent and cooperative learning. ICT - Information Communication Technology is at the centre of programming and teaching and learning. All programmed units of work and most lessons incorporate the use of Interactive TVs, computers and relevant interactive programs.

We have an established culture of continuous professional improvement where deep understandings of how our students learn is shared. Throughout 2023, we continued our work on Leading Learning Collaborative. Staff received further professional input around how best to improve student achievement and build teacher capacity to learn, teach and lead. Students continued to develop their understanding around what they were learning, why they were learning it and how to improve their learning. Each classroom incorporated Learning Intentions and co-constructed Success Criteria. All staff share responsibility and accountability for student growth and achievement.

St Patrick's is a Successful Foundations school, supporting a positive transition to school for our Kinder students, through their early years of learning. We acknowledge current research and best practice in the field, which respects the rights, capabilities and needs of the Early Learner to achieve success and build the successful foundations to flourish in their learning and wellbeing. Priority is given to literacy and numeracy development because these are the foundations on which further learning is built. Priority is given to motor skills development, physical activity and the development of safe and healthy personal practices. Priority is given to the holistic wellbeing of the child, including social and emotional learning as well as early

intervention and support. All children in the early years have the opportunity to develop their sensory, cognitive and affective appreciation of the world around them through exploratory and creative learning in the arts and technology. Our Kindergarten teacher and Learning Support teacher visited the preschool settings for the students entering St Patrick's Kindergarten in 2024. This partnership allows our students the best possible start.

At St Patrick's, we continue to provide quality support for students with additional needs. We offer a variety of support programs such as MiniLit and MacqLit and have passionate aids working in classrooms. As a Gifted Education Lead School with a Gifted Education Mentor (GEM), we have been able to identify our gifted learners and implement programs, including a Virtual Academy, to help meet student needs. This year we have focussed on educating students around Growth Mindset to support their social, emotional and academic needs. This year we introduced guitar lessons and a variety of lunch club activities including drumming, painting, STEM and singing to further engage students in their interests and abilities.

Our Year 5 and 6 students are part of our BYOD program (bring your own device). All classrooms incorporate the use of Interactive TVs, computers and relevant interactive programs.

## Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

### NAPLAN

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The purpose of NAPLAN is to provide information to parents and teachers about the achievements of students in 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.

From 2023, NAPLAN results are reported against proficiency standards with 4 levels of achievement to give teachers, parents and carers 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 Primary School for 2023 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	64%	54%
	Reading	79%	67%
	Writing	71%	76%
	Spelling	64%	61%
	Numeracy	71%	65%



NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	93%	64%
	Reading	75%	74%
	Writing	94%	66%
	Spelling	87%	69%
	Numeracy	80%	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 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

In 2022, the school community identified six key priority areas for further focus to enhance whole school wellbeing and learning. In 2023, the following strategies were implemented in response to these key areas:

### **1. Reimagine our whole school approach to wellbeing, drawing on research and best practice.**

Further work has been undertaken to produce a Wellbeing and Learning Framework, specific to our school context across a Multi-tiered System of Support.

### **2. Build social and emotional skills to support students in making and keeping friends and regulating emotions.**

We continued the Smiling Mind Primary School Program. This program is an evidence-based approach to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children from 5-12 years old, in the classroom, school, and home environments. Students participate in one lesson each fortnight and practice mindfulness exercises in class approximately 3 times each week.

The introduction of a specific Wellbeing Room, named the MacKillop Room was introduced in 2023. This has functioned as a break-out space for small group and individual support for identified students who require assistance in developing social/emotional skills. This is also a space for students to speak with our School Pastoral Care Worker/Wellbeing Support teacher about concerns, worries or challenges. Our School Psychologist also operates from this space once per week.

### **3. Inspire opportunities for student voice and leadership.**

In 2023, Year 6 introduced suggestion boxes for each classroom. These are to encourage students to have an opportunity to share ideas that would enhance their experiences at school. Year 6 students collect these suggestion boxes once a fortnight and take ideas to Miss Harvey and Staff for further consideration/action.

Students have also been supported in running lunch club activities based around areas of special interests. These have included talent shows, drawing competitions and magic shows.

Students have been supported when taking initiative to organise fundraising opportunities such as selling handmade loomband accessories and guessing competitions.

Year 6 organised and ran whole school events such as a Jump Off Day and Sea Week Activities.

Student surveys have also been implemented K-6 to provide opportunities for students to share their feelings and perspectives about school.

#### **4. Advance student engagement and participation in extra-curricular activities.**

This year the school engaged external providers to run a range of extra-curricular programs or incursions. These included: guitar, ukulele, flute and voice (private tuition), after school drama class (private tuition), Creative Writing Workshop run by Australian authors Jess Black and Ed Wright for Years 3-6, KidBiz full day incursion (Year 6), illustrator Kirrilee Lonergan workshop during Book Week, a range of opportunities were provided for sporting engagement.

#### **5. Empower parent engagement, communication, and collaboration as partners in student learning and wellbeing.**

Parents were invited to attend a presentation about Student Wellbeing which was well supported. The presentation provided research around the link between wellbeing and learning as well as practical ways schools are incorporating whole school approaches to enhance wellbeing.

Parents were provided with many opportunities to engage with their child's learning and contribute to the school community including Easter and Christmas craft; open days; Triple M Radio Breakfast Show; Book Week/Science Week/Grandparents Day; Mother's Day Father's Day; Spring Fair; Colour Run; Christmas Concert and Movie Night; as well as various liturgical celebrations.

The School P&F was reinstated and were highly successful in running a wide range of fundraisers and community events.

Communication shared via Facebook, Compass and See Saw was boosted.

A survey was conducted to gauge parent interest and ability to volunteer and assist in extra-curricular activities such as lunch clubs.

**6. Enhance student knowledge and competencies in addressing safe and responsible use of digital technology.**

Students participated in classroom-based lessons on Safer Internet Day

Years 3-6 students participated in eSafety webinars through the eSafety Commissioner.

Stage 3 students and teachers were trained in using OneNote to support learning in the classroom and utilised this program across all KLAs.

Parents and staff had the opportunity to attend an e-safety seminar facilitated by ThinkUKnow regarding the prevention of online sexual exploitation of children.

Additionally, student wellbeing, respect and responsibility has been supported through:

- participating in planned activities and liturgies for Harmony Day, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week, promoting inclusion of people from diverse backgrounds.
- participating in Child Protection Week, where explicit classroom-based lessons and a whole school activity enhanced understanding and skills in personal safety and responsible decision making within homes, school and wider community.
- providing small group intervention for identified students requiring additional social and emotional skills through programs such as F.R.O.G.S; Peaceful Kids; and Social Detectives.

## School Improvement

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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 Identity and Catholic Curriculum
- Learning and Wellbeing

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

During 2023 there were many areas of improvement undertaken across the school environment. The Key improvements achieved are:

**1. Student Wellbeing:** The emotional and physical well-being of our students is at the heart of what we do at St Patrick's. As such, priority has been given this year to developing a new whole school Wellbeing Framework. With a focus on the voice of the child, we have taken the time to really listen to what our students need and want. The implementation of the Smiling Mind Primary Curriculum has been successful in focusing on the explicit learning of social and emotional skills. An increase in student engagement has been made as well as an improvement in students adapting a growth mindset in their work and social interactions. There has been a noticeable decrease in playground issues with students being more able to articulate how they are feeling and finding better ways to solve problems. Progress has been made across the priority areas identified to enhance wellbeing across the school as outlined above.

**2. Professional Learning in Numeracy:** During 2023, the staff continued to work as a Professional Learning Team with a focus on improving Mathematics Number outcomes. Through professional development in implementing the Leading Learning Collaborative framework, staff improved their pedagogy around learning intentions, success criteria, feedback, assessment, setting individual learning goals, and using the classroom environment as the Third Teacher by co-constructing anchor charts with students. Teachers successfully tracked and analysed student achievement in the focus areas of Representing Whole Numbers K-2, and Whole Number 3-6, using a collaborative inquiry model, a whole school co-constructed data wall, and the online assessment platform Essential Assessment. Through LIFT professional learning with Peter Sullivan, staff improved their pedagogy in

building number fluency and delivering a balanced Mathematics lesson, incorporating active teaching, structured games, and practical investigations. Our GEM and PM continued to build teacher capacity in teaching Numeracy with a focus on differentiation and engagement.

**3. Formation:** Staff and student faith formation continued to be a focus for 2023. Staff participated in ongoing faith formation opportunities. More staff undertook professional learning opportunities.

### Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

During 2024, we aim to:

1. Launch our whole school **Wellbeing Framework** and ensure all key stakeholders know, understand and use the skills to make positive and healthy choices to support student learning and achievement. Use the framework to develop a Multi-tiered System of Support to integrate wellbeing and learning and cater for all students' needs and development.
2. Further develop individual **formation** plans for staff which will draw on Accreditation to Work, Teach and Lead requirements, personal interest areas and career aspirations formation.
3. Ensure agreed practices in Literacy and Numeracy are embedded in programming, teaching, and learning, aligned to the new English and Mathematics syllabuses. **Literacy:** A Foundational Skills program and a Conceptual Understandings program written and implemented each term. Foundational Skills programs taught using the InitialLit program (K-2) and the PLD program (3-6). Conceptual Understanding programs focused on developing textual concepts using quality mentor texts. **Numeracy:** Use of the Launch, Explore, Summarise model, with low floor/high ceiling open-ended activities to ensure differentiation is embedded; and connected mathematics outcomes taught as 'big ideas'. Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, descriptive feedback, peer and self-assessment and individual goal setting are embedded teacher practice in Literacy and Numeracy.
4. Develop greater **data literacy** using a collaborative inquiry model to identify and address learning needs: the ongoing collection and analysis of data; plotting students on data walls; identifying students above/at/below grade level; and working with knowledgeable others to ensure the growth of all students in Literacy and Numeracy.

## 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 annually. This data is shared with the school community and contributes to the priorities for future planning.

### Parent satisfaction

The parents see the small school setting as an advantage because it is able to offer a nurturing environment where the students and their families are known by every staff member. We have received lots of positive feedback and thanks this year, either verbally, via email, or on Facebook for the number of opportunities for social events that have been provided. Our events are well supported in number by parents, carers and extended family members. Parents and grandparents happily volunteer and are seen regularly around the school. Parents also take the time to email appreciation for the care and concern given to the students. In our recent whole school wellbeing survey, 100% of parent respondents felt that student / teacher relationships are respectful, authentic and positive. They also felt that students are happy, valued and included; and that the community is welcoming and respectful; academic, spiritual, social and emotional growth is supported.

### Student satisfaction

Data obtained through the Smiling Mind Student surveys in Terms 3 & 4 indicate growth in student satisfaction between surveys across all areas measured. These surveys were conducted for students from Years 3-6. The satisfaction rate for the data is as follows:

- Connection – growth of +2.95% (above National Average)
- Engagement – growth of +4.28% (above National Average)
- Gratitude – growth of +4.01% (above National Average)
- Happiness – growth of +1.36% (above National Average)
- Mindfulness – growth of +2.17% (at National Average)
- Perseverance – growth of +3.73% (above National Average)

When the data is broken down across gender, the results show that both boys and girls were above the national average in all domains.



In Term 4, students in K-2 completed a survey of 15 questions that aligned with the CSO Wellbeing Together Framework. Their responses as a collective across these areas were as follows:

- I feel safe, supported & included: Mostly - 69.39%, Sometimes - 21.22%, Rarely - 9.39%
- I am creative, connected, engaged: Mostly -70.20%, Sometimes - 22.45%, Rarely - 7.34%
- I can learn, lead & thrive: Mostly - 65.30%, Sometimes - 26.12%, Rarely - 9.80%

### Teacher satisfaction

St Patrick's is blessed to have such a highly motivated, dedicated, professional staff. The high level of pastoral care amongst staff members is to be admired. Staff participation in community events and the low rate of staff absences are indicators of staff satisfaction at St Patrick's.

The staff value the professional development opportunities offered to them and are always seeking ways to enhance their teaching practice and pedagogy to improve student outcomes and wellbeing. The staff work as a team and support each other when challenges arise.

In our recent Wellbeing survey, 100% of staff respondents agree that:

- Student wellbeing is important to prioritize.
- The community is welcoming, respectful and inclusive.
- Students are known, valued and cared for.

In the 2023 Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Engagement Survey undertaken by staff, the results are as follows:

- Engagement (the level of job satisfaction and staff commitment to the organisation) is high, with 96% of staff indicating they are engaged.
- Wellbeing (the emotional wellness of staff at work, and their ability to successfully manage job stress) is high, with 88% of staff indicating they feel well at work.
- Progress (staff perceptions about organisational performance) is high, with 99% of staff indicating they are satisfied with the organisation's progress and success in delivering outcomes.

# 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 2023 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2023	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$1,895,302
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$498,698
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$307,215
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$13,922
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$113,764
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$2,828,901</b>

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$36,075
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$2,100,366
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$797,476
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$2,933,917</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 2023 REPORT