

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

Together in Christ



Holy Cross Primary School

326 Lake Road, GLENDALE 2285 Principal: Ashley Borg Web: http://www.glendale.catholic.edu.au

mn.catholic.edu.au

About this report

Holy Cross 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.

Principal's Message

Holy Cross forms part of an authentic, faith-filled Catholic community, where high standards of education ensure that student growth, across learning, social and spiritual endeavours, are paramount. Holy Cross follows the Making Jesus Real framework, which has a Positive Behaviours for Learning "twist". This is based on the belief that we are the image of Jesus to everyone.

Gospel values embedded through the program, invite and encourage all members of our community to do their best to treat others fairly, to be responsible for their actions and to follow moral and ethical conduct embracing equity and justice. Our Mission Statement dares us to walk with Jesus as a people of action, in a place of peace for a future filled with inspired learners. Holy Cross is a great school moving forward.

With a wonderfully supportive school community of families and staff, the school continues to grow and expand. We are proud of our Indigenous heritage and the many facets of multiculturalism experienced across the school.

It was fantastic to have our full school community back in the swing of things in 2023.

Academically, students continued to engage with Lyn Sharratt's Clarity focus on Writing and Fluency in Numeracy. Staff at the school continued to work diligently on explicit teaching of all concepts.

Parent Body Message

On behalf of the executive team and myself, we are so proud to be part of this community and we are so proud to have been able to provide a platform, that was approachable and present as the representing Holy Cross Parent Body.

The P&F set some goals at the start of the year in terms of where we would like to see funds been used for the students, and we came up with a simple concept.

Something to See. Play. Learn. Touch. And of course, something Fun

Something to SEE – Over at the Primary section wall, you can see a beautiful mural created uniquely for Holy Cross by a local street artist and in collaboration with the Holy Cross students. It is truly magnificent and has become the eye-catching centrepiece of our wonderful school.

Something to PLAY – we were able to purchase brand-new musical instruments this year to go hand in hand with the Holy Cross music program. We will be sure to see some little rockstars come out of their shells in 2024!

Something to LEARN – we purchased programs for the students, Spelling and Maths Mastery, which has come with great success for our students. We also collaborated with staff and helped purchase Electricity & Circuit Robotic Class Kits for hands on Science and Tech learning for 2024.

Something to TOUCH – the Henny Penny hatching program seen a lot of love for circle of life. The kids were in awe of the hatchlings and were able to look, touch and learn all about them.

Something FUN – We hosted events such as an Ice-Skating night, Colour Run and a School Disco. These events were such a hit with the students, they will return next year, without a doubt!

All these goals would not have been reached without a wonderful energetic team behind the scenes. I would like to give some very special mentions to the executive team who have all done a magnificent job throughout the year taking time to organise events, set up fundraisers, attend meetings, run the canteen, and uniform shop, collaborate with staff and so much more!

Student Body Message

As student leaders at Holy Cross, we have really valued the opportunity to take on a captain's role within the school. Our Principal led us in demonstrating servant leadership.

We were part of fundraising opportunities such as the Father's Day Stall, Socktober and many more. One of my fondest memories was raising money for a backpack bed for a homeless person.

Leading the school has been a great thrill and privlege and I will miss Holy Cross.

As our school Facebook page says "HCG is the place to be".

SCHOOL CAPTAIN 2023

School Features

Holy Cross forms part of an authentic, faith-filled Catholic community, where high standards of education ensure that improving the educational outcomes for every student is paramount. Holy Cross follows the Making Jesus Real framework, with a Positive Behaviours for Learning "twist". This has seen the disciplinary issues reduce by over 35% in a two year period (15% this year alone!)

Our Mission Statement dares us to walk with Jesus as a people of action, in a place of peace for a future filled with inspired learners At Holy Cross Primary School, Glendale, we pride ourselves on offering children the highest quality education within the context of a caring Catholic community. We pride ourselves at Holy Cross on knowing every student, with Lyn Sharratt's "Clarity" at the centre of our focus, we know all the "faces on the data". Not only the data, but we know all about our children's interests, what makes them tick and how we can help them learn to their optimum.

Our school's Mission Statement focuses on challenging students to strive for success in all areas of school life, to become lifelong learners and achieve their personal best. To maintain high standards in literacy and numeracy, class timetables are aligned across the school, emphasising the integral role of English and Mathematics. These key learning areas are uniquely timetabled to maintain the best possible use of human resources to support best practice.

Additional teaching staff include a Learning Support teacher who provides expertise in additional needs, including extending student academia and gifted education. A Pedagogical Mentor, who works alongside teachers to give them the best possible support and to build capacity, as well as seven Learning Support assistants who provide in-class support for teachers, enabling greater access to differentiated learning.

A Gifted Education Mentor (GEM) provides professional and learning support to gifted learners and their teachers, across the school.

An Aboriginal Education Teacher and an English as an Additional Language or Dialect teacher, raises awareness and supports the school community in celebrating our indigenous and multicultural heritage whilst assisting the academic growth and cultural development of our Indigenous students.

Our bubblers were a significant improvement to the school this year and have definitely

brightened up the environment. We added chickens to our school and incorporate a community and family feel to our surroundings. Holy Cross is an inviting school where all are welcome, feel they belong and every child MATTERS.

Our major SPDC project, the outdoor learning space, was completed early this year at a significant cost to the Diocese. It has provided students and teachers with an excellent opportunity to incorporate outdoor learning, as well as gives the school a wonderful street presence on Lake Road. We wish to thank the Diocese of Maitland Newcastle for the grant, as well as any other bodies and agencies responsible.

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
70	62	31	132

* 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 91.28%. 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
92.59	90.69	92.98	91.31	91.30	89.20	90.92

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

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2023:

Total number of staff	28
Number of full time teaching staff	9
Number of part time teaching staff	8
Number of non-teaching staff	11

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

The main professional learning conducted at Holy Cross was around Professional Learning Teams. On a twice-termly basis, staff were released for half days to utilise "best practice" pedagogy, data analysis and moderation techniques with their students. As a result, teachers became more engaged in student's strengths and areas for improvement. This led to more specific teaching programs and a more thorough and rigorous curriculum being undertaken in classrooms, K-6.

Staff also completed professional learning on fluency in mathematics, the science behind why fluency is important to learn and teach explicitly and how to effectively group students for precise teaching of concepts in the working mathematically strand. This will be a continuing focus going forward in 2024.

Writing professional learning also occurred through our Knowledgeable Other, our Pedagogical Mentor. She took staff through several sessions of examples of strong pedagogy in writing, assisting teachers with appropriate scaffolding tasks, "spice jars" for vocabulary and establishing specific criteria for successful writing. She also worked one on one with teachers in developing scope and sequence documents and programs, to coincide with the 2024 release of the new English Syllabus.

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)

Holy Cross were very active in the community, demonstrating God's love for all through Mission.

Mini Vinnies is a time-honoured tradition at Holy Cross. With COVID and a change of leadership, it somehow lost its way. This year, through our new Religious Education Coordinator, it has been inspired and over 40 students took on the challenge of participating. They were responsible for:

- Collecting items for the Winter Appeal and Christmas Appeals
- organising and running Socktober activities
- assisting the Year 6 leadership team with Project Compassion.

Our "Green Team" fostered Mission throughout the school, through looking after our gardens, ensuring our chickens were well fed and hydrated, as well as organising for the sale of eggs from the chicken coop back to the community. Another primary responsibility of the Green Team was to ensure that fruit scraps and other food items do not go to waste. A compost bin was established and further enhancements to this area will be a topic of discussion for future years.

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.

The teachers at Holy Cross provide a rich and purposeful curriculum fulfilling NESA requirements. Not only is the teaching across key learning areas of a high standard, the school also offers expertise from external providers. Each class is provided with dance and gymnastics lessons across two school terms. Additional opportunities were also provided for students through private music tuition.

The school purchased the Amplify program to enhance its music teaching skills and pedagogy. This, along with a Parents and Friends sponsored purchase of musical equipment, will be a terrific addition to our teaching repertoire and student engagement.

Spelling Mastery and Mathematics Mastery were also included into school curriculum group time for Literacy and Numeracy. These programs have given teachers a greater specificity when working with the vast student needs we have at Holy Cross. This better caters for each individual child.

Holy Cross also forms part of the Diocesan gifted education initiative through the employment and support of a gifted education mentor. This has enhanced learning opportunities for gifted students through involvement in the Diocesan virtual academy for gifted students.

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 Holy Cross Primary School for 2023 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards		
		School	Australia	
	Grammar and Punctuation	70%	54%	
Year 3	Reading	74%	67%	
	Writing	83%	76%	
	Spelling	57%	61%	
	Numeracy	57%	65%	

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards		
		School	Australia	
	Grammar and Punctuation	100%	64%	
Year 5	Reading	91%	74%	
	Writing	82%	66%	
	Spelling	82%	69%	
	Numeracy	82%	68%	

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

Students at Holy Cross continued the Making Jesus Real Program, titled, "Highway Heroes". On a fortnightly basis, each class took ownership of "teaching" the school a specific learning goal, revolving around our school's five expectations, which are clearly displayed throughout the school:

- Listening and Respecting others
- Let the teacher teach so I can Learn
- Safe Hands, Safe Feet
- Kind Words, Kind Deeds
- Take Responsibility for My Actions

Students were given "gotchas" as a way of "catching students being good". These gotcha tickets combined throughout the school to create a whole school tally. If students exceeded this tally, a "Reward Day" for students was held. These days taught students that hard work pays off, goals can be achieved and the lessons learned during the fortnightly assemblies have led to a dramatic decrease in student behavioural issues in the playground (over 35% in two years).

A Pastoral Care Worker was employed on a contract basis, with the funding extended in to 2024. Her role was to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all students within the school, to assist families and initiate programs to foster the wellbeing, support and friendship of students who have difficulty engaging with others.

A school psychologist was granted a 0.2FTE allocation by the Catholic Schools Office to work with Holy Cross Glendale, to facilitate higher-level mental health issues experienced by students, to work with families and liaise with teachers and other like-minded professionals.

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 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

The Leading Learning Collaborative has created the impetus for ongoing improvement in academia across the school. The visible use of Third Teacher Displays inclusive of 'bump it up walls', and co-constructed learning goals and success criteria has brought about increased levels of student engagement and inclusivity. So too, the depth of data analysis has created a learning culture of continuous improvement as teachers, support staff, children and their families maintain a focus on personalised growth for every student.

Involvement in the Successful Foundations initiative has ensured a deeper understanding, across all members of the staff, about appropriate and meaningful transition processes. Kindergarten children commenced school in a settled manner, whilst the classroom teacher and additional staff were able to make significant observations and reflections about how to best meet the needs of students. Behavioural data shows a significant decrease in incidents in the playground, compared to 2022. There has been a 14% decrease in 2023 and a 35% decrease, since the new behaviour matrix was initiated in 2022, an extraordinary achievement!

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

The executive have looked at our School's Improvement in the past couple of years, analysed the key data points and spoken with the staff. We need to continue what we are doing this year into next year and consolidate the gains made by so many at Holy Cross.

The "BIG TICKET" items we are looking into next year are:

Improvement of writing - in particular, improvement of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Our students, your children, have WONDERFUL ideas and GREAT arguments when writing, we just need to work with them to get it down on paper / laptop in the best way possible. The improvements so far have been AMAZING, now it is time to consolidate.

Fluency in Mathematics - Fluency is one of the greatest predictors of a student's future success in mathematics. A student who is fluent in number not only "knows" their facts, but "knows" why they work and in multiple and frequently different situations

Wellbeing - Staff and students - I have said this many times to a parent. If a child feels safe and nurtured in the school grounds then they are more likely ready to learn, and our teachers can weave their "magic" and teach them.

At Holy Cross, we have been working with Bronwyn Thoroughgood, who has a Traumainformed background and works at the Catholic Schools Office. She has been delivering sessions to our staff this year on ways in which we can work with students to bring the best out of their wellbeing, in order for them to better engage in class. It is definitely not a "snap my fingers and students just engage" approach anymore. Teachers work diligently, everyday, on strategies which work with our students, your children.

One of the aims next year is to look at a "Holy Cross" way of teaching our students, in order to increase their wellbeing at school and improve results through engagement.

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

Parental satisfaction was generally high at Holy Cross. We always have welcomed positive feedback through the community. The main reasons parents send their children to HCG are:

- we are a community based school
- our teachers know the students very well, academically and as people
- we are uniquely Catholic
- Leadership at this school is strong and communication is frequent, transparent and timely.

Student satisfaction

Many students have expressed that Holy Cross is a safe school to be a part of and they feel included.

Some quotes from students:

"I feel welcome at Holy Cross and I like playing with my friends" (Year 3 girl)

"The children and the teachers treat me with respect" (Year 6 girl)

"I have a class who cares for each other." (Year 4 Boy)

"I can trust my teachers to help me when I feel down." (Year 2 Boy)

Teacher satisfaction

Staff survey from the CSO indicated high levels of stress, but also high levels of satisfaction with their role, the leadership of the school and the direction the school is headed.

Further work will be undertaken on the ever increasing morale of the staff. This year, the inception of Professional Learning Team Meetings gave staff a greater sense of togetherness, an openness to speak in a forthright, yet professional manner, to listen to concerns and to solve problems amicably.

The greatest indicator of the high levels of satisfaction amongst staff is the minimal turnover at the end of 2023.

One staff member is leaving due to travel and the other has ceased their contract to obtain permanent employment outside the Diocese.

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 ¹	\$2,228,069	
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0	
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$608,936	
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$412,591	
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0	
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$107,935	
Total Income	\$3,357,531	

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023		
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$378,760	
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$2,727,417	
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$684,301	
Total Expenditure	\$3,790,478	

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