

# 2023

## ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

*Together in Christ*



### St Bede's Catholic College

24A Heritage Drive, CHISHOLM 2322

Principal: John Murphy

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

## About this report

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St Bede's Catholic College (the 'College') 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 College community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

Detailed information about the College'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 College directly or by visiting the College'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

2023 was a year to remember with many highlights. Most notably, our first cohort of students who commenced in Year 7 2018 graduated at the end of Term 3 and completed their HSC exams in early Term 4. Our third building, the McAuley Building, was opened at the start of the year and construction of the fourth and final building progressed ahead of schedule.

The journey for our graduating class of 2023 goes back to 2017, in preparation for the opening of St Bede's the following year. During 2017, the platform for success was laid with the development of our College Vision and Mission Statement, the development of our first three-year strategic plan, the enrolment of 107 students, and the recruitment of a high quality staff. To see these students graduate after 6-years with the hopes and dreams we had back in 2017 being fulfilled was a historical and happy event that is now etched in the history of St Bede's. As a college we were incredibly blessed to have such a committed and enthusiastic student leadership team led by our inaugural College Captain, Eaden Dawson, and Vice-Captain, Caitlin Price. Eaden's closing comment in her Captain's Speech at the Graduation Event at NEX, captured our hopes for our students attending St Bede's, "Despite our fear, we must keep learning, keep aspiring, keep believing, keep dreaming and keep growing."

Making up for lost time during the COVID years, the building program progressed faster and smoother than expected. The McAuley Building opened at the start of the year and was immediately utilised by our staff and students, with high quality learning outcomes being evidenced in student works. The McAuley building includes closed and learning spaces architecturally designed for maximising learning and a state of the art Technologies Centre. As with the first two buildings, a climate control/air-conditioning system and new furniture, fittings, and equipment provide ideal conditions for student comfort and learning. The McAuley Building connects with the second stage of our Peregrine Trail which is the large interconnecting internal walkway/break-out learning spaces. This enables easy movement from one side of the school to the other and a more relaxed and less crowded campus.

The final stage of the carpark extension, additional outdoor spaces, a playing field, landscaped yard spaces, and our Indigenous Yarning Circle were all completed. The Yarning Circle, located in the centre of the new yard at the back of the second stage of the Peregrine Trail, features a circular structure of sandstone blocks, a natural earth like surface, totem poles, and a magnificent wedgetail eagle statue. The opening of the Yarning Circle on the 18 September was well attended by Aboriginal elders, senior Diocesan and College staff, parents, and students and was a significant moment in St Bede's becoming a truly inclusive school community. As I stated in my principal's address at this event, "The yarning circle will symbolise the past, present, and future. It will be a place to represent what we stand for as a

community, where racism and ignorance is not accepted and where multiculturalism and respect of our founders become part of the fabric of who we are as a school community.”

Amongst the busyness of the day to day activities of a Year 7 – 12 school, building works, graduation events, two key strategic goals were targeted.

(1) To redevelop and implement the College Mission and Vision Statement that aligns to the four pillars of Knowledge, Courage, Faith, and Community.

(2) For students to be empowered to be more connected and engaged with their learning, as evidenced in pedagogical practices, student feedback, learning walks and talks, and professional learning activities.

Both these goals involved a whole school commitment and the input of all stakeholders. The first goal of developing a new College and Mission Statement for implementation in 2024 was timely given our original mission and vision statement was aimed at what we hoped to achieve by 2023. Our College Mission Statement developed back in 2017 stated, ‘Inspired by Jesus Christ, St Bede’s Catholic College nurtures a vibrant and welcoming community; Seeking knowledge and realising gifts through persistence and collaboration; Living the Gospel in word and action’. The Vision Statement stated, ‘Students will leave St Bede’s as confident, resilient, reflective young adults embracing learning, searching for truth, and living their faith in a contemporary world.’ These statements helped guide us through the first six years of education for our students. Reviews, surveys, and observations indicated the success achieved over these foundation years. In collaborating with parent, student, and Diocesan and College staff, a comprehensive process of consultation, workshops, and committees throughout this year resulted in the development of a new Mission and Vision Statement that will guide us for the years ahead. The launching of this new Mission and Vision Statement will occur at our opening mass at the start of next year.

With the second goal of student empowerment, our student body had a genuine voice in new initiatives and decision making. This included student leaders working side by side with teachers in workshops in developing our new mission and vision statement, a review of our uniform and grooming policy, greater student efficacy in their learning, and student led initiatives such as the winter St Vincent De Paul sleep-out. The work of our student leaders in driving positive change led to a review and improvement of some of our practices and processes. Our first Student Senior Leadership Team, Eaden Dawson (Captain), Caitlin Price (Vice Captain), Sharlotte Mate, Ricky Curley, Leila Kelly, Bella Sepos, Blaze Brockman, and Mackayla Jones were outstanding ambassadors and leaders of the College.

Enrolment numbers, as expected, continued to increase from approximately 680 students to 780 which in turn led to the employment of additional staff. It is anticipated that next year our enrolment numbers will be approximately 830 before further increasing to over a 1,000 within another few years. The calibre of the staff recruited were excellent and they quickly and successfully transitioned to life at St Bede’s. Learning results, particularly in our targeted area

of spelling, improved. Survey data, including a staff engagement survey, was pleasing with our commitment to an integrated learning and wellbeing approach being a strong commendation.

Thank you to our wonderful parents/carers for all their support, particularly our two parent representatives, Michelle McDonald and Nadine Yager. Thank you to our amazing hard working and caring staff, particularly to our College Executive, Mr Donohoe (Foundation Assistant Principal), Emma South (Assistant Principal), Andrew Slater (Ministry Coordinator) who worked with me in leading the College. With our first cohort of students having graduated, it was timely and totally deserved that Mr. Donohoe was appointed as Principal at St Mary's Gateshead, commencing at the start of next year. Mr. Donohoe commenced his tenure back in Term 4 2017 and has been an integral part of what we have achieved together. During his six-plus years as our Foundation Assistant Principal at St Bede's, he has been a key driver of the processes that have set our college up for sustainable success. Mr. Donohoe's work ethic, expertise, commitment, and care has been second to none. He is highly respected and valued by the Diocese and our College community and should be proud of his enormous achievements. Mr. Donohoe will leave a legacy at St Bede's and will be fondly remembered for his achievements.

In closing, thank you to our whole College community, including our energetic and engaging students, which makes St Bede's such a wonderful school. We should all look back at 2023 with pride and look forward to embracing the opportunities of the coming years.

John Murphy (Principal)

### **Parent Body Message**

At St Bede's one of the main opportunities for parents/caregivers to be involved in the life of the school is the Parent Engagement Group (Parent Forum) meetings. These meetings enable discussion of current topics and lines of communication to remain open.

St Bede's was represented in the Diocese Federation of Parents and Friends Association by two parents who were also involved each term in formulating Parent Forum Agendas by highlighting current issues. Throughout 2023 these representatives were included in discussions around the naming of the school chapel and a review of the Uniform and Grooming policy and invited to important College events such as the official opening of the Yarning Circle space.

A high priority continues to be placed upon the development of positive relationships between staff and parents via clear communication processes that include fortnightly newsletters, the student planner, electronic notifications, social media, and the use of Compass.

Michelle McDonald & Nadine Yager (Parent Representatives)

## Student Body Message

2023 marked a momentous milestone for the history of St Bede's, as the College finally became a full Year 7-12 school. It has been incredibly exciting to have been part of the growth and perpetuation of St Bede's over the past six years, growing from foundation students to its inaugural graduating class.

As a now fully functioning 7-12 school, 2023 marked the first HSC group of St Bede's, in which the foundation year group were preparing throughout the year for the HSC exams and their forthcoming graduation. This saw an increased focus on the academic side of schooling, as students continually strived to produce quality work and prepare for their exams, collaborating with their peers and HSC teachers to support one another through what was a busy time. The first HSC exams were sat in October and concluded in November.

Throughout the year, the St Bede's community engaged in a variety of cultural and community events, including the annual Swimming and Athletic Carnivals and Feast Days, which saw students get involved to display their house spirit and engagement in school life. These were memorable moments when the College came together to celebrate one another, and the community and ethos which is fostered at St Bede's.

St Bede's additionally held its first "Vinnie's Winter Sleepout", organised by the Year 12 leadership team and coordinated by teachers, Ms Pascoe and Mr Slater. The sleepout was a powerful initiative raising awareness of the harsh realities of the homeless experience, in which it challenges Australians to give up their warm beds for the night. It was a huge success, with the sleepout team having raised over \$1,400 to support the winter appeal for homeless Australians within and beyond the local community facing disadvantage.

With the current 2023 leaders preparing to graduate, it was once again time to elect a group of incoming student leaders. With this came the election of the 2024 College Captain, Thomas Benedich, and Vice-Captain, Veronica Para-Mariaca, as well as an additional six senior student leaders, who make up the eight roles of the leadership team. The college will be left in great hands under the guidance of the new leaders and know that they will be wonderful in their positions.

Term 3 saw the end of Year 12's high school journey, with class work being completed and the final week being one of celebrations and bittersweet goodbyes. Following came our final college liturgy and clap out before the Graduation Ceremony. Graduation night was a lovely evening celebrating each other's achievements over the course of both the year, and our time at St Bede's since 2018.

While Year 12 move on from St Bede's and into the future, we will not be leaving it behind. St Bede's will always have a special place in our lives. We look forward to seeing and hearing about all the amazing things that we know St Bede's will continue to do, in its next chapter. We have loved being a part of this community, and it has been a privilege to have had the

opportunity to represent our college in positions of leadership. We will forever say, we were proud students at St Bede's Catholic College.

Eaden Dawson (2023 College Captain) & Caitlin Price (2023 College Vice-Captain)

## School Features

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### History of the school

St Bede's began with the vision of Bishop Bill Wright of the Maitland Newcastle Diocese, Bill Wright, who saw the need for another Catholic High School within the Maitland Newcastle region. With the support of our local parish priest, Father Paul O'Neil, and with the drive of the staff from the Maitland Newcastle Diocese, this vision grew into a full-scale project. The College was named after St Bede, who was born in 672AD in England and is regarded as one of the most prominent Catholic scholars in history.

St Bede's was officially opened on Friday 2 February 2018 with 107 students and eleven full-time teachers in interconnected demountables, referred to as our Flexible Learning Village. These foundation students became the first cohort to graduate and to complete their HSC this year.

### Enrolments

As the College progressed to Year 12 in 2023, enrolment numbers grew to approximately 780 students. It is expected that enrolment numbers will increase to over 850 students in 2024 and increase each year until enrolments reach a maximum of over 1,000 students in the coming years.

St Bede's accepts students from both Catholic and non-Catholic schools. Included in the surrounding areas where enrolment applications are accepted are Berry Park, Chisholm, Duckenfield, Hinton, Morpeth, Phoenix Park, Raworth, Thornton, Beresfield, and Tarro.

### Building Works

The College offers outstanding learning facilities and is rapidly progressing through the different stages of the building works. The architectural design, and the high quality of the building works, furniture and fittings means students attending St Bede's are being provided with outstanding purpose built learning facilities to maximise wellbeing and learning opportunities.

The first of four buildings, the Benedict Building, was opened on 29 October 2018. The second building, the Dominic Building and the large interconnecting closed walkways/ learning spaces known as the Peregrine Trail was opened on the 23 August 2022. The third building, the McAuley Building and the second stage of the Peregrine Trail, was completed and occupied at the start of 2023.

The last of the four buildings, the Marion Building and the third and final stage of the Peregrine Trail, is expected to be completed early next year. This will be followed by the



Chisholm Chapel later next year which will be shared with St Aloysius. The final stage of the building works, including the oval and cricket nets, will be completed in early 2025.

A large local council sporting complex close to the College on Emperor Parade Chisholm, which will include playing fields, will be completed in mid-2026 and will be utilised by the College.

### **Parish and /or feeder schools**

The two local feeder schools are St Aloysius Catholic Primary School, located next door to the College, and Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, located in the nearby suburb of Tarro. About half of our students come from these two feeder schools with the other half coming from a range of Catholic and non-Catholic schools. Additionally, some students are accepted from St Joseph's Primary School East Maitland.

We have a close connection with our two local parishes, Our Lady of Lourdes, Beresfield and Immaculate Conception, Morpeth.

### **Parents and Friends Activities:**

In-lieu of a Parents and Friends Association, a Parent Engagement Group (PEG) model was introduced in 2018 and again effectively operated throughout 2023 with termly meetings. Included at these meetings, were presentations from guest speakers, our two Parent Representatives, the College Executive, as well as question/answer sessions and optional building tours. Parent input into key decisions was an important part of these meetings.

### **Co-curricular Program**

A diverse co-curricular program was offered, including music and drama performances, debating, public speaking, excursions, and sport. All students enthusiastically participated in a diverse Friday afternoon sporting program which included a range of inter-school competitions, such as Touch Football, Oztag, Soccer, Rugby League, and Netball. Many students were selected in representative teams, including Diocesan teams. The College's swimming and athletics carnivals were well attended with high participation rates in events and many College records broken.

St Bede's enjoyed its most successful year in sport with some outstanding results. This included:

- Bill Turner Cup (Girls Team) who were Regional Champions.
- Years 7/8 and 9/10 and Netball Teams who qualified to compete at the Regional Championships and the Year 7/8 Team placed 4th in the Region
- Year 7/8 Netball Team were Minor Division Champions at the NSW Sydney Netball Championships.

- Year 9/10 Boys Touch Team who qualified for the Finals at the Hunter Touch Championships.
- Four students selected in the Diocesan Touch Team
- One student selected in the U15's NSWCCC Touch Football Team
- Fifteen students selected in the Diocesan Athletics Team
- Two students selected in the Diocesan Girls Rugby League Team
- One student selected in the Diocesan Swimming Team
- One student selected in the Diocesan Netball Team
- Three students competing at All Schools Cross Country
- Nine students selected in the Diocesan Cross Country Team
- One student selected in the Diocesan Football Team U16's
- Four students named Aged Champions at the Diocesan Athletics Carnival
- Over 50 records were broken in both College Carnivals
- Downie Cup and Berg Shield Cricket undefeated and progress through to the Quarter Finals.

The number of students representing St Bede's in a variety of sports increased dramatically over the year, with students demonstrating great sportsmanship, skill, and a positive attitude.

Included in overnight student events were the Year 7 Camp, Year 11 Retreat, and the Year 12 Retreat. All three events were highly successful and enjoyable. Numerous incursions and excursions occurred throughout the year which positively impacted on student learning.

**Location/Drawing Area:**

St Bede's is located at 24A Heritage Drive Chisholm, located within the Maitland Region. For the location of St Bede's [click here](#).

# Student Profile

## Student Enrolment

The College caters for students in Years 7 – 12. Students attending this College 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
423	363	56	786

\* 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 88.40%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group					
Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
89.86	87.57	86.33	86.99	89.80	89.82

## Managing Student Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The College, 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, College staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

College 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 College 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 College's strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

## Student Retention Rate

Of the students who completed Year 10 in 2021, 67% completed Year 12 in 2023.

## Senior Secondary Outcomes

The table below sets out the percentages of students undertaking vocational training in their senior years as well as those attaining the award of Higher School Certificate (or equivalent vocational education and training qualifications).

Senior secondary outcomes 2023	
% of students undertaking vocational training or training in a trade during the senior years of schooling	13 %
% of students attaining the award of Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification	100 %

## Post School Destinations

Each year the College collects destination data relating to the Year 12 student cohort.

The graduating Year 12 class of 2023, which is St Bede's first, chose a range of post school pathways. Those 74 students chose the following:

- 77% were offered and accepted university undergraduate degree programmes
- 5% were accepted into Open Foundation university pathway programmes
- 14% chose either work and/or Tafe and/or Open Foundation
- 1% accepted an apprenticeship
- 1% did not complete the HSC requirements
- 1% was unsure of their next step

# Staffing Profile

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## Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2023:

Total number of staff	95
Number of full time teaching staff	68
Number of part time teaching staff	3
Number of non-teaching staff	24

### Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

Teachers at this College 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 College.

### 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 College 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

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 Maitland Newcastle Catholic Schools Office (CSO). The College takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating, and tracking 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 development was aligned with our School Improvement Plan and the Lead Learning Collaborative initiative of the Diocese.

One-hour staff professional learning meetings each month and three extended professional development twilight sessions throughout the year were successfully completed. The targeted focus for teachers was:

- Continued development and implementation of a whole school approach to the explicit teaching of literacy skills, as per the Literacy LIFT initiative.
- Curriculum development, with a particular focus on Stage 6.
- Teaching for transfer and the work of Michael McDowell, with a particular focus on the three levels of complexity in learning – surface, deep and transfer.
- Utilising student achievement data, such as NAPLAN and PAT, to improve student learning.
- Differentiating for Gifted students.

Five staff professional development days occurred throughout the year. The following were the focus areas:

- Preparation for the start of the year, School Improvement Plan, CPR & anaphylaxis training, child protection, Learning Support and Compliance (2 days).
- Developing Stage 6 programs that best prepare our first HSC cohort, with a focus on assessment and pedagogical practices.
- Developing the new Vision and Mission Statement for the College.
- Reflection on the 2023 school year, including analysis of HSC data and the Lead Learn Collaborate work completed.

Staff also successfully engaged in a range of other Diocesan and external professional development which they documented in their NESAC accreditation accounts.

## 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)

St Bede's Catholic College continued to work towards achieving our College Mission and Vision Statements throughout 2023. The Mission states, 'Inspired by Jesus Christ, St Bede's Catholic College nurtures a vibrant and welcoming community; Seeking knowledge and realising gifts through persistence and collaboration; Living the Gospel in word and action.' Our Vision states, 'Students will leave St Bede's Catholic College as confident, resilient and reflective young adults, embracing learning, searching for truth and living their faith in a contemporary world.'

Learning and Wellbeing are inextricably linked at St Bede's Catholic College as demonstrated in our Learning and Wellbeing Framework. The Learning and Wellbeing Framework is structured around the College motto of 'Shine with Christ's Glory.' It's first domain, which shapes the unique Catholic identity of the College is Catholic Formation and Mission. The key aspects of our Catholic identity were:

- The celebration of the liturgical year through liturgy and prayer. This included liturgies for opening the school year, Ash Wednesday, Easter, St Bede's Feast Day, and Advent.
- A visitation from Bishop Michael Kennedy, where he joined staff for morning tea and addressed the College.
- Visits from Father George Anthicad, Father Camillus Nwahia and Father John Vien Vo, who led us in liturgical celebrations.



- Holding Reflection Days for Years 8, 9, 10 and 12. The themes for these days were 'Do not seek your own advantage, but that of the other' (Year 8), 'Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire' (Year 9 and 10) and 'The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed' (Year 12).
- Redeveloping the College Vision and Mission Statement. This process started with a Staff and Senior Student Leader Spirituality Day, facilitated by an external facilitator. This day developed an understanding of the history of the Diocese and enabled staff to explore their values and how they align with the College values. The day finished with staff working in their House groups to develop a new Vision Statement. This process continued through a staff twilight session, small staff group workshops and feedback from students, parents, Assistant Head Religious Education and Spirituality and our Parish Priest Father George Anthicad. The new Vision and Mission Statement will be launched in 2024.
- Participation in Diocesan and community events, including the World Day of Prayer, the Ecumenical Way of the Cross, the launch of Project Compassion and Catholic Mission Month, Catholic Schools Week, and Senior Student Leaders Mass.
- Continued involvement in a range of social justice issues through Project Compassion, Catholic Mission, Stella Maris, St Vincent de Paul Society, and The Holy Child Program. This included the first Vinnies Winter Sleepout held at the College.
- Joining with the Parish community at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, Beresfield, for the celebration of a Vigil Mass. Staff and students conducted the various ministry roles integral to the Mass.
- Celebration of a monthly, before-school Mass, which is open to all staff and students.

## Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

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### Secondary Curriculum

The Secondary Curriculum follows the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabus for each course offered as required for Registration and Accreditation under the Education Act 1990 (NSW) and implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office (CSO).

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.

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In 2023 we celebrated our first cohort of 77 students completing Year 12 and welcomed our second cohort of Year 11 students. Significant planning had gone into developing a greater variety of subject lines to cater for the diverse needs of our learners. Particularly for those students wishing to pursue a non-ATAR pathway. New subjects introduced into Year 11 included the VET endorsed courses of Construction, and Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways. Courses introduced in Year 12 included Mathematics Extension 2, English Extension 2, Science Extension, and History Extension

The curriculum structure for Stage 6 continued with six subject lines and students required to undertake exactly 12 units in Year 11, with the option to drop to 10 units in Year 12.

Subjects additional to those already stated offered and run in 2023 include:

- Studies of Religion 1 and 2
- Studies in Catholic Thought
- English Extension, Advanced, Standard and Studies

- Mathematics Extension 1, Advanced, Standard 1 and 2
- Ancient History
- Modern History
- Business Studies
- Legal Studies
- Society and Culture
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Earth and Environmental Science
- Physics
- Personal Development, Health, and Physical Education (PDHPE)
- Community and Family Studies
- Industrial Technology: Timber and Multimedia
- Drama
- Music 1 and 2
- Visual Arts
- Chinese Beginners
- VET Business Services
- VET Hospitality
- VET Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways

Stage 4 now comprised 180 students in each of Years 7 and 8. Students were broken into six streams of 30 students in each of English, Mathematics, History/Geography (HSIE) and Science and 8 streams of Religious Studies, Music, Religious Studies, and Personal Development, Health, and Physical Education (PDHPE). Students in English/History/Geography continued to engage with an integrated curriculum, called Humanities under a pedagogical model of the entire cohort of year 7 students and year 8 Students being cotaught at the same time by six teachers. Mathematics continued with the individualised

learning program 'Mathematics Pathways' across Stage 4. In Year 8, students replaced Music and picked up Languages (Mandarin) and Visual Art.

In Stage 5, Year 9 numbers had grown from 120 students in 2022 to 180 students. The continued development of the curriculum into Year 10 saw students complete their elective subjects in Commerce, Drama, Food Technology, Industrial Technology Timber, iSTEM, Music, PASS (Physical Activities & Sports Studies), and Visual Art. New electives introduced in Year 9 included Textiles and Design, and Marine Studies. Students continued with their studies in Religious Studies, English, Mathematics, History/Geography, Science and PDHPE. A Mathematics accelerated class in Year 10 completed their program by completing the end of course preliminary examination in Advanced mathematics. A second accelerated Maths course completed its first year of the program.

Personalised learning continued to be an important aspect of the College. Learning support played an important role in supporting students through an integrated program where learning support assistants and teachers were timetabled in learning spaces. Additionally, our new Gifted Education Mentor continued to support students and staff at school one day each week.

## 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 Bede's Catholic College for 2023 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 7	Grammar and Punctuation	76%	64%
	Reading	74%	68%
	Writing	66%	63%
	Spelling	77%	73%
	Numeracy	72%	67%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 9	Grammar and Punctuation	64%	56%
	Reading	62%	63%
	Writing	61%	58%
	Spelling	71%	71%
	Numeracy	59%	64%

### Higher School Certificate (HSC) Diocese

The results of the College's Higher School Certificate (HSC) candidature are reported for particular subjects. The table provided shows the percentage of students who achieved in the top two bands and shows comparison with results from previous years.

NB: A number of new syllabuses were implemented this year which means there was a change in either subject name and/or course number. For this reason, results from previous years may appear as 0%. Some courses no longer run and therefore will show as 0%.

2023 was the first year that St Bede's students completed the HSC so there is no comparative data. Through HSC analysis strengths have been identified in the courses Physics, Science Extension, Visual Arts and English Extension 1, each with achievement above typical. All students enrolled in these subjects achieved a Band 4 or greater. Across all subjects, 11 students achieved a Band 6.

As it is the first year of the HSC at St Bede's there is no historical data to use to identify trends, but it has been noted that students across a range of subject areas have either not responded to, or not responded sufficiently to, short answer questions.

As a college we plan to develop targeted teaching strategies to address short answer response writing. This will focus on students engaging with activities that develop skills in this area. This will include actively engaging with the verb in a given question, so that students come to understand the action the question is asking them to perform. We will also work with students to ensure they answer all parts of the question, this includes providing relevant examples from coursework where applicable. These targeted strategies will include practice activities, the provision of model responses and peer review exercises.

Higher School Certificate	<i>Percentage of students in the top 2 bands (Bands 5 and 6)</i>					
	2021		2022		2023	
	School	State	School	State	School	State
Community & Family Studie	-	-	-	-	39 %	36 %
English Extension 1	-	-	-	-	100 %	94 %
English Extension 2	-	-	-	-	100 %	86 %
Hosp Exam Kitch Op & Cook	-	-	-	-	50 %	39 %
Music 1	-	-	-	-	88 %	69 %
Physics	-	-	-	-	57 %	39 %
Science Extension	-	-	-	-	75 %	78 %
Visual Arts	-	-	-	-	94 %	66 %

### Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

Eligible students who leave school before receiving their Higher School Certificate will receive the NSW Record of School Achievement (RoSA). The RoSA has been designed to provide grades for all Stage 5 (Year 10) and Stage 6 (Preliminary) courses completed during secondary education. In 2023, the number of students issued with a RoSA was 139.

## Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

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### Pastoral Care Policy

The College'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 College'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 College. The College does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by College persons and non-College persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the College. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the College'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 College'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 College's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.

## **Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility**

The College promoted respect and responsibility of our students through a variety of ways, including our Wellbeing Program, Student Merit System, Year Group Meetings, and College Assemblies. A strong stance was adopted in addressing cases of student mistreatment of their peers and bullying. This included a balance of strong sanctions and restorative justice practices. Anti-Bullying measures were supported through presentations at Stage Meetings and Year Meetings, as well as allocated lessons within the Wellbeing Program.

The College Wellbeing program continued to be developed. This included fortnightly wellbeing lessons where themes such as respect, resilience, positive relationships, and social justice were covered. The program was aligned with our College Pillars of Courage, Knowledge, Community, and Faith which provided a common language in the promotion of respect and responsibility. Alongside the Stage 6 course of study, the wellbeing lessons were adjusted to cater for the growing maturity and self-awareness of these young people, and students were provided with choices as to how they used their wellbeing time. Students were able to select from activities based around the Five Ways to Wellbeing, where they could keep learning in additional study time, be active by getting outdoors to do physical activity, take notice by doing mindfulness activities and connecting and giving by supporting younger students in their wellbeing lessons.

This year we were proud to take part in the 'Top Blokes' program, where 25 male students from Year 9 and 10 were enrolled for a semester-long program. The program uses a prevention and early intervention framework to provide an environment that fosters critical thinking so they can build self-efficacy and the skills to lead healthy and safe lives. The program's principles focus on strength-based, harm minimisation and peer-mentoring delivery methods, to engage boys at a formative stage in their lives.

The College Student Leadership was based on our four student houses of Benedict, Dominic, McAuley, and Marion and the four portfolios of learning, social justice, stewardship, and wellbeing. Each Committee had students from the six-year groups and a staff representative. The Student Committees promoted respect and responsibility by leading different initiatives and sharing these with the wider community via newsletters, social media, and student works showcase events.

The College also recognised significant national and international events that promoted respect, responsibility, and equality, including Harmony Day and International Women's Day.

Students enthusiastically supported our social justice program, which included fundraising, through Project Compassion, Catholic Mission, Stella Maris, St Vincent de Paul Society, and the Holy Child Program.

## School Improvement

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The College 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 College'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 College 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 College administrative office.

### Key Improvements Achieved

The St Bede's Catholic College school improvement plan for 2023 was focused on Domain 1: Catholic Culture and Mission, and Domain 2: Learning and Wellbeing.

#### **(1) Catholic Culture and Mission**

Smart Goal: By the end of 2023, we will redevelop and implement the College Mission and Vision Statement that aligns to the four pillars of Knowledge, Courage, Faith, and Community.

Indicators of success: Staff, Parish Priest, Parents and Year 12 student leaders participated in the formation and collaborative development the Vision and Mission Statement, redevelopment of our visual identity document, approval of submitted Vision and Mission Statement by Bishop Michael Kennedy.

#### **(2) Learning and Wellbeing**

Smart Goal: By the end of 2023, students will be empowered to be more connected and engaged with their learning, as evidenced in pedagogical practices, student feedback, learning walks and talks, and professional learning activities.

Indicators of success: Input from the Student Learning Committee, student representation in the tendering process for the choice of company and devices for the rollout of new student devices for staff and Year 7 & 10 students, involvement of students in the Staff Term 1 Twilight Session and in the Learning and Wellbeing Committee review of workshop, student leader workshops on what student empowerment look like, student-driven workshops with student community, Parent Forum – workshop at first parent forum on student empowerment,

improved spelling and numeracy NAPLAN results, high standard student works, pleasing HSC results for our first graduating class.

### Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

**(1) Catholic Culture:** Embedding Catholic worldview and perspectives across the curriculum and school life.

Aligned with Catholic Schools Office Strategic Plan 2023-2025: For all leaders and staff to grow in their preparedness, confidence, and capacity to share in God's mission leading to full active participation in the Catholic life of the school.

Smart Goal: By the end of 2024, all staff will have a shared understanding of the importance of the Catholic worldview and perspectives and a clear framework for embedding these into their programs and pedagogical practices.

**(2) Learning and Wellbeing:** St Bede's will develop a coherent sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that ensures consistent teaching and learning expectations and a clear reference for monitoring learning across the year levels. (NSIT – Domain Aligned with Catholic Schools Office Strategic Plan 2023-2025:

- GOAL 5: To equip learners with the analytical, cognitive, digital, and social competencies that enables them to fully engage with and contribute to our changing world.
- GOAL 6: To 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.

Smart goal: By the end of 2024, the school will have a clearly documented whole school plan for curriculum delivery, ensuring all subject areas meet NESA requirements and timelines.

## 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 College has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the College 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

Parents are overall very satisfied with the College. This is evidenced in the high level of parent engagement and the variety of activities including parents across the calendar year. The College continues to implement a Parent Forum (Parent Engagement Group) once per term, inviting parents to come to engage in discussions relating to the daily operations of the College. The forums are structured where the Executive and Parent Representatives provide a report, followed by an educative item which is decided by the school and parent representatives. Parents were also included in the overall endorsement of the changes made to the College Uniform and Grooming Policy.

Where possible parents have been invited to events which showcase the work of our students. Such showcases include various Creative Arts works such as 'Drawn in', and musical recitals. Information Evenings have had significant increases in parent and student attendance as the College has revised the timings and structure of these evenings. The information provided coincided with a significant educational milestone, which included transition to Secondary School (Year 7), Information seminars from subject specialists and students for Stage 5 electives (Year 8), and Stage 6 electives (Year 10), and a Specific HSC Information evening (Year 11).

Parent representatives have also been integral as they formed part of a committee in the development of the new Mission and Vision statement to be launched at the start of 2024. A separate committee of parents were also involved, alongside staff and students in the naming of the Chisholm Chapel which will be announced in 2024.

It was a spectacular end to the year with the large gathering of approximately 500 parents who attended the end of Year Awards Presentations evening to celebrate the academic achievements of their child. Similarly, the College had a very successful Graduation Ceremony and Awards evening for Year 12 students at the NEX in Newcastle, followed by a Graduation dinner at Ben Ean, in the Hunter Valley.

## **Student satisfaction**

The College actioned a recommendation from the 2022 COSI External Review which was to consider ways of empowering students. This became a college goal in its Annual School Improvement Plan. Early in the year, Leaders of Wellbeing and Engagement carefully selected student form groups to initiate discussions on what is working well and what can be improved. The data from these dialogue groups was presented at an evening twilight session with all teaching staff and student leaders. It was at this meeting where staff acknowledged the areas of improvement through the voices of students. The data gathered at this meeting was then tabled for further discussion and consultation amongst the school Learning and Wellbeing Team. Outcomes from these meetings at this point included quiet spaces for senior students to study and eat, sanitary stations in female toilets, and indoor areas for student use. The Uniform and Grooming Policy was also changed to provide more flexibility to students, whilst maintain high standards.

The College developed more clubs for students, at their request. These include but are not limited to clubs in homework, chess, craft activities, cultural and wellbeing. The College extended the opening hours by one hour in the Learning Hub on Tuesday and Thursday afternoon to provide time for senior students to access resources and complete work.

The Executive initiated fortnightly meetings with Year 12 leaders to evaluate school processes and initiated termly meetings of all student leaders. These meetings complemented the meetings they were already a part of through their various portfolios which were facilitated by staff representatives.

Student representatives were also key stakeholders in the decision-making and work conducted in naming the College Chapel and the development of the new Mission and Vision Statement to be launched at the start of 2024.

Year 12 completed a comprehensive Exit Survey which affirmed the quality of work experienced across key domains which included Teaching and Learning, Faith Formation, Community and Careers Transition.

## **Teacher satisfaction**

Staff completed the Xref Engagement Survey which was issued to all schools across the diocese. St Bede's was acknowledged as having the highest rate of completion across the staff. The results for this survey were unpacked by the executive and shared at the staff level. Next steps were then considered amongst the College middle leaders.

The survey measured outcomes in Engagement, Wellbeing and Progress. The strengths unpacked from the survey include the following:

Engagement is high with 83% indicating they are engaged. Staff have a sense of personal accomplishment in their work, they see a future at the school and feel a sense of pride.

Innovation is high with 87% of staff strongly agreeing in the fact the school is innovative. 93% strongly agree the school makes good use of technology in learning.

Safety is a priority at St Bede's with 94% strongly agreeing that WHS is a priority and 86% strongly agree they know who to see and where to go if they feel unsafe or unwell.

Areas of improvement include workload, flexibility, and career progressions. Next steps are on working towards an action plan in these three areas.

# 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>	\$12,043,562
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$4,485,478
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$3,346,692
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$3,103,953
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$844,249
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$23,823,934</b>

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$14,777,678
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$12,777,768
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$7,264,579
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$34,820,025</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