

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

Together in Christ



St Benedict's Primary School

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About this report

St Benedict'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.

Principal's Message

It is my privilege to present to you the 2023 Annual Report for St Benedict's Catholic Primary School, Edgeworth. The purpose of the report is to notify parents and other readers of the nature of the school and its role within the Diocesan System of Schools.

St Benedict's is a Catholic Co-educational, Kindergarten – Year 6 Systemic School in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. We acknowledge that our school is on the country of the Awabakal people. We pay respect to their tribal elders; past present and emerging. We celebrate their continuing culture and commit to walk gently on their land.

As a Catholic school community, we actively aim to express Catholic values throughout the curriculum and the general life of the school; through our words and our actions. Our Catholic identity impacts upon the total curriculum and extra-curricular life of the school. It furthermore embraces the contribution that the Sisters of St Joseph made to the spiritual life of the school. We are particularly proud of the support we give to the less fortunate and taking actions to make our world a better place. Catholic Social teachings permeate everything we do.

Whilst we have had individual and team successes in sporting, cultural and academic endeavours and general success as a school community over the year, by far our greatest achievement is in our students themselves. At St Benedict's, we celebrate growth in all areas of school life and recognise the many different parts of the whole child and the whole community that make the whole greater than the sum of its parts. Excellence in learning is not about being THE best, it is about being YOUR best. That alone is worth celebrating.

The overall extent of the school's success will be more evident throughout this report. I commend the St Benedict's Annual Report to you, a copy of which will be distributed to all members of the school community and available from St Benedict's to any other interested parties. Please join with me in celebrating our achievements in 2023

Parent Body Message

At St Benedict's we are very proud of an active Parents and Friends Association. Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of each month during school terms. Meetings are held in the school administration building starting at 6pm. We alternate out meetings to be held via Zoom to open up availability for more to attend. These meetings begin at 7pm. Our school

Principal and Assistant Principal attends meetings to collaborate with parents as we seek to represent the best interests of the students, parents and staff.

The P&F meetings provide an open forum for all parents and members of the local community to share in the strategic direction of the school's continuous improvement and to make suggestions for the continued development of the school and its facilities.

Close collaboration between the P&F committee and the school executive team ensures that a healthy partnership exists that provides valuable and beneficial support to the children and staff. It is a working partnership and a relationship of which we are proud.

We acknowledge the announcement form the Catholic Schools Office, in October 2023, that all schools will be transitioning to Parent Engagement model to be know as FACE (Family and Community Engagement) by 2025. Whilst currently maintaining our P & F, our proactive and positive transition to this model will be a focus in 2024.

Student Body Message

The school leaders head the student school leadership team and carry out various civic responsibilities such as conducting assemblies, attending official functions that includes a local ANZAC DAY service and Kindergarten Orientation mornings and welcoming visitors. The leaders are supported by the Active Lifestyle, Environmental, Service, Social and Safety Leaders. Together the student leadership team form a Student Parliament attended by all Senior students to discuss student initiatives and navigate the student events and interactions throughout the year. The Leaders of Parliament meet with School Executive to collectively share, plan and implement appropriate initiatives from the Student parliament. Each leader also leads various student groups throughout the year including Mini Vinnies, Eco Warriors, Lunch Clubs, Sport Clubs etc.

2023 was the first full year of the Student parliament in action and the students led their own School Disco, No Bake Club, Coding Club, Cake Stalls and implemented the beginnings of an coordinated recycling program throughout the school.

The school leaders at St Benedict's support the Principal and teachers providing a link between the staff and students and as role models for students. They are just one vehicle of student voice within the school that is so critical to Student wellbeing

School Features

St Benedict's opened on Awabakal land in 1962 and was staffed by Sister Cabrini and Sister Anne Mary of the Sisters of St Joseph, Lochinvar. Over sixty children were housed in four wooden buildings. As the area developed, the school population increased and the school grew with the community.

St Benedict's Primary School is a co-educational Catholic Primary School. It Is part of the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese within the metropolitan location of Edgeworth, New South Wales. Edgeworth is a suburb of Lake Macquarie, New South Wales, Australia, located 18kms west of Newcastle's central business district. It is part of the City of Lake Macquarie local government area.

The school had a total enrolment of 344 students with 14 classes. The school caters for years Kindergarten to Grade 6. The school site now provides a combination of indoor and outdoor learning spaces including 14 classrooms, a library, a learning support hub, a chapel, multipurpose hall and playground facilities such as play equipment, tee pee, sandpit, basketball courts and soccer fields.

St Benedict's provides K-6 education across 7 KLAs. Being a faith-based school, the opportunity to celebrate liturgies and Mass together, and to experience prayer in a variety of ways and settings are important aspects of school life at St Benedict's. Our Catholic charism is visible throughout the school and integrated as a way of life. Our school is an active part of the Parish of Sugarloaf.

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
180	163	68	343

* 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 91.86%. 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
92.85	92.89	91.45	92.34	91.94	91.47	90.09

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	45
Number of full time teaching staff	13
Number of part time teaching staff	15
Number of non-teaching staff	17

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

Friday 27th January - Annual Staff Induction and Governance Paperwork + School Identity – aligning Mission, vision, values and school rules

Monday 30thJanuary -School Improvement plan, Professional Learning and PPD preparation – initial goal setting for whole school and PLTs. Using One Note for Communication Using SharePoint to store school documentation

Monday 24th April - Improving Learning in Mathematics

Approaches to student-centred structured-inquiry teaching – focusing on "how"- A balanced approach to teaching mathematics.

Monday 17th July - Learning for Justice; Empowering through Education - a day exploring the context for indigenous Australians including the current Closing the Gap data, school data, issues with the voice referendum, and stories of indigenous staff within our diocese.

Friday 15th September - Staff Formation; Catholic Social Teachings - reflect on the nature and purpose of the social teachings of the Catholic and how they inform and guide not only our social justice action, but the passionate call to act justly and participate in building God's Kingdom in the here and now.

Monday 18th and Tuesday 19th December - CPR and Emergency Care Training.

Collaborative Inquiry Cycle on Quality Feedback and Goal Setting

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)

As a Parish school grounded in its Josephite beginning, all members live by the vision statement : Aspiring to be people of faith, courage and examples of justice for all. At St Benedict's we will live our mission every day. We will grow in our Catholic Faith and celebrate God's gifts. We will experience a safe and nurturing environment where educational standards are high.

St Benedict's provides K-6 schooling based on Christian Values to give an understanding of and a commitment to the Catholic faith and its traditions. Being a faith-based school, the opportunity to celebrate liturgies and Mass together, and to experience prayer in a variety of ways and settings are important aspects of school life at St Benedict's. Our Catholic faith makes us different from other schools and with this we are challenged to reflect gospel values, especially truth, justice, acceptance and forgiveness.

The St Benedict's school community actively participates in the life of Sugarloaf Parish. Regular meetings are held between the school's Religious Education Coordinator and the Parish Priest and Parish Sacramental Team.

The Religious Education of our children and the creation of a Catholic culture is a key priority. We are authentically Catholic and this is visible throughout our school through symbols, in our actions and in our words.

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.

Every teacher uses the NSW syllabus to plan their teaching and learning sequences. They follow the SBE scope and sequence for each KLA and the whole school assessment schedule. Kindergarten to Year 2 classes implement the InitialLit program in English.

All teachers in K-6 have now been provided with Professional Learning opportunities unpacking and understanding the new K-6 English and Mathematics syllabus in readiness for full implementation in 2024

Teachers adjust their teaching and learning programs in consultation with the Learning Support Teacher as outlined in their Personal Plans.

In line with the Catholic Schools Office initiative, Leading, Learning, Collaborative, we continued the year unpacking the Assessment Waterfall including a deep dive into the impact of quality feedback to develop assessment capable learners.

The main focus of the year was to have all teachers successfully use Assessment Rubrics to drive quality feedback and inform student goal setting for English and Mathematics by the end of the year. The professional learning was provided around this, as well as in class support from the pedagogical mentor and lead teacher.

In the second half of the year, there was a specific focus on the nature of the gifted and high achieving learner. Initially the focus was developing a deep understanding of our learners and the identification tools that can be applied to have them supported in the classroom. The data we drew from the identification process gave considerable clarity to the students who can be bests supported through the differentiated instruction and benefit from the work of Michela McDowell in "developing Expert Learners". the work in this area will continue into 2024.

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 Benedict'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	
	Grammar and Punctuation	72%	54%	
Year 3	Reading	74%	67%	
	Writing	90%	76%	
	Spelling	66%	61%	
	Numeracy	70%	65%	

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards		
		School	Australia	
	Grammar and Punctuation	68%	64%	
Year 5	Reading	80%	74%	
	Writing	56%	66%	
	Spelling	71%	69%	
	Numeracy	68%	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

The importance of respect and responsibility are core values on which our school stands together with Love & Faith, Compassion & Action, Empowerment & Effort, Courage & Honesty. These values grounded in the person of Jesus are foundational to the formation of the whole school Wellbeing framework and the Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) Framework. The core values permeate all elements of PBL which promotes, guides and celebrates positive choices and interactions that underpin behaviour and active participation in school life.

Social Justice is a core value at St. Benedict's. The importance of Social Justice is reflected in the school's vision statement. St Benedict's is a very generous school community where students, parents and staff are keenly aware of the needs of others. As such, the school has a very active Mini Vinnies Conference that organised various fundraising activities in support of the work of the senior conference and parish initiatives in both the local parish and overseas communities. A continued focus on Catholic Social Teachings in 2023 saw the promotion of and commitment to the Eco Warriors group to primarily protect and ensure the Care of our Common Home.

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

Catholic Identity - Catholic Identity that includes the vision, mission, motto, emblem, and values continue to be integrated into learning, wellbeing and PBL and demonstrate a non negotiable commitment to this across all areas of our school

Leading Learning Collaborative/ Assessment Capable Learners - The use of bump it up walls and rubrics to inform Quality Feedback and Goal Setting is established and students are developing capacity to be assessment capable learners.

Partners in Learning - Opportunities for parents and teachers to meet and collaboratively set learning goals that are emended into COMPASS profiles and Semester Reports was introduced in 2023. This saw an increase in the uptake of these meeting from 45% to 78% of the parent body. We look to include students into the partnership in 2024.

Wellbeing and Positive Behaviours Framework - ongoing support and adaptation of these components. Data analysis across different components used to inform next steps. Look to develop an ongoing collection of student data via a wellbeing survey in 2024.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

#1 Faith in Action To promote powerful links between Faith Formation (Head and Heart) and Mission and Justice Dimensions (Heart and Hand), student and staff will regularly articulate

relevant Catholic Social Teaching that adds perspective to curriculum, purpose to action and deepens understanding of faith in action.

#2 Wellbeing for Life So that data informs the school's support for student wellbeing, staff will continually raise awareness via School TV and implement a student wellbeing and engagement survey (Via Pivot Pilot) regularly. The school will use this data to adapt initiatives and approaches within the term and communicate this to parents. School to track growth data in student responses across pilot.

3 Right Learning, Right Child So that students are engaging with learning the meets their capacity and pushes them to achieve their next learning goals, the school will commit to differentiated instruction in every classroom via multiple entry success criteria, task engagement and assessment rubrics of deepening level of success.

#4 Partners in Learning So that all partners are actively involved in timely discussion about student learning (their achievements and goals); the school will introduce learning conferences with Parents, teachers and Students to jointly develop learning goals for each Semester and embed feedback on these goals as part of Insights.

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

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and staff are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. In 2023, the school has made a committed effort to greater levels of communication, consultation with key school initiatives and updates on work being done in the area of learning and wellbeing.

In the 2023 Tell Them from Me survey conducted in September, the school tracked positive growth in Parent feedback when asked to consider the school as inclusive, safe, welcoming, supportive of positive behaviours and learning and communicating well with parents. Qualitative feedback indicated that parents were benefiting from the new communication format and regular updates via COMPASS. They did indicate that the Reporting of Student learning needs further discussion to be more proactive across the year and inclusive of parent voice. This fed one of the key goals in 2023 which we have since enacted. We have tracked an increase in Parent take up of opportunities to meet to discuss student learning from 35% to 78% from 2022 to 2023

Student satisfaction

Student data in the TTFM survey also indicated positive trends in the student's perception of feeling safe at school, their experiences of bullying and witnessing positive behaviours at school. Student data indicated they wanted a greater voice in the school; wishing to contribute ideas and solutions to some of the different problems.

The Student Leadership now encompasses a Student Parliament with up to 20 students with leadership portfolios across all areas of school life and all Year 6 students being part of the Parliament. The launch of the Parliament was in 2023 and the students responded positively to the challenges within the student parliament. they now very clearly identify Student Voice within the school and can identify how it is modelled within Parliament.

The school will seek to establish regular survey contacts with students throughout the 2024 year to gain ongoing clarity of student satisfaction.

Teacher satisfaction

2023 was a strong year for teacher commitment to Professional Performance and Development Plan and Teacher Accreditation. There was very minimal turn over on staff reflecting an investment from the staff team to this school across years .

Staff morale remained reasonably high through the various time and work pressure experienced across the year and ongoing streamlining of the delivery of PL and communication allowed for meeting times to be balanced between a focus on PLT and CMM priorities as it and actual PL linked to the Strategic Plan.

All staff were confident in the completion of their PP&D for the year and were able to confidently align their PL to their actions and to the whole school strategic improvement.

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	\$3,776,019	
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0	
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$1,054,267	
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$808,289	
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$2,025	
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$304,194	
Total Income	\$5,944,794	

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023		
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$62,508	
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$4,436,532	
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,513,160	
Total Expenditure	\$6,012,200	

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