

2023

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

Together in Christ



St Joseph's Primary School

Marquet Street, MERRIWA 2329

Principal: Mrs Anne Marie Peebles

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

About this report

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

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

Message from key groups in our community

Principal's Message

It is with great pride that I present the 2023 Annual School Report. St Joseph's Primary School Merriwa is a small, rural school situated in the Upper Hunter.

Demographically, we are the furthest school from the Diocesan offices, but we are never left wanting!

Our mission is to be a community of Catholic faith where the uniqueness of each child is nurtured and valued; where students are empowered and challenged to become lifelong learners with optimism and hope for the future.

Students this year have achieved academically, with placings in the Diocesan Public Speaking and Maths Bee as well as representing the school in the Regional Spelling and Regional Debating. This year we had one student working within the Maitland Newcastle Gifted and Talented Virtual Academy program and two students participated in the Aspire Young Scriptwriters program.

This year staff have continued with professional learning in Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, and the Assessment Waterfall with a continued focus on literacy.

I express my personal gratitude to all the staff for their continued hard work, dedication and genuine love for each other, the students and families and our beautiful school.

We look forward to continuing to improve the standard of our learning and academic outcomes throughout 2024 and beyond as our school enrolments increase.

Parent Body Message

2023 – a year of success and adaptation for our P&F.

Throughout the year, our P&F has provided opportunities for us as parents and guardians to play an active role in the life of the school, advocating for improvement and contributing to school activities and finances.

In 2023 our P&F volunteers have operated the school canteen and uniform shop on a weekly basis, Mother's Day and Father's Day gifts stalls and BBQ, the canteen at the town Campdraft, supported school sporting events, all in addition to running our annual Campdraft and Fete.

We began the year with a goal of increasing family engagement and raising the profile of our P&F to ensure the sustainability of our Association and its great work. Events such as the social nights in term one and two which were attended by so many of our families, teachers, and staff, enabled us to connect with one another in a relaxed way.

Behind the scenes, establishing regular check ins between the School Principal and President has solidified the partnership between the P&F and the school, ensuring that we are working strategically, toward common goals.

This year we have made a significant investment in a new chilled and filtered water system for the playground, ipads, laptops, smart TV and resources for all classrooms, the library and learning support. This level of investment was only possible due to the incredible fundraising efforts of the P&F over many years (not just this year) and has played an important role in raising the profile of the P&F across the school, the parent body and the wider community.

While the year was not without challenges; operation of the Aberdeen Bus service was outsourced and as such, cleaning of the bus is no longer a means of fundraising for us and we were notified of the pending restructure of the P&F to a FACE model, we have adapted and looked for ways to improve how we do things.

As a result of the momentous efforts of our Campdraft and Fete team, our fundraising surpassed previous years, which is a truly remarkable achievement given we are a small (but mighty!) community. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all our volunteers that worked tirelessly to make sure this event was a success.

To round out 2023 as a year like no other, the P&F hosted the end of year rewards day; every child in the school attended an excursion to Port Stephens to either visit the Koala Sanctuary or participate in a surfing lesson. It was an incredible day that will no doubt be remembered by everyone for some time to come!

Thank you to everyone who has contributed in any way to making 2023 a success

Student Body Message

What a year 2023 has been! It has been an intense but exciting year for everyone including the teachers. As the school captain of 2023 I would like to take the opportunity to thank the students and staff of St Josephs for the amazing year we have experienced.

We had the extremely successful Camp draft and fete only made possible by the parents and friends of St Joseph's. A few of the students rode in the camp draft and the Year Six students also ran their fun stalls.

Stage 3 attended separate excursion to Sydney and Canberra with St Mary's Scone and St Joseph's Denman. K to 2 explored Tocal Homestead and learnt about its history. Students

including myself were successful in the small schools relay making it to State. We were over the moon with our achievement.

In Term 3 our school performed our original school play, this years theme, 'Animals Reclaim Their Land' and like all the years before it was a sell out! Sadly that was my last ever primary school play.

To rap up it has been a huge year full of opportunities for all. I really believe that this school has helped everyone become respectable students who are prepared for amazing things in the world.

School Features

History of the school

St Joseph's Primary School was founded in 1883 by the St Anne's Catholic Parish Merriwa. In 1885 the Sisters of St Joseph took up residence in Merriwa and assumed responsibility for the education of the children at the school. They were the first Foundation formed from Lochinvar, which had come into existence only two years earlier in 1883. The Sisters of St Joseph continued a teaching presence at the school until the early 1990s.

In 1886, the total enrolment was 77 - 39 girls and 38 boys. On 25th November, 1928, Bishop Dwyer blessed the new school in Marquet Street. In 1954, Bishop Toohey blessed the new infants' classroom and in 1961, blessed the new school building of three classrooms.

Secondary classes operated at St Joseph's Merriwa from the early 1950's to 1968. In 2008 the Honourable Joel Fitzgibbon opened and Fr Des Harrigan blessed the new Kindergarten classroom giving the school a total of four classrooms.

In 2016 the school gained a new library which boasts state of the art facilities. In 2019 the total refurbishment of the student toilet blocks was completed. In 2020, the belltower was lovingly restored after significant damage. In 2021, the new playground shelter was constructed, giving students a safe place to play in all conditions. In 2023, the playground equipment was upgraded.

For over 130 years, St Joseph's Catholic School has provided quality education to the children of the Merriwa district.

Location/Drawing Area

St Joseph's School is located in the rural township of Merriwa in the New South Wales Upper Hunter Shire Council area. It is the most western school in the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. Students travel from within the town limits, as well as from outlying rural properties. The villages of Cassilis to the west, and Gungahlin to the east are served by this school. Although the geographical drawing area dwarfs other Diocesan urban schools, the population within the drawing area is small as is the school enrolment (2023 - 43 students).

Neither the small population nor the 180 odd kilometre distance to our Newcastle based Catholic Schools Office can dampen the St Joseph's School Community's passion for education. St Joseph's Primary School Merriwa is a small school with a big heart! Students at St Joseph's are offered Catholic education from K-12. Students completing Year 6 are able to travel by coach daily to St Joseph's High School Aberdeen.

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
18	25	1	43

* 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 88.64%. 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
90.52	89.92	89.21	89.23	86.12	88.90	86.55

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

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2023:

Total number of staff	13
Number of full time teaching staff	5
Number of part time teaching staff	3
Number of non-teaching staff	5

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

Staff at St Joseph's Primary School Merriwa continued to engage in relevant and meaningful Professional Learning, which built upon and aligned closely with the School's Improvement Plan for 2023.

Professional Learning Highlights included:

Lenten Program held weekly over Lent for a period of 6 weeks, which nurtured staff member's Faith Formation, according to the Catholic Schools Office, FEA Policy.

Pedagogical Mentor, Principal and staff attending professional learning with Beverley Derewianka focusing on the teaching-learning cycle and the importance of literacy across all learning areas. Staff continued to have a focus on phonics implementing a scope and sequence developed by the staff and create resources to implement the new K-2 Syllabus. The staff also spent time unpacking the new 3-6 Mathematics and English syllabus. Termly writing samples were marked collaboratively with PLT partner and track on a data wall as well as Acadience reading data.

Development of Learning Intentions and Successful Criteria in English and other KLAs with the implementation of Bump it Up walls in classrooms. When combined with sound pedagogy and instructional walks, student learning gains are found to be of a higher yield.

Staff continued in their pursuit of excellence and consistency throughout the year through regular Professional Learning Team meetings, where conversations generally revolved around student learning and improvement.

Catholic Identity and Mission

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

At the heart of everything there is always Jesus Christ.

Catholic schools educate:

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

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

Catholic Imagination and Spirituality

St Joseph's Primary School Merriwa's mission is to be a community of Catholic faith, where the uniqueness of each child will be nurtured and valued, where students will be empowered and challenged to become lifelong learners with optimism and hope for the future. There were many opportunities for students to celebrate Catholic mission and identity at St Joseph's school. Daily prayer, Opening School Mass, Commissioning Mass, liturgies for St Joseph's Day, Grandparent's Day, Mother's Day and Father's Day, just to name a few. Towards the end of their final primary school year, the Year 6 students participated in a Retreat, where they reflected on their time at the school, and their journey moving forward. Likewise, Year 5 students were involved in a Leadership Day which focused on servant leadership and what this may look like in the community; seeing a need and doing something about it. Wherever possible the school community attends significant parish liturgical celebrations at our local church, St Anne's.

During Friday assembly each week the students reflect on the Sunday Gospel and apply the salient message to their everyday lives, they also take part in a reflection where they have time to think about how the week's lesson may be present in their lives. Parents are invited to share this Liturgy, along with all others, with the students. Staff members also gather for prayer once a week which focuses on the Gospel message and applying this to their

personal and school lives. The staff participated in a Lenten Program to which parish members also attended.

A positive relationship between the school and Parish continues to be a high priority at St Joseph's school. During Catholic Schools Week students and teachers opened their classrooms and school for the wider community. St Joseph's participated in a Catholic School's Week Mass and a school parish dinner was also held during this week. Each fortnight there is an REC section in the newsletter which is emailed out to parents to keep them updated of any changes in our school and parish communities. Social media is also used to build awareness of significant religious events and feast days we celebrate. The school supported the local St Vincent de Paul Society via Vinnies Day in Term 2 and Catholic Mission by Socktober and Mission Day in Term 3. The Parish Priest maintains an active working relationship with the Principal, REC and other members of our school community. The REC works closely with the parish priest and the children preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation.

Christian Discipleship

Prayer and reflection begin all meetings, gatherings and the parent newsletter. In each prayer there is a call to action. At the end of the school year, Year 6 students participated in a retreat, and Year 5 students in a Leadership Day. Our weekly liturgy provides opportunities for students, staff and parents to reflect on the message of the Gospel. A relevant hymn/song is also used at times to help staff and students fully understand the Gospel message of the week.

Throughout the teaching of Religion, students are given the opportunity to reflect and participate in a variety of activities, such as meditation, which allows for the formation and development of their own spirituality. Each classroom and the staffroom have a sacred space designed and refreshed regularly depending on our Liturgical season.

Religion lessons at St Joseph's follow the curriculum set by the Maitland–Newcastle Diocese, which is currently going through developments into modules. All class teachers are responsible for the teaching of Religious Education in their classes and are formally accredited to teach Religious Education or are in the process of satisfying the academic requirements needed for accreditation. Each structured lesson develops the knowledge and understandings of Catholic faith. Class and school liturgical, sacramental and prayer celebrations form an important aspect of the Religious Education curriculum.

Religious literacy is a priority in the classroom with added resources and support given to teachers and students particularly a focus of Religious Literacy vocabulary- which directly link up with the units taught. In 2023 our teachers have attended relevant professional

development on the Religious Education curriculum to gain insightful knowledge about the newly developed modules that have begun being released.

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.

Staff development continued in implementing a whole school phonics and spelling scope and sequence, plus work informed by Beverley Derewianka and the Teaching and Learning cycle.

The main aspect of the learning cycle

- identifies the language demands of the task;
- explicitly teaches students the genres needed for success in schooling;
- is concerned with deep learning of content together with learning the language of the content area;
- makes explicit the learning intention and success criteria for each stage of the cycle;
- constantly assesses students' progress at each stage of the cycle and responds to identified needs. work was to focus on engaging students in topics, eliciting prior knowledge and build shared.

Positive Behaviour For Learning (PB4L) continues to be a focus at St Joseph's, we engaged support from the Catholic Schools Office to review our practices. This continued awareness and approach to the behavioural outcomes for students have seen continued good behaviour at school, more calm students and teachers who focus more of their teaching time on teaching, rather than on behaviour management.

Staff continued to engage in Visible Well Being with Annabelle Knight, from Strengths Canvass in Melbourne. This professional learning, coupled with the school's work in Wellbeing this year, has contributed to the establishment of a Wellbeing Framework for the school.

At St Joseph's, a culture of "High Expectations, No Excuses" is embodied throughout. Staff are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence.

All staff in 2023 were fully accredited or graduate teachers with NESA and conducted themselves professionally in their work.

The school's learning support programs, which included MiniLit, Multi Lit, MacqLit and this year, a Mathematics intervention program CAMS and STAMS and assistance with Literacy and Numeracy Groups, provided students with excellent pathways to success.

Whole school approaches to improve student achievement included the use of Learning intentions and Success Criteria in Religion Mathematics, English and other KLAs, which highlighted strengths and areas of improvement for students. This gave students a greater clarity in their learning and allowed staff to refine their teaching skills. 2023 has seen further focus on feedback as well as co-constructed success criteria.

Staff work in two Professional Learning Teams (PLT's), Infants (K-2) and Primary (3-6). These teams are highly collaborative and professional in their diligence and pursuit of high performance throughout the school. The teams worked closely with our Pedagogical Mentor (PM), to achieve strong growth in all areas of the PAT testing regime.

A continuation of the "Leading Learning Collaborative", a CSO initiative based on the work of Lyn Sharratt, Canadian Educational Researcher, was weaved through the Professional Learning of staff. Data Walls have continued to enhance the terrific work being done in this area of school improvement.

Our Performing Arts program was further enhanced this year, with the regular visit of Anna Kerrigan, ASPIRE Artistic Director. Her input, influence and expertise were invaluable in assisting all students and staff in the formation of the highly successful School Play. This year, we successfully showcased "Animals Reclaim their Land".

St Joseph's worked diligently with students throughout the year in Mental Maths, introducing maths groups to the infants classes and continuing with Maths groups in the primary classes, and Spelling, as well as Public Speaking. The school held school-wide competitions, before advancing onto Regional and Diocesan levels.

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 Joseph's Primary School for 2023 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	43%	54%
	Reading	57%	67%
	Writing	43%	76%
	Spelling	43%	61%
	Numeracy	71%	65%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	40%	64%
	Reading	70%	74%
	Writing	50%	66%
	Spelling	60%	69%
	Numeracy	50%	68%

Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies guidelines and procedures are informed by the [Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#).

The Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy 2022 aims to provide a framework for the policies, programs, resources and practices implemented at system and school level with the purpose of supporting and enhancing the wellbeing of students, and all within its school community. It refers to the overall climate of care that exists within a Catholic school.

The environment is designed to be safe and inclusive, one that promotes academic rigour. A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents, and the wellbeing of all.

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

St Joseph's willingly and wholeheartedly participates in Positive Education and Visible Wellbeing Programs, as a member of the Where There's A Will Foundation Upper Hunter Cluster. The Principal and Executive attends regular meetings each term to keep in touch with the latest information.

We engaged with Annabelle Knight, from Melbourne, who is an expert on Positive Education. We met with her once per term to speak about how we can enhance our teaching and learning in Positive Education. Staff completed online training refresher courses in Visible Wellbeing using the SEARCH Framework.

A regular Character Strength of the Week focus was placed in newsletters and on our Facebook page, to keep the public informed of our initiatives. A Character Strength of the Week Merit Award continues to great effect. An end of year major award is awarded to the students who shows a good knowledge of strengths in themselves and others.

Wellbeing Weeks continued, which were in Week 5 or 6 of every term. The emphasis was on "No Homework, No Meetings" and opportunities for staff and students to enhance wellbeing on a personal or spiritual level. Activities were organised by teachers and were proven to be a great success and change from the regular routine during lunchtimes! Discos, mindfulness colouring, thankful cards and meditation were some of the terrific initiatives provided by the school staff.

St Joseph's Merriwa students were able to participate in several community gatherings and events. Our school representatives attended the ANZAC Day ceremony, which was greatly appreciated and noticed in the town. Students created Christmas Cards and engaged with the local hospital (Merriwa Multi-Purpose Centre) and Gummun Place to deliver these cards to those in need and sing carols.

In 2023, our Pastoral Care Worker funding continued. Our PCW worked diligently to provide services such as a lunchtime clubs, Gardening Club, breakfast club, young farmers program and provided meaningful and local support for students and families where necessary.

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

Literacy has been a major focus for 2023, consolidating phonics and seeing the evidence in the students writing.

Phonics/Spelling

- Infants to follow best practice model Phonics-Phoneme/ grapheme relationship (reading/spelling at the same time) of daily review, phoneme/grapheme, word, sentence, and dictation.
- Stage 2-Continue to consolidate with a particular focus on morphology.
- Stage 3-Continue with scope and sequence with a focus on morphology and etymology.
- Spelling is formally assessed in writing samples using the National Literacy Learning Progressions.

Writing

- Teachers to continued to mark writing samples in PLTs together to ensure consistent teacher judgement as well as collaborating on strategies to target students needs through explicit teaching.
- Writing is assessed using the National Literacy Learning Progressions
- From these assessments teachers then identified areas that needed to be targeted and explicitly taught.
- Students in primary are expected to move at least 1 progression per year.
- Students in infants are expected to move 1-2 progressions per semester.
- With these continued practices teachers have become more familiar with students needs and 'where to next', thus enabling the waterfall assessment chart to be a

continual classroom practice where it occurs informally during lessons and for both formative and summative assessments.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

Catholic Formation and Mission

The improvement of the overall teaching of Religion

All staff working towards gaining accreditation, as per the Catholic Schools Office Faith Education Accreditation (FEA) Policy

The continuation of a more rigid environmental awareness through the document, Laudato Si with support from our Pastoral Care Worker.

Learning and Teaching

- Targeted Mathematics groups- the instruction questions to develop a greater depth and understanding of a concept.
- Infants- focus Quantifying number and Additive strategies
- Primary- Quantifying number, Additive strategy, Multiplicative strategies
- Professional Learning for all staff and utilising knowledgeable others and sharing resources and knowledge from other schools.
- To diminish cognitive load, creative repetitive, sustainable practices and match them to resources.

Leadership

To continue to enhance the quality of the Principal and REC and their leadership capacity.

Continuation of Mentoring and Observation of teachers throughout the school, including Instructional Walks and Talks, to enhance leadership capacity and build teacher capacity.

Wellbeing and Partnerships

Continue to enhance, review, and implement the PB4L program throughout St Joseph's.

Visible Wellbeing Professional Learning for all staff – through engagement with Annabelle Knight- Canvass strengths.

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

Enrolments for Kinder 2024 has risen from 4 in 2023 to 16 in 2024

The Tell Them From Me Survey was not completed in 2023.

The results from 2022 are included here:

- According to the Tell Them From Me Survey for Parents in 2022:
- Parents felt very welcomed in the school, could easily speak with their child's teachers and the Principal about any matters.
- They were well informed and were given appropriate and immediate feedback about their child or school events.
- Parents believed the school supports positive behaviour and students are clear about school rules.
- 100% of parents 'agreed' or "strongly agreed" in recommending St Joseph's Merriwa to others.

Student satisfaction

According to the Tell Them From Me Survey for Students in 2022:

- Students valued their positive relationships with their peers
- Students valued, very highly their schooling outcomes and believed what they learn at school will make a difference to them.
- Students mostly felt their behaviours were "positive" at school (81%)
- 87% of students felt they tried hard to succeed in their learning.
- 93% of students felt the school would help if they felt unsafe.
- 83% of students recommended St Joseph's strongly to others.

Teacher satisfaction

- According to the Tell Them From Me Survey for Teachers in 2022:
- Teachers felt well supported in challenging times (10/10)
- Staff felt as though they collaborated well with each other (8.3/10)
- Student engagement and work were discussed regularly (9.2/10)
- Staff felt that they worked well with students with special learning needs
- Staff felt they have clear expectations for classroom behaviour
- Teachers wish to continue to improve their skills in engaging with feedback at the school.
- All teachers felt that leadership was strong and effective, as well as their belief that the school was highly regarded in the local Merriwa community.
- Over the last 2 years there has been 100% turnover of teaching staff. All teachers are remaining at the school for 2024.

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	\$1,250,277
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$351,419
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$107,044
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$4,933
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$33,650
Total Income	\$1,747,323

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$187
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$1,160,473
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$630,841
Total Expenditure	\$1,791,501

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