

2023

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

Together in Christ



Our Lady of Victories Primary School

15 Lovell Parade, SHORTLAND 2307

Principal: Mr Gerry Vandermaat

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

About this report

Our Lady of Victories 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

Now that COVID is well and truly behind us, the challenges of bringing together a disjointed community was an important focus for Our Lady of Victories in 2023.

It was a year where difficult decisions had to be made in the parent participation model and alternatives were explored. Difficulties with consistency in staffing challenged the school community and it was pleasing to see the children stay focused with all the change happening around them.

We welcomed the largest Kindergarten intake in many years which provides evidence that Our Lady of Victories is a sought after place for parents to have their children educated. We look forward to further growth in the coming years.

The end of the year was a chance to celebrate our successes and we finished looking forward with a strong and vibrant community.

Parent Body Message

2023 was a year of change in regard to how families engage with the school. At our Parents and Friends (P&F) Annual General Meeting no parents nominated for executive roles so could not form a functioning P&F.

Advice was sought from the Parent Engagement team at the Catholic Schools office to look for a new way to facilitate parent engagement. After multiple discussions, the parent body decided that moving forward, a Family and Community Engagement (FACE) model would be adopted. As a part of this model the school has implemented fortnightly 'Cuppa and a Chat' sessions where parents are welcome to drop in discuss school life with an executive member of staff and monthly meetings are also run by the school principal. These meetings aim to facilitate discussion around school events, teaching and learning practices, school policy and fundraising.

Our Lady of Victories strives to build good relationships with the parent body. We are confident that these latest changes will enhance the relationships between school, families and the wider community. The dedicated support from families and the local community of the school is greatly appreciated as without these volunteers we would not have been able to provide the social and community events that are enjoyed by children and their families each year.

This coming year we look forward to events such as: Continuing to run the 'Victory Café,' Easter raffle, Mother's Day and Father's Day stalls, annual disco, end of year party and Christmas raffle. The way these events are being organised and run is also evolving. To build a sense of connection and community among parents the school is supporting each class to organise and run a social or fundraising event. We are looking forward to seeing the connections and engagement this builds.

Thanks go to the outgoing P&F executive for their exceptional efforts in promoting a sense of community and pride in our school, including their fabulous efforts towards fundraising for the educational needs for our children. Thanks goes to all general members of the P&F for your commitment to our school community and the association, those who have volunteered their time to work in the canteen, wrap raffle prizes, attend Mother's Day/Father's Day Stalls, and putting together various social events over the last 12 months. All efforts are appreciated and are what brings us together as a school community.

Our Lady of Victories Parent Body

Student Body Message

I like to be part of Our Lady of Victorious because it is a fantastic school. I like Everything there. Here are the following reasons why.

Firstly, I have awesome friends who always make me happy. We talk during break times and play soccer with the boys, which is so much fun.

Secondly, my excellent teachers, especially my year six teachers always help me learn and grow in my classroom.

Lastly, I am proud to be a school captain because I am responsible, helpful and a good listener. I wear my badge with pride and take my role seriously.

In conclusion, being part of OLV is the best thing ever, as are my amazing friends and teachers and my essential role as a school captain.

(Michelle - Yr 6 Student)

I like being proud captain at OLV because it gives me responsibility which I love. Some things are really important. and requires me to show responsibility and respect. I am looking forward to representing the school at the community ANZAC service later this year.

I feel proud to put my badge on each morning and when I walk in the school gate. Being school captain involves a challenge and I look forward to it each day because the school is worth the effort.

(Maxwell - Yr 6 Student)

School Features

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

Our Lady of Victories Primary School was established by Fr Roley Smyth with three Sisters of Joseph (Mary Cecily, Matthew and Marguerite) originally being named St Joseph's in 1957. It started with an initial enrolment of 81 in a range of classes from Kinder to year 4. It grew steadily over the subsequent years and reached a total of more than 300 in classes Kinder to Year 6 during the sixties.

The spirit of the Sisters of St Joseph is still evident in the school's commitment. Our Lady of Victories School is committed to developing a Catholic Faith Community. In 2007 the school celebrated 50 years of Catholic Education in Shortland. In 2011, a community hall was constructed at Our Lady of Victories with funding from the Federal Government BER program. Major renovations for the classrooms were completed at the end of Term 2 in 2016. Playground upgrades were made during 2018 with the support of Parents & Friends fund raising activities to support the new learning initiatives in Kinder in 2019 as well as widen the playground experiences for the rest of the school.

LOCATION/DRAWING AREA

Our Lady of Victories draws from areas within the Parish of Wallsend/Shortland. Children from the suburbs of Shortland, Birmingham Gardens, Wallsend, Fletcher, Maryland and surrounds may be enrolled at Our Lady of Victories. The school caters for all children from Years Kinder to Year 6 After Year 6, families may choose San Clemente High School, Mayfield, to continue their children's Catholic education.

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
75	64	43	139

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The [Enrolment Policy](#) applies to all school enrolments within the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. School authorities manage local enrolment processes and procedures in a manner consistent with the rationale and guiding principles articulated in this Enrolment Policy and accompanying [Enrolment Procedures](#). It aims to:

- Set direction for school procedures and practices for enrolling students into Catholic primary and secondary schools within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.
- Establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices.
- Assist the system of Catholic schools to:
 - provide schooling, where possible, for children of Catholic families who seek enrolment
 - cater for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources
 - encourage parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in faith.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2023 was 89.65%. 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
89.71	86.18	90.69	90.36	92.61	89.93	88.09

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

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2023:

Total number of staff	21
Number of full time teaching staff	10
Number of part time teaching staff	6
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

In 2023, the school staff participated in:

Executive Assembly Days

Leading Learning Collaborative - Lyn Sharratt - Principal as Lead Learner

PLT's twice per term

Initilit Training for Year K-2

Pilgrimage - Camino Santiago de Compostella

Successful Foundations Refresher

Vocabulary in Practice - Donna Crow

Retreats

Faith Witness Story

LiFT - Bev Drinkwater & Michael McDowell

Tamworth Study Tour

Dr Michelle Connolly

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)

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

Throughout 2023 all staff participated in Dr Michelle Connolly system formation Day. Over the year Our Lady of Victories erected new signs to display around the school with our Vision

and Mission Statements. The staff are able to refer to these during class time and playground time to familiarise the children with both the school's vision and mission statements.

In 2023, the Year 1 class followed the new Religion units of work that were written by the Catholic Schools Office and found them very valuable.

There was a community build up through our Cuppa & Chat where the parents suggested what sort of things they would like to discuss or have further knowledge in.

Throughout the year we celebrated Weekly Monday morning Liturgies, Harmony Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparents' Day, Catholic Schools Week, ANZAC, NAIDOC Week, Our Lady of Victories Feast Day and participated in Friday Parish Masses. We had a lot of interested guests join us in all our wonderful celebrations.

We had a number of students participate in our Parish based Sacramental Program with extra help being provided after school for parents and students who wanted to take part in this program.

Our School took part in social justice initiatives such as Project Compassion, Vinnies Sleep-Out, the "Socktober " Catholic Mission Appeal and St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal.

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.

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Our Lady of Victories honours its commitment to quality Catholic education through its provision of high-quality programs enabling each child to reach their full potential. We are a community of learning characterised by high expectations to achieve excellence, academic rigour, innovation and purpose, within an environment that engages, empowers and enables. The curriculum at Our Lady of Victories is based on the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Curriculum. Students receive instruction in all key learning areas. There are seven key learning areas taught from Kindergarten to Year 6. For more information our policies are available on our school website where you will find policies on Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science & Technology, HSIE, Creative Arts, PDHPE.

<https://www.shortland.catholic.edu.au/curriculum>

Learning Support

Quality teaching is provided by exceptional educators at Our Lady of Victories and is very well resourced in terms of equipment and support personnel. Our Lady of Victories provides learning support services and special needs programs, including access to specialists in psychology, occupational therapy and speech pathology.

Providing a meaningful and inclusive learning program, Our Lady of Victories caters for the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, social and physical dimensions of each student. It fosters the wellbeing of all students and other members within its school community so that each person is “empowered and challenged to become lifelong learners with optimism and hope for the future”.

Our Lady of Victories aims to provide a fully inclusive mainstream learning environment that reflects the principles of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Disability Standards for Education (2005). All students are included in the activities of the school community and given opportunities and responsibilities that recognise their value to the community and provide positive learning and social experiences. Our commitment to the practices of purposeful inclusion reflects the Gospel values of respect, equality and social justice. Within a Christian framework, we provide a learning environment that is supportive and responsive to individual needs and differences and that recognises and celebrates the individual student’s abilities and strengths.

WE AIM TO DO THIS BY:

- helping all students reach their full potential, academically, socially and emotionally identifying individual strengths and needs
- providing appropriate interventions where necessary
- fostering the growth of student confidence and independence in learning
- working collaboratively with parents and other specialists for the benefit of each student.
- providing the latest technologies to enhance their learning

STUDENTS SUPPORTED BY SPECIAL LEARNING AT OUR LADY OF VICTORIES HAVE NEEDS IN ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- mental or physical disabilities (primary focus)
- learning difficulties
- English as second language (ESL)
- behavioural difficulties
- mental health concerns

- organisational issues
- social skills
- gifted and talented identification
- anger management
- literacy, maths/numeracy support
- general population (curriculum support)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background

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 Our Lady of Victories 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	71%	54%
	Reading	83%	67%
	Writing	88%	76%
	Spelling	67%	61%
	Numeracy	65%	65%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	85%	64%
	Reading	90%	74%
	Writing	80%	66%
	Spelling	75%	69%
	Numeracy	63%	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

Each fortnight, at our assembly, the teachers recognise students, or group of students, who are actively living our Vision and Mission through their actions. Awards have the reason on them and these can be seen in the awards section of the newsletter.

Our V&M statements also link with our PBL (Positive Behaviours for Learning) focus of I AM SAFE, I AM A LEARNER and I AM RESPONSIBLE in that the same sort of caring, community minded actions are encouraged through this initiative as well. It will be unpacked over time with the students so they know HOW to live our V&M.

We have displayed our V&M Statements with new signage around the school and refer to them regularly at morning assemblies and throughout the day.. Further we respond to positive displays of behaviour by recording these on open display charts around the COLA.

We have a beautiful community at OLV and this will serve to ensure that we instil lifelong values that will benefit our community for years to come, and other communities into which our students enter, after they leave us

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

During 2023, we focused on revisiting all the key areas of comprehension from K-6. The following areas were: main ideas, inferring, summarising, monitoring, visualising, predicting, connecting and asking questions. After each focus area each class shared activities they did in the school newsletter. Parents were also informed of each area being taught with an explanation to be able to encourage the children to be using these skills when reading at home.

Throughout staff meeting and PLT's staff developed their skills in teaching new vocabulary based on English and Maths. Children were encouraged to use the new language taught in everyday situations. Through PLT's Staff worked on developing their capacity to interpret, analyse and use data to inform teaching, this assisted staff to develop data driven teaching units and collaboratively developed and analysed assessments.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

For 2024, Our Lady of Victories, we intend to:

- Unpack our new Vision and Mission Statements,
- Establish baselines and identify consistent practices in Vocabulary development especially towards improving Numeracy skills,
- Embed practices and data collection across the school.
- Develop a supportive and positive culture across the school.

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

Data from the latest "Tell Them From Me" survey tool indicates that parents were supportive of the Faith life of the children at Our Lady of Victories. They are confident that:

- the school is a safe and supportive place for their children.
- behaviour issues are dealt with in a timely manner.
- the school has good leadership and would recommend the school to others.

Student satisfaction

Data from the latest "Tell Them From Me" survey for the children at OLV indicates that they predominantly feel safe and supported at school. It is strongly agreed by students that they have opportunities to know about Jesus. Students feel that there is a positive environment and the rules and expectations were clear and understood.

Teacher satisfaction

Data from the latest "Tell Them From Me" survey tool for teachers indicates that the school leadership is supportive and provides feedback to create new learning opportunities for their teaching. There is a strong sense of collaboration. There is a strong sense of a successful learning culture and feedback to students about this is regular and informed by relevant assessment strategies. Teachers feel strongly that Our Lady of Victories is an inclusive school and involves parents in partnership for their children's learning.

The teachers are confident that they present:

- Challenging and visible learning goals for students,
- Plan learning opportunities which involve and intentional transfer of skills and knowledge
- Receive quality feedback
- Provide support for students to overcome obstacles.

Financial Statement

This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

School Financial Information for the 2023 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2023	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$2,402,140
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$636,849
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$587,373
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$9,058
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$104,427
Total Income	\$3,739,847

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$602
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$2,531,635
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,267,288
Total Expenditure	\$3,799,525

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