

2023

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

SERVICE | LEADERSHIP | JUSTICE

Together in Christ



St Joseph's Primary School

Farquhar Street, MEREWETHER 2291

Principal: Karen McGinlay

Web: <http://www.merewether.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

Throughout 2023 there has been an inordinate amount of learning occurring both with our students and our staff members. Learning about learning, learning about reading - fluently and with meaning, learning to not only master new number facts but to solve problems in various ways and articulate these ways, and learning how to enquire, record, justify, listen, research, and myriad other things have taken place with the students. While much of the teachers' professional learning has been about learning itself, the teaching of Maths and the new Maths, English and Religious Education syllabuses.

Launching our year with professional learning from James Nottingham, even before the students returned, was very clearly establishing what our focus was to be, going forward. The staff learnt how to help children develop the belief and understanding that learning is not meant to be too easy or too extremely difficult, but it is meant to be challenging.

Together across all classrooms, in all KLAs and in staff meetings, we have jumped into Learning Pits and have deepened our learning across many areas and felt great pride and achievement, when, with the help of others and a range of learning strategies, we have come out of the pit, on top, experiencing many 'Eureka' moments.

The growth mindset that is emerging across the school from Kindergarten to Year 6 around what learning is, and should be, is fabulous. Collectively, we now know that learning can be messy and a 'bit all over the place'. You get ahead with it then drop back at times, trying to make sense of things; you struggle alongside of others, you experience gains, and you support others. Ultimately, we have learnt that through the struggles and mistakes great learning is actually occurring.

This increasingly widespread understanding and belief around learning is certainly something to celebrate. I applaud our community for the great learning that has occurred this year and I look forward to seeing the learning that continues to take place in 2024.

Parent Body Message

St Joseph's is a vibrant community with great warmth and camaraderie. There are so many wonderful individuals who contribute to the fabric of our special school environment.

We have been particularly touched by the generosity displayed through initiatives such as the Easter Egg donation drive, which brought joy to numerous children in our community. Such acts of kindness is a testament to the heart of St Joseph and the importance we place on community spirit.

The dedication of our school staff and leadership team, continues to inspire us. Their unwavering commitment to nurturing our children's potential is the cornerstone of our success. We extend our deepest appreciation to these passionate educators for their remarkable work.

A vibrant P&F membership has been instrumental in collaborating with the school leadership team to make St Joseph's an extraordinary place of growth and learning. The P&F contributions have been about fostering a sense of community and leaving a lasting legacy. The new flagpole stands as a symbol of our commitment to reconciliation and inclusivity, now proudly flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags. And our collaborative efforts are bringing us closer to the dream of a revitalised school library.

We are committed to making involvement in school life more accessible and fulfilling for everyone. We hope that each family finds multiple ways to engage that resonate with them, creating a variety of experiences for our children and ourselves.

P&F Executive

Student Body Message

The 2023 school year has been a fantastic one, including many different school and grade activities. One of our big student highlights was the school Colour Run where we raised thousands of dollars to put towards our school library upgrade. It was wonderful to see our whole school community having fun and so full of joy.

This year we participated in countless sporting events, carnivals and excursions that helped our students to understand the things they were learning in class, like the Year 5 trip to Timbertown and the Year 1 excursion to The Awabakal Centre. There have been many opportunities to spend time with God and share special liturgies and prayers together. The students at St Joseph's learned about what it is like to be in the 'Learning Pit' and that sometimes it is okay to struggle and find things challenging. Our teachers and support staff worked hard to make sure everyone experienced success and made it out of the Learning Pit having mastered a new skill.

We, the leaders of 2023, have had a great year leading our community and are sad but excited to pass on the leadership for 2024.

School Captains/Vice Captains - Elizabeth Dinneen, Sidney Maxwell, Chloe Webber and Harry Hardy.

School Features

St Joseph's Primary School is a two-stream Kindergarten – Year 6 Catholic systemic coeducational school located in Merewether. Upon completing their primary education at St Joseph's most of the students follow the system's secondary pathway of St Pius X, Adamstown or St Francis Xavier College, Hamilton.

The school is one of two Catholic primary schools in the Newcastle Inner City Parish of St Benedict. This site has provided Catholic education since 1876 when a church and school opened. From 1882-1884 the Sisters of Mercy, Hamilton and lay teachers conducted a school, until in 1888 when the Sisters of St Joseph arrived. Along with the primary school, a girls' high school was established on the site in 1932. In 1936 a two storey brick school was constructed on the corner on Kenrick and Union Streets. The girls' secondary school closed in 1983 and the site became a dedicated primary school.

The school undertook a major refurbishment in 2007 when twenty rooms were refurbished and the Parish hall was renovated internally as well as the adjoining canteen. In 2018 further refurbishing of several classrooms was undertaken, providing contemporary learning spaces for the students. In 2020 the main playground had a major overhaul and is now a very usable space for sports activities and creative play. Across 2022, all classrooms were fully refurbished with the inclusion of contemporary and flexible classroom furniture to provide effective learning environments for all students K-6. In 2023, new interactive boards were installed in each classroom across the school.

The school places an emphasis on authentic, contemporary teaching and learning practices, focusing on growth in student achievement in each Key Learning Area (KLA). The staff continually participate in professional development experiences to further engage students in their learning. Our staff consists of highly skilled, dedicated classroom teachers and assistants, as well as specialist teachers for Music, Learning Support, English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) and Library.

Co-curricular events, linked to and enhancing the curriculum, include overnight excursions to Canberra and The Great Aussie Bush Camp; participation in inter-school public speaking and Maths and Spelling Bee initiatives; and opportunities to represent the school in creative arts pursuits including our bi-annual school musical and ASPIRE events. Students also engage in sporting pursuits that include gala days, athletics, cross-country running and swimming.

Students have access to extra-curricular activities and lessons in the areas of musical instrument tuition; drama, choir and singing lessons; Mandarin and French language classes; gardening club; and robotics. Families are able to avail themselves of on-site, before- and after-school care.

Special school events providing witness to community spirit and Catholic values include St Joseph's Day, Mother's and Father's Day breakfasts and liturgies, beginning and end of year thanksgiving Masses or liturgies, Harmony Day, NAIDOC Day, the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence, weekly assemblies and creative arts performances.

An active Parents & Friends Association (P&F) contributes enormously in their partnership with the school. An example of this involvement is the large number of parents who organise and/or participate in fundraising and social events throughout the year. Communication with parents is maintained through formal information sessions, the school website and official Facebook page, the Compass parent portal, formal and informal parent meetings, school newsletter and regular P&F meetings.

A collaborative relationship has been formed with the staff of St Francis Xavier College in preparation for the majority of our Year 6 students enrolling there for 2024, as it is transitioning from a senior school to a Year 7-Year 12 school.

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
187	202	62	389

* 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 91.52%. 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
91.16	91.40	91.53	92.63	91.90	92.41	89.58

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	35
Number of full time teaching staff	15
Number of part time teaching staff	9
Number of non-teaching staff	11

Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

Teachers at this School are either accredited as conditional, provisional or proficient as defined by the NSW Teacher Accreditation Act 2004. Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher are voluntary. The number of teachers within the Diocesan Schools System (systemic schools) at these levels is as follows:

- Conditional 107 teachers
- Provisional 69 teachers
- Proficient 1887 teachers
- 4 Highly Accomplished teacher
- 1 Lead teacher

Additionally, there are approximately 10 teachers who are currently actively engaged in the submission process at the higher levels of accreditation. Teacher status at individual schools can be sourced directly from the School.

Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO). The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes.

Summary of professional learning at this school

Staff Development Days

- The Learning Pit - James Nottingham
- 3-6 Syllabus English & Mathematics Training
- Annual Staff Induction
- Transition meetings and First Aid/CPR Training
- Staff Formation Retreat

Additional Professional Development

- Continuing with the diocesan Leading Learning Initiative with Lyn Sharratt, Michael McDowell and Peter Sullivan
- Additive Strategies - Dr Angela Rogers and Dr Bernadette Long
- Professional Learning Teams with focuses on Writing, and Working Mathematically
- Pedagogy of Encounter - Religious Education Curriculum
- Successful Foundations
- Reading Success in the Early Primary Years
- Pedagogical Mentor Training
- Gifted Education Training

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)

St. Joseph's Merewether is a Josephite school, guided by the enduring heritage and values of the Sisters of St Joseph. Embedded in our Catholic faith, our motto "Live the Truth" serves as a constant reminder to embody the Gospel in every interaction. We foster an inclusive and welcoming environment, where all individuals feel valued and respected, embracing the Gospel values that underpin our Josephite tradition.

Our school's vision and mission is to: Learn, Love, and Live the Truth. We Learn the truth by nurturing the holistic growth of every child, striving for academic excellence while celebrating diversity and inclusivity. We Love the Truth by manifesting our commitment to building a Christ-centered Catholic community, marked by justice, integrity, and peace, fostering positive relationships grounded in respect and belonging. We Live the Truth by bearing witness to our faith through active engagement in social justice endeavours and by being responsible stewards of creation. This Truth reflects our unwavering belief in God the Father, shaping our identity as the body of Christ and guiding us in answering His call.

Our Catholic identity permeates every facet of our institution, from our vision and mission to our daily school life. We prioritise the spiritual formation of students, parents, and staff, fostering a community where prayer is integrated in our daily routines and our sacred spaces are adorned with religious symbols grace each classroom. Our commitment to spiritual

development extends to our staff, who benefit from ongoing opportunities for growth through weekly prayer gatherings that help nurture their spiritual well-being.

Collaboration between our Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, and Parish Priest strengthens the bond between our school and parish, integrating faith into our educational endeavours. The Religious Education Coordinator actively contributes to preparing children for the Sacraments and participates in the Sacramental Program by participating in the Confirmation retreat and attending the Confirmation Liturgy at the Cathedral, fostering strong connections with St Benedict's Inner-City Newcastle Parish. Students are encouraged to engage in parish life and represent our school at various Diocesan and community events including our student leaders representing our school at the ANZAC Day Commemoration service.

Highlighting our dedication to social justice, we acknowledge the traditional landowners, the Awabakal people, and engage in fundraising initiatives to support the wider community, including endeavours such as Project Compassion, Catholic Mission, and the St Vincent de Paul appeals. Through these efforts, we embody the principles of Catholic education, striving to make a positive impact on our local and global communities.

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.

St. Joseph's Merewether is committed to delivering a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum designed to cater to the diverse needs of all students. Our focus is on providing engaging and challenging programs that foster growth and enable each student to achieve their learning goals. As a Catholic school, our mission is to nurture the holistic development of every child, encompassing their academic, spiritual, emotional, and social well-being.

We embrace a strengths-based approach that acknowledges and builds upon each student's unique talents and capabilities. Encouraging students to work at their own pace, we offer a supportive and adaptable learning environment where they can participate in meaningful and enriching activities tailored to their individual needs and learning styles. Our dedicated teachers share a common vision for curriculum delivery, offering diverse opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of concepts and develop essential skills such as teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving. The synergy between curriculum and pedagogy is paramount in our educational philosophy.

Our curriculum prioritises continuous student growth and enrichment, particularly in English and Mathematics from Kindergarten to Year 6. Through ongoing professional development, our staff continually enhance their teaching strategies, focusing on explicit instruction in English; and exploration, adaptive reasoning and problem solving in Mathematics. We monitor student progress closely using whole-school data walls and spreadsheets, and collaborate in Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) to design targeted learning experiences that address student needs. Pedagogical Mentors provide guidance and support to ensure best practices are implemented across the school.

We continue to implement the new Religious Education curriculum for students K-2, we emphasise the Pedagogy of Encounter, exploring the mystery of God and the Catholic faith at its core. We integrate the Early Years Learning Framework and the Successful

Foundations Action Research project in Kindergarten and Year 1, utilising various pedagogical approaches, such as play based learning to enrich the learning experience.

Our commitment to technology integration is evident through programs such as Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) for Years 4-6 and laptop use from Kindergarten to Year 3, fostering students' digital literacy skills. Additionally, we provide support for gifted students through enriched classroom experiences and participation in programs like the diocesan Virtual Academy. Students requiring additional assistance receive personalised support through individual or small group interventions, both in the classroom and on the playground, to help them realise their full potential.

In summary, St. Joseph's Merewether remains dedicated to providing a dynamic and inclusive educational environment where every student can thrive academically, spiritually, and socially. Through collaboration, innovation, and a commitment to excellence, we empower our students to become lifelong learners and compassionate members of society.

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	76%	54%
	Reading	74%	67%
	Writing	93%	76%
	Spelling	71%	61%
	Numeracy	69%	65%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	98%	64%
	Reading	100%	74%
	Writing	95%	66%
	Spelling	97%	69%
	Numeracy	91%	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 is committed to fostering respect and responsibility through various initiatives implemented across the school, whether on a class level or whole school basis. In 2023, the school continued to refine its Positive Behaviour for Learning Framework (PBL), a comprehensive approach aimed at providing clarity and consistency regarding student behaviour and learning dispositions. This framework centres on four key expectations: Act Safely, Be Respectful, Care for All, and Do Your Best. Positive student behaviours for learning are recognised and acknowledged through the use of Dash tokens and fortnightly PBL awards.

Staff continue to engage in professional development to further embed PBL principles, while students actively contributed to shaping the school's behavioural expectations, sharing their ideas and partnering in a variety of initiatives through our Student Representative Council and our Social Justice Team.

St Joseph's is a school which practices restorative justice. Restorative justice is an approach to student management which focuses on teaching students the skills in taking responsibility for their actions and rebuilding respectful relationships. Information about restorative justice was communicated with parents. This ensures that all members of the community are aware of how incidents are managed, resolved and restored.

Our Kindergarten – Year 6 Buddy Program, where the Kindergarten students are matched with an older student, not only supports the new Kindergarten students but provides opportunities in a supportive and familiar environment for the Year 6 students to practise taking on responsibility for others. The Buddy Bench program is used to promote respect for others and responsibility. These Buddy Benches promote tolerance and inclusion of others. Each class has specific practices which support building and maintaining positive respectful relationships.

Each class implements specific practices aimed at nurturing positive relationships, and students are offered opportunities to enhance these skills through excursions such as Aussie Bush Camp (Year 5) and Canberra (Year 6). In response to specific needs, classes may participate in the Friendship Saver Program, the F.R.O.G.S program and the MAT Life Skills program. These are evidence-based interventions fostering friendship, conflict resolution, emotional regulation and problem-solving skills.

The school's Year 5 students continue to engage in the 'YLead – Lead with Heart' program, designed to empower them as compassionate leaders. Through this program, students explore qualities such as respect, courage, and positivity, equipping them to make a meaningful impact within the school and broader community.

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

Key areas for improvement at St Joseph's in 2023 have been:

- Continued development of consistent practices, in research and evidence based effective pedagogies, in the teaching of Mathematics.
- Continued development of consistent Mathematics teaching through the implementation of school wide Mathematics lessons
- Professional learning in preparation for the implementation of the new Years 3-6 Mathematics & English syllabuses
- Enhancing teacher practices and student outcomes, in response to case management meetings
- Continued implementation of consistent practices to further enhance the learning of students and staff including; Instructional Walks & Talks, the use of 'Bump it Up' walls, Pedagogical Mentors modelling for teachers, teacher observations and program reflections.
- Responding to parents' requests in regard to further enhancing home-school communication practices
- Preparation of staff in the Pedagogy of Encounter in order to implement the new Religious Education curriculum.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

Key areas for improvement at St Joseph's in 2024 will focus on the following:

- Professional Learning and implementation of consistent approach to the teaching of spelling and morphology

- Continued professional learning in assessment practice which improves learning with a continued focus on data analysis and feedback to students
- Engagement with learning consultants to assist staff to challenge and motivate students to engage with learning and develop a growth mindset in regard to learning in order to further achieve their potential
- Engagement with the Diocesan Learning Impact From Teaching (LIFT) initiative to further equip teachers with effective literacy and numeracy pedagogical practices
- Introduction of a Wellbeing Coordinator to work in collaboration with the Leadership Team and in consultation with system Wellbeing Education Officer to create an implementation plan and identify a suitable Wellbeing Program that caters to the needs of our students
- Implement CSO Student Wellbeing Framework to enhance students' positive sense of self and belonging at St Joseph's Merewether
- Implementation of new Mathematics and English syllabus from Years 3-6
- Provide relevant and contemporary Digital Learning for staff.

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

Through electronic forms, emails, topics discussed at P&F meetings and incidental conversations and anecdotal evidence, parents' views have been elicited regarding their satisfaction with St Joseph's.

We received a great deal of feedback throughout the course of the year in regard to the high level of parent engagement and involvement that was evident across the school. The planning and execution of events, such as Grandparents' liturgy, the Christmas concert, NAIDOC day, the Colour Run and Book Week were particularly mentioned.

A surprising number of parents attended the James Nottingham 'Self Efficacy' parent workshop and the parents expressed that they both enjoyed it and learnt a lot from it. In the words of one parent, "it served to enlighten us parents... and keep challenging ourselves."

It was felt that the P&F was highly motivated and inclusive and that the class parent network was of great support to families that were in need throughout the course of the year.

Appreciation was also expressed for the quality of the learning spaces provided for their children and for the Year Six 'buddy network' along with the range of extracurricular activities, particularly sporting events.

The introduction of twice a term Compass class news feeds conveying what was happening in each class via photos and limited text was a great success.

Student satisfaction

An overwhelming satisfaction expressed by the students has been in regard to 'The Learning Pit'. They have very much appreciated learning about this and coming to understand that learning is meant to have a challenging element to it. They feel the whole school approach to the Learning Pit has really encouraged children to give learning ago and to not give up. It encourages children to think of new strategies to apply to their learning and appreciate how the teachers encourage them to obtain answers in a variety of ways. The students also very

much appreciate the collaborative learning that takes place in their classes and believe that there is a very balanced curriculum, on offer to them. They have expressed appreciation for the visuals in their rooms along with hands on experiments in Science, novel studies in English and how there is an integrated approach to learning across the different KLAs.

The facilities in each of the classrooms are viewed favourably by the students. They like the features that are part of the new interactive screens, and they believe that the new furniture is more comfortable. They like how it is adjustable and can easily be moved and rearranged and they feel that it helps them to focus more on their learning. A commonly held opinion is that their learning spaces are now more appealing and inviting and this makes you want to learn. They also recognise that these furnishings help them to collaborate a lot more than in previous years.

The students like the range of extracurricular activities that are on offer in the school and particularly like the provision of activities that give them a chance to try new things and to see what they enjoy and/or are good at. They also appreciate the lack of competitiveness that is a part of the extracurricular activities. The students particularly like sports gala days and any activities where they get to showcase their creativity, such as “Joeys Got Talent” and the musical soirées.

They also acknowledged how the variety of incursions and excursions on offer cover sports, learning, cultural, and creative aspects. They expressed appreciation for the prayer spaces in their classrooms and time given to prayer. They also commented how their Religious Education lessons aren't just facts but relate to their lives.

Events such as Anti-bullying day, Harmony Week, Child Protection week are viewed very favourably and they believe that the associated activities help prevent inappropriate or undesirable behaviours as well as being supportive of students. The students feel safe at St Joseph's and they value the support that teachers give to help them sort out any problems they may be experiencing and they like how teachers help them to be honest and not be afraid or ashamed of their behaviours, and help them to grow.

Teacher satisfaction

Staff throughout the year were asked to share their thoughts about various initiatives, plans and practices. Ideas were shared through digital surveys and forms, small group discussions in staff meetings, incidental conversations and written responses to emails.

The area in which there was the greatest satisfaction expressed by staff has been professional learning and development. The staff were extremely grateful for the opportunities they received in this area and particular mention was made regarding James Nottingham's work on 'The Learning Pit'. Collaborating with fellow systemic schools around our professional learning program was viewed favourably.

Great appreciation was also expressed in regard to the leadership team providing staff with the opportunities to offer feedback, in particular to the practices of case management meetings and professional learning teams. The staff were not only grateful for the opportunity to express their thoughts but in how that feedback was acted upon and resulted in the leadership team working with the staff to make positive changes to whole school practices.

It was also felt that there was great communication with parents, along with a high level of community and parent involvement throughout the course of the year.

Staff expressed appreciation for the continued support for the provision of resources and high-quality classroom learning environments.

They also valued the shared language the staff have and the collaborative approach that is in place to support student learning.

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	\$3,472,978
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$919,869
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$1,215,494
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$4,007
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$336,384
Total Income	\$5,948,732

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$1,685
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$4,136,157
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,644,903
Total Expenditure	\$5,782,745

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