

Annual School Report 2023 School Year

St Joseph's Primary School, Tenterfield



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Principal
Cherie Yates

About this report

St Joseph's Primary School is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The report outlines to the school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school Annual Improvement Plan.

The report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the CSO. This report, approved by the CSO, monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NESA requirements for Registration.

This report complements, and is supplementary to, school newsletters and other regular communications. It is available on both school and CSO websites by 30 June 2024 following its submission to NESA.

The contents of this report may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums, including the School Advisory Council meetings and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6736 1786 or by visiting the school's [website](#).



1.0 Messages

1.1 Principal's Message

There were many people who assisted in the development of the school as a Catholic learning community. In particular, special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St Joseph's Primary School is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

St Joseph's Primary School has been educating the children of Tenterfield and the surrounding district for over 140 years. Established in 1880 by the Sisters of St Joseph, St Joseph's is a quality primary school with 125 students, located in Tenterfield in the New England region of NSW.

The school has spacious grounds, modern open-plan classrooms, low teacher/ student ratio, state-of-the-art technology with individual student Chromebooks and experienced, committed staff.

St Joseph's prides itself on a high standard of education using quality teaching and learning strategies, where every child is challenged and valued for their unique gifts. The school has embedded the 'Living Well, Learning Well' student support framework with the three pillars that all students know and understand:

- I am Safe
- I am Valued, Respected and Cared for
- I am a Learner

One of the defining features of the school is the strong relationship between family, school, parish and the wider community.

Cherie Yates
Principal

1.2 A Parent Message

The P&F continued to contribute funds to the school to help purchase resources and provide equipment, such as Chromebooks for all students and Promethean Boards for the classrooms.

Throughout the year, the P&F very much enjoyed welcoming the community through P&F initiated functions. Mother's Day and Father's Day stalls were successfully organised and later in the year the P&F teamed up with the local Junior Rugby League committee to host a Melbourne Cup Calcutta.

The P&F is much more than a fundraising body. The P&F help the school with a welcome morning tea for new parents, morning tea for Grandparents' Day, Father's Day breakfast BBQ, a picnic lunch and flowers for mums for Mother's Day, a BBQ for Carols By Candlelight and catering for the end of year presentation day. These events help build the school community as a welcoming and friendly place.

The P&F are proud to support the school wherever possible.

Kieran Haakstad
President
P&F Association



2.0 This Catholic School

2.1 The School Community

St Joseph's Primary School is located in Tenterfield and is part of the St Mary's Parish which serves the communities of Tenterfield and Deepwater, from which the school families are drawn.

Last year the school celebrated 143 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest, Fr Poovathinkal, is involved in the life of the school.

2.2 Catholic Life and Religious Education

St Joseph's Primary School follows the Armidale Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student text *To Know, Worship and Love*, as authorised by the Bishop of Armidale, Michael Kennedy.

The school is actively involved with St Mary's Parish, Tenterfield. The staff work closely with the parish priest. All classes attend parish masses and the year commenced, celebrating together the Opening School Mass, induction of school leaders and St Joseph's feast day.

Each week is commenced with prayer led by the School Captains. A sacramental program for first Eucharist and first reconciliation was celebrated with school and parish communities. Staff continued with structured prayer on a weekly basis, which was greatly supported.

Gospel values were lived practically through the raising of money for Caritas and Children's Mission. The school continued a successful Mini Vinnies Chapter with 42 members from Years 4 to 6. Monies raised went to the local St Vincent de Paul Society for use within the local community.

Fr Leech, parish priest of some 10 years, retired due to ill health, and we welcomed Fr Poovathinkal to the parish.

Students in Year 6 in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Armidale undertake the Diocesan Religious Education (RE) Test annually. The test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions.

Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education.

Our School's average result (as a mark out of 30)	
Year 6	28

2.3 School Enrolment

St Joseph's Primary School caters for children from Years K to 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

	Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	TOTAL 2023	TOTAL 2022
Male	15	8	3	10	10	11	12	69	20
Female	9	8	8	11	9	6	7	58	27
Totals	24	16	11	21	19	17	19	127	47



2.4 Student Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is important that they attend school regularly. Whilst it is the parents' legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly, staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor attendance each day. The class roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each week by the Principal or their delegate. The school uses the attendance coding system adopted in all NSW schools. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by staff. Parents are requested to provide a satisfactory explanation for an absence by means such as a written note, telephone call, SMS message or email to the school, preferably on the first day of absence and certainly within seven days. The Principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations, the Principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases, students and their parents meet with the Principal to discuss the leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2023 is shown in the following table.

	Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All Years
Average Student Attendance Rates	92.0%	92.0%	89.0%	91.0%	89.0%	89.0%	87.0%	89.9%

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.
- monitoring engagement of individual students in their learning and identifying strategies to enhance engagement.
- 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.
- intervention strategies for students with unsatisfactory attendance may include academic case management, social case management, referral to counselling and parent/ carer involvement.
- the Director of Catholic Schools or designated Catholic Schools Office Armidale officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom previous strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

When the Catholic Schools Office Armidale is notified of a student for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and previous strategies have failed, the Principal and the System Performance Leader will convene a meeting with the family, the student, and other agencies if required, to develop a Return to School Plan.



2.5 Staff Profile and Teacher Standards

Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile	Number of Teachers
1. Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Provisional or Conditional level.	0
2. Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Proficient level.	16
3. Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Highly Accomplished level.	0
4. Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Lead level.	0
5. Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.	10
6. Number of staff identifying as Indigenous employed at the school.	0
7. Total number of non-teaching staff employed at the school.	8

2.6 Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. We want every student to understand and appreciate that they are part of both the school and the local community. The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

- The values of respect and responsibility lie at the heart of Catholic schools and underpin all policies and procedures.
- The Living Well, Learning Well Framework ensures that all are valued, respected and cared for. Students, teachers and parents were regularly reminded of the school's commitment to these and other school values by newsletter items, assembly messages and by the nature of interpersonal relationships.
- Many of the awards presented to students throughout the year were indicative of these values. Respect and responsibility are fundamental to the school's restorative justice program.
- Students and staff contributed generously to social justice appeals, including St Vincent de Paul and Caritas. A large Easter raffle was a successful fundraiser for Caritas. The Mini Vinnies Chapter organised, and the students accumulated, perishable food items for 25 Christmas Hampers to be shared within the local community.

2.7 Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the school used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the school from parents, students and teachers.



Parent Satisfaction

Parental completion of the survey stood at 48% which is considered a very good rate. All areas of the survey recorded a high level of satisfaction. In particular, parents strongly agreed that the St Joseph's is a safe place for their child. Parents would recommend this school to others as high expectations for attendance, engagement and outcomes are clearly communicated. Parents also gave a high rating to the school celebrating student achievements.

Student Satisfaction

Student completion of the survey stood at 67% which is considered an excellent rate. Students recorded that they would recommend this school to others, they are accepted and teachers care about them. They know what they are learning and why, and they are given specific targets to improve their learning. The students communicated that Religious Education is an important subject in the school and that they are well-supported in their learning. Students strongly agreed that they receive feedback from their teacher to improve their learning and technology is used often in the school.

Staff Satisfaction

Staff completion of the survey stood at 75% which is considered an excellent rate. All areas of the survey recorded a high level of satisfaction. Staff would recommend this school to others and the school is well resourced. The Catholic identity of the school is of a high priority with Core Catholic Principles and Values explicitly taught in the school. Staff rated highly that they gain a lot of satisfaction from working in this school and that there is good morale amongst the staff. Staff celebrate student success and believe there is an emphasis on differentiated learning and quality teaching and learning activities for all students, including high-achieving students who are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended.

3.0 Teaching and Learning

3.1 School Curriculum

The school provides an educational program based on and taught in accordance with the 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. In addition, the school implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office Armidale.

Religious Education in Catholic schools is a mandatory KLA included in the curriculum for students in each year group. St Joseph's Primary School is committed to providing a quality education that meets the needs of all students.

Staff continue their commitment to cater for the varying academic ranges and needs of all students through differentiation and adjustment. Scope and Sequence plans for all KLAs were continually revised and updated. Experienced educational assistants support teachers and students within the classroom. The school strives to continually update technology with the acquisition of interactive Promethean Boards and new Chromebooks for all students in Years K-6.

A comprehensive sporting program exists. The Crunch and Sip program continued throughout the year. During NAIDOC Week, the school partook in a series of workshops where students experimented with Aboriginal art and craft and heard the Dreamtime stories.

St Joseph's Primary School has developed the Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum approach to students' learning, which allows students to know the Learning Intention of a lesson or unit and the Success Criteria needed to ensure students take responsibility for the success of their learning. The



timely feedback provided to students allows them to further develop their skills. Collaborative teaching, case management of students and Professional Learning Teams ensure that the best possible outcomes are achieved by students.

A primary focus for the school was to ensure best practise was adopted when assessing and reporting for students. This involved professional development workshops, triangulation of data, use of the Diocesan Ecosystem, use of NESA rubric standards and the involvement of parents in communication.

3.2 Student Performance in National Testing Programs

3.2.1 NAPLAN

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 21 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 17 students.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data and space and geometry.

Commencing in 2023, NAPLAN test results are reported using proficiency levels.

Students' results show how they performed in each of the NAPLAN assessment areas against 4 proficiency levels:

- 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.

At St Joseph's Primary School, school and student performance are closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office information sessions on NAPLAN and Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of St Joseph's Primary School students in the top two levels compared to the State percentage.

**Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy
Percentage of Students in Levels Strong and Exceeding**

Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar and Punctuation	Numeracy
91.0	85.0	67.0	72.0	53.0



**Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy
Percentage of Students in Levels Strong and Exceeding**

Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar and Punctuation	Numeracy
88.0	65.0	71.0	64.0	83.0

4.0 School Policies

4.1 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Armidale adheres to the policy as endorsed by the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' of Students in the Catholic Systemic Schools of the Diocese of Armidale. The Catholic Schools Office Armidale monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements. Children from families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church may be considered eligible for enrolment. A pastoral approach is adopted for parents experiencing genuine difficulty with the payment of fees.

This school does not have any enrolment policies or support documents in addition to the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' for schools in the Diocese of Armidale. This policy is available on the school's [website](#) and the Armidale Catholic Schools Office [website](#).

4.2 Living Well, Learning Well - A Student Support Framework for the Diocese of Armidale

Living Well, Learning Well - A Student Support Framework for the Diocese of Armidale are policies and procedures justifying a model of student support that considers learning, wellbeing, school connection, behaviour, family-school partnerships and similar domains as inseparable and interrelated elements in the lives of children and young people and in the complex community that is the contemporary school.

The development goal of Living Well, Learning Well, and related policies was, and is, to ensure contemporary research and findings in fields of pedagogy, inclusion, behaviour support, pastoral care, bullying prevention and intervention, student voice, participation and connection to school, child and adolescent psychology, student wellbeing and staff collective efficacy are reflected in all language, policy, practice and protocols of the system and schools. It supports a whole-system ecological approach to understanding and acting on the complexity of factors that interact to shape and form the lives of children and young people.

At the heart of Living Well, Learning Well is a universal and unconditional positive regard for children and young people and a high regard for the collective capacity of a school staff team to increase learning, wellbeing and life-opportunity outcomes for children and young people. The full text of the school's Living Well, Learning Well procedures may be accessed on the school [website](#).

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. The school does not sanction the administration of corporal punishment by school staff or non-school persons, including parents, to enforce appropriate behaviour in the school.



4.3 Student Protection Policies and Procedures

The role of the Catholic school in child protection is to protect children and young people and to promote and safeguard the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people. This responsibility is shared with the whole community. Every school within the Armidale Catholic Schools Office (CSO) system of schools works within a statutory framework of cooperation with government authorities and other relevant agencies and with families in the care and protection of children and young people.

Schools have a key role to play in today's society by assisting students and families with child protection. The safety, welfare and wellbeing of students is given the highest priority in every preventative and protective action taken.

In caring for children and young people, we must act in their best interest and take all reasonable steps to ensure their protection. This involves sincere commitment to upholding children's rights to safety and their wellbeing, and taking comprehensive steps to create a child safe school organisation and culture, with shared responsibility requiring all Armidale CSO personnel to work together within a comprehensive framework to ensure action and accountability for child safety.

St Joseph's Primary School is committed to fulfilling its obligations and seeks to develop best practice to identify and address risk and harm, and to promote the wellbeing of all children and young people in Armidale CSO schools. The dignity of the human person is a central truth of the Gospel message of Jesus. In respecting the dignity of all human persons, Catholic school communities are called to ensure the welfare and safety of all of their members.

The protection of the students entrusted to our care, then, is a very serious responsibility. In taking up this responsibility along with parents, who are recognised as the primary educators and carers of their children, Catholic school communities are committed to ensuring Catholic schools have at their centre the total care of the whole student.

St Joseph's Primary School follows the guideline, policies and procedures as determined by Armidale Catholic Schools Office who provides policy, procedures, forms and links to other resources relating to child protection. These resources have been developed to guide and assist staff and to inform Catholic school communities. Further details can be accessed from the school's [website](#) which includes a further [guide for parents](#).

4.4 Complaints Handling Policy and Guide

The Diocese of Armidale has established a 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' which is implemented by this school. The rationale for this 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 the contemporary world. The Catholic Schools Office monitors the implementation of these policies.

No changes were made to the 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' this year.

The full text of the school's 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' may be accessed on the school's [website](#) or the administration office.

5.0 School Review and Improvement

Each year, the school develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the school's Strategic Improvement Plan and informed by the Catholic Schools Office Annual Improvement Plan. The school engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the System Performance Leader.



Key Goals Achieved and Implemented in 2023	Key Goals for 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Safety, Code of Conduct and Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown Procedures • LWLW language and behaviours are embedded particularly in Stage 'Codes of Cooperation'. • Introduction of 'Cornerstones' RE professional development by two staff • Triangulation of data to ensure evidence driven A-E reporting with comments reflecting this data • Timetabling enabling most effective use of MaST • InitialLit taught K-2: data showing growth • The English Syllabus embraced K-2, particularly in the area of oral language • Mathematics Syllabus taught effectively K-2 :data showing growth. • Co-teaching teams demonstrate evidence of: Co-Planning, Co-Assessing, Co-Reflecting • PLTs led by data • Revisit of Andrell VCOP • Data driven analysis to determine growth in Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop the culture of LWLW in our school community • Development of student collaboration through student voice and faith development • Faces on the Data in Mathematics using whole number • Student use of Concrete, pictorial and abstract understandings in Maths • Embed new 3-6 Mathematics and English Syllabus • Clarity: focusing on professional learning in curriculum, pedagogy and assessment • Targeted writing development • Developing strong co-teaching teams including Educational Assistants working with teaching teams • Developing timetables that ensure impact of key stakeholders ie MaST, LoP • Utilising teams to ensure effective differentiation and student achievement of outcomes

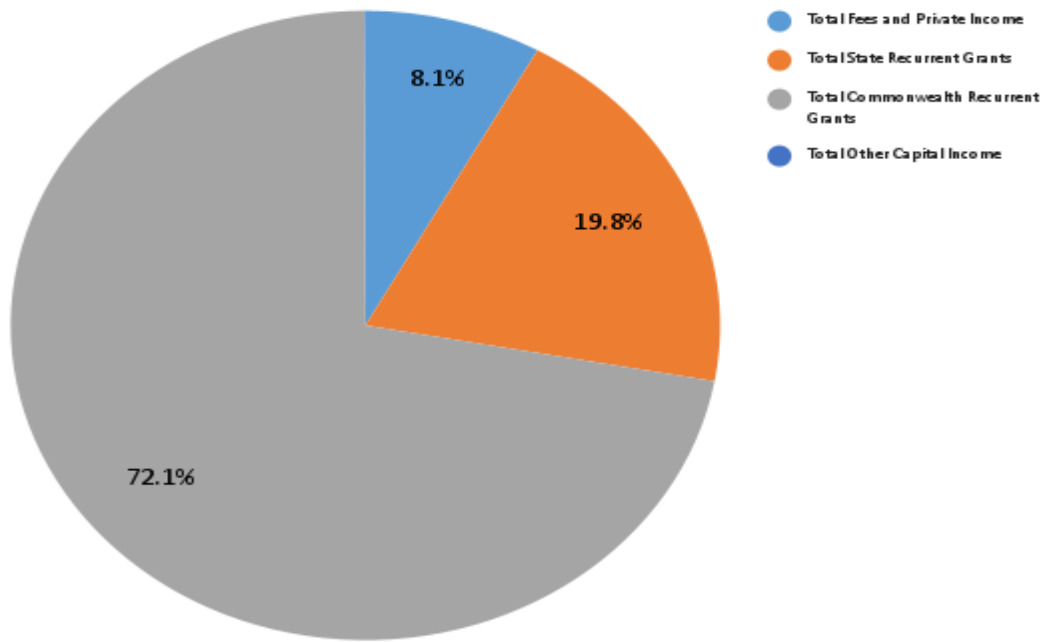
6.0 Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools, K-10 schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2023 is presented below:



2023 Income - St Joseph's Primary School, Tent erfield



2023 Expenditure - St Joseph's Primary School, Tent erfield

