

Annual School Report

2021 School Year

St Mary's Primary School, Bowraville



Carbin Street

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www.bwppism.catholic.edu.au

About this report

St Mary's Primary School is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Diocese of Lismore 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 to the Parish School Community* for this year provides the parish school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The *Report* also outlines to the parish school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance and the achievements arising from the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

The *Report* demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the Catholic Schools Office (CSO). This *Report* has been approved by the CSO which monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NESA requirements for Registration.

This *Report* complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, yearbooks and other regular communications. The *Report* must be available on the school's website by 30 June 2022 following its submission to NESA.

The contents of this *Report* may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this *Report* may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6564 7369 or by visiting the website at www.bwplism.catholic.edu.au.



1.0 Messages

1.1 Principal's Message

The primary purpose of St Mary's Primary School is to support the members of the parish community in providing a faith formation for their children. The school fosters a commitment to the individual person and provides opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. St Mary's Primary School offers students a quality Catholic education based on the teaching of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community.

Our parish school continued to provide many opportunities for the students to excel in academic, cultural and sporting areas. All of these areas combined to ensure that our school's mission was lived out daily in the life of the school. St Mary's Primary in Bowraville, has long and strong links to the Gumbayngirr community. Language continued to be taught weekly as part of our Language lessons and connection to culture. We are so very blessed to be immersed with the Elders of our community, educating and supporting our students and staff as we move forward into 2022.

The student's achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2021. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies. Our focus was to ensure we continue to build on the reputation that St Mary's Primary School has earned as an exemplary school.

The students' achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2021. Student work was proudly displayed in classrooms, on school noticeboards and in the school office. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies. Our focus was to continue to build on the reputation that St Mary's Primary School has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school's academic achievements. In 2021 the school:

- Students continued to learn our traditional Gumbayngirr language, leading to language and song presentations within the school and wider communities.
- Students were very adaptive to having to move to blended learning at home, while in lock down. All students need to be commended for this accomplishment.

There were many opportunities throughout the year for our school to be represented at community and cultural events. The following list provides an indication of the school's cultural program and community involvement. In 2021 the school:

- Sorry Day Reflection saw many of our local Gumbayngirr Elders join us for our Assembly which was followed by a morning tea for all the Elders. This was a day that enabled our students to connect with the Elders in our Community.
- Students participated in the Uncle Baz Fishing Memorial in Term 4. All students had the opportunity to go fishing in 2021 to celebrate and share in an equal way.
- NAIDOC week Mass was held in the Bowraville community this year. This Mass involved members of our local Parish, our school community and the wider Bowraville community.
- Staff participated in an "On Country" experience. This was important for all of our staff to listen, learn and understand the history of our local area so that we can better teach our students.
- Parent Team Meetings continued twice a term. One of our focus areas with this group is how we can continue to expand St Mary's footprint in the community. This will be a continued focus in 2022.

Students performed well at various sporting events throughout the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights. In 2021:

- We were able to participate in both School Athletics and Cross Country. Our cross country day was completed with a Colour Run, which the students enjoyed.



- We finished our year off with our annual trip to the Bellingen Pool. This is day that helps children with water safety and basic swimming skills.
- Other opportunities were limited due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

There were many people who assisted in the school's quest for excellence. In particular, special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St Mary's Primary School is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

Nadine Slingsby
Principal

1.2 A Parent Message

Parent and family involvement started strongly at the beginning of the year when we saw sports events such as netball, cross country/colour run and the athletics carnival. Parents were able to attend and support their children. Parents were also invited to attend Parish Mass at the Corpus Christi Church with the St Mary's students in attendance on a regular basis.

There was a strong parent commitment to raising funds for the Easter raffle this year. A Mothers' Day stall was also held and run by parents on the day.

There were community celebrations within the school such as NAIDOC week, however, due to COVID19 restrictions tightening within the year, many celebrations and commemorations were held within the school with only students and teachers attending. The school continued to provide strong learning for the children around Indigenous culture and notably the traditional Gumbayngirr language which was taught by a St Mary's staff member. St Mary's also continued to roll-out the Deadly Cultural Learning Plan (DLCP) with parents for Indigenous children.

The Parent Team and School Leadership Team worked together throughout the year enhancing the participation of parents in the decision-making and discussions about many areas within the school. At the latter end of the year due to COVID19 restrictions there was a slowing in momentum, however parent communication was kept strong and moved more to the digital scope such as Zoom meetings, phone calls and emails along with regular school newsletters and Facebook posts.

Leia Duncan
Mother of three beautiful St Mary's students
Bowraville

2.0 This Catholic School

2.1 The School Community

St Mary's Primary School is located in Bowraville and is part of the Nambucca Valley Catholic Parish which serves the communities of Bowraville, Macksville and Nambucca Heads., from which the school families are drawn.

Last year the school celebrated 118 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest Fr Shelwin Fernandez is involved in the life of the school.

St Mary's Primary School is a parish school with strong links to the parish family. The school aims to involve the children and their families in the life of the parish through activities such as:

- Participation in Parish Sacramental Programs.



- Participation in ministries such as Welcome to Country in Language, altar serving, reading and offertory at school and Parish Masses.
- Including and supporting the Gumbaynggirr Elders.
- Supporting the local St Vincent de Paul Chapter.

The parish school uses the mandated Diocesan Religious Education curriculum and the resource text "To Know, Worship & Love". Catholic life and culture permeate school life with two and a half hours of religious education taught formally each week. The Diocesan Daily Prayer guidelines support the school's prayer life. The aims and direction of our parish school are guided by *The Mission of Jesus Christ Foundational Values Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore*. This Framework underpins all policy, planning, roles and processes within the parish school. Our aim is to increasingly integrate the essence of this statement into all aspects of school life. Religious Education is given priority in our school and classroom curriculum and planning.

The parish school Mission Statement highlights the nature and calling of the school.

2.2 School Enrolment

St Mary'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 2021	TOTAL 2020
Male	3	5	10	5	4	1	3	31	30
Female	2	0	2	3	3	2	2	14	19
Indigenous *	3	5	9	2	4	2	3	28	31
EALD *	3	5	9	2	4	2	3	28	31

* count included in first two rows

NB: EALD refers to students who have English as an Additional Language or Dialect.

2.3 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 monitor attendance each day as a part of their duty of care. 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 2021 is shown in the following table.

Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All Years
89.0%	83.0%	87.0%	91.0%	86.0%	84.0%	86.0%	86.6%



2.4 Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

All teachers employed by the School are qualified to teach in NSW. Additionally, all teachers at this School who are responsible for delivering the curriculum are accredited with NESAs. Effective from October 2007, the minimum qualification for a teacher in a systemic school in the Diocese of Lismore is a four year teaching degree. 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 Diocese at these levels is as follows: Conditional 57 teacher(s); Provisional 44 teacher(s); Proficient 1486 teacher(s); Highly Accomplished 1 teacher(s); Lead 1 teacher(s). Teacher status at individual schools can be sourced directly from the School.

At this school there are 8 teacher(s) accredited with NESAs, 8 teacher(s) with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education, 5 Indigenous staff and 1 non-teaching staff.

2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average teacher attendance figure is 95.0%. This figure is provided to the school by the CSO.

In August of the 2021 school year, Mr Warren Niethe was appointed as Acting Principal at St Francis Xavier in Woolgoolga. Mrs Nadine Slingsby stepped into the Acting Principal role at St Mary's. There were no other significant staffing changes during the 2021 school year.

We were successful in appointing a Covid Intensive Learning Support Teacher to carry out Tier 2 Interventions for students who require additional support.

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. Students, teachers and parents are regularly reminded of the school's commitment to these and other school values by newsletter items, assembly messages and by the nature of our interpersonal relationships. In 2021, the school added a new word to our St Mary's Learners attributes - Respectful. This was unpacked by each classroom teacher to ensure that children understand what it means to be respectful in the classroom and in the playground.
- The values of respect and responsibility among the students was further consolidated through working closely with the Principal (Yarning time) and the School Counsellor. The language of Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, mirrors that of being a respectful and responsible learner.

2.7 Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The school uses a variety of methods to gauge parental, student and teacher satisfaction with school operations. The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. Last year the following formal and informal opportunities allowed the school to test reaction to decisions, policy and school procedures.

Parent, student and staff satisfaction with school operations are all very important items of feedback for a school on an improvement agenda journey. Parent feedback is welcomed at all times. More



formal methods have included surveys sent to parents regarding Online learning (during COVID), and the Parent Team Meetings that occur twice a term to give our parents and families a platform to share their thinking about school progress and improvement.

Staff have completed surveys around school improvement and, looking into 2022, what they would like to see changed, continued and what is valued. Staff are also asked around their preferences for teaching and learning moving into 2022.

3.0 Teaching and Learning

3.1 School Curriculum

The school provides a comprehensive 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.

- St Mary's continues to support our Early Learners with a play-based approach in our K-2 learning spaces. Our educators are offered high quality professional learning opportunities in play based pedagogy to ensure we are providing the best learning environments and connections for our children.
- St Mary's has a strong focus on the Cross Curriculum Priorities from the NSW syllabus, in particular, Indigenous Perspectives across KLAs. The teaching and support staff work hard with the local community to create opportunities for children to link to Culture and Country with their learning.

The educational emphasis at St Mary's is to meet our learners where they are at. We sit in the space of quality assessment that informs instruction. In 2021 St Mary's ran two intervention programs - EMU Maths and STAR Reading. The children are selected for these groups based on their learning data. Each Intervention runs for 20 weeks and targets a small group of students, directed to their point of need.

Our K-2 learners are engaged through a Play based approach that sees strong links to both Literacy and Numeracy. Our play based pedagogy is centred around students interests and ensures they are engaged in their learning.

The parish primary school offers a strong co-curricular program including student participation in:

- Various sporting events through the year including the following highlights:
 - A local Netball Gala Day - students in Years 3-6.
 - Cross Country and our Colour Run - all students.
 - Our Annual Athletics Carnival at Scotts Head - all students.
- Working with local Gumbaynggirr artist Nelli Gallop in creating a five panel mural based on the Nambucca Valley for our school community. This was funded by the Catholic Schools Office Arts Grant.

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, 8 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 2 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.

In both Year 3 and Year 5 there are six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages.

At St Mary'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 Mary's Primary School students in each band compared to the State percentage. Please note that due to the possible rounding up or down of numbers or students who achieved results outside of these bands the total percentage figure may not be 100%.



**Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy
Percentage of students in Bands 1 to 6**

BAND	6		5		4		3		2		1	
	State	School										
Reading	22.0	13.0	22.0	13.0	19.0	38.0	13.0	0.0	8.0	13.0	3.0	0.0
Writing	20.0	13.0	37.0	13.0	23.0	38.0	9.0	13.0	4.0	13.0	2.0	13.0
Spelling	23.0	25.0	23.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	13.0	13.0	7.0	38.0	5.0	13.0
Grammar and Punctuation	22.0	13.0	24.0	13.0	19.0	0.0	10.0	38.0	6.0	13.0	4.0	0.0
Numeracy	14.0	13.0	22.0	13.0	27.0	13.0	19.0	38.0	10.0	0.0	3.0	13.0

Note: Year 5 had five or less students who participated in the Assessments this year and the NAPLAN information has been withheld to protect the privacy of the students.

From the 2021 NAPLAN results we have a number of celebrations:

- Year 5 girls Reading is above State and SSSG.
- Year 3 Reading is above Stage and SSG.
- Year 3 Spelling boys has improved.
- Year 5 Writing inclining in both boys and girls.
- Year 3 Grammar and Punctuation incline in all areas.
- Year 5 Grammar and Punctuation incline for boys.

The things we are noticing and wondering are:

- Year 5 Reading has declined.
- All areas of Spelling have declined.
- Our Year 3 Writing results have declined.

As a collaborative staff we analysed our 2021 NAPLAN data. This ensures we are finding out where the gaps may sit with our students and targeting our Learning and Teaching to address the needs of students, both individually and in small groups.

3.3 Teacher Professional Learning

All teachers have been involved in professional learning activities during the year. These activities are designed to develop the professional skills and understandings of staff so as to improve student outcomes. Professional development can take many forms including whole-staff development days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences.

Whole staff development day professional learning activities in 2021 were:

Staff Professional Learning Activity	Date	Presenter
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Clarity - Staff Professional Learning Day	12/08/2021	St Mary's Primary School Bowraville - Learning Collaborative Team
Staff Spirituality Day	05/10/2022	Kelly Chessell
First Aide Training	14/08/2021	Kym Rayner
ATSI Action Plan	01/04/2021	Doreen Flanders & Danny Rankin
Clarity -Unpacking the Parameters - Dr Lyn Sharratt	19/04/2021	St Mary's Primary School Bowraville - Learning Collaborative Team

Additionally, staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:

Activity	Staff numbers	Presenter
National Consistent Collection of Data	10	Lismore Catholic Schools
Instructional Leader Professional Learning	1	Lismore Catholic Schools Office
Extending Mathematical Understanding	1	Jo Hall
Walker Learning K-2 Documentation	4	Early Life Foundation
Walker Learning K-2 Linking literacy & numeracy.	4	Early Life Foundation
Walker Learning 3-6 Planning and Documentation	3	Early Life Foundation
Learning and Teaching Collaboration	1	Lismore Catholic Schools Office

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at \$3618 per staff member. This figure has been calculated by the CSO and reflects expenditure on casual release days and professional development activities in particular categories.

4.0 School Policies

4.1 Enrolment Policy

Parish schools were established as places of educational excellence and places that transmit the faith, in the mission entrusted to the Church by our Lord Jesus Christ. They form part of a tradition of Catholic education provided by religious and lay teachers in the Diocese of Lismore for over 150 years. They also fulfil parents' rights to choose the schooling for their children which reflects their own faith, values, beliefs and hopes. Catholic schools have a particular responsibility to provide a Catholic religious education to children baptised in the Catholic faith and to support parents in honouring the commitments that they made on behalf of their children at baptism. The Catholic school is also "open to all who want to share its educational and faith goals inspired by Christian principles" (Congregatio de Institutione Catholica 2009). Most importantly, there is a special place in parish schools for those with the greatest need, especially in areas of lesser educational options or lower socio economic circumstances, and efforts should be made to encourage such enrolments, within the vision of the Bishop of Lismore for the poor. Every new enrolment at St Mary's Primary School requires parents to attend an enrolment interview. The interview provides an opportunity to learn more about the educational experience provided by the school, specific school procedural policies and current school expectations. The [School Enrolment Policy](#) explains the Parish enrolment guidelines. A copy of the



enrolment policy is located in the school office or it can be accessed on the school's website. There have been no changes to this policy this year.

4.2 Pastoral Care Policy

The school's Pastoral Care Policy is based on the principles of restorative justice and procedural fairness. The policy reflects the vision and mission of the Catholic Church and is characterised by safety, trust and mutual respect. To live out this policy the school has adopted various programs aimed at helping students value themselves and experience wellbeing. These include programs focussing on self-esteem, social relationships, moral development, vocational awareness, sexuality, anti-bullying, drug awareness, health and personal safety. The school's pastoral care program has been developed in consultation with staff, parents and students and is available on the school's website. There have been no changes to this policy this year.

4.3 Discipline Policy

The school does not sanction corporal punishment or allow parents to administer corporal punishment in the school.

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and ensures that school practices respect the dignity, rights and fundamental freedoms of individual students. Students are required to abide by the school rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with delegated authority. Where disciplinary action is required any penalty imposed will vary according to the nature of the breach and/or the student's prior behaviour. The policy is discussed with students, staff and parents on a regular basis. Reminders about the policy are regularly included in school newsletters. Relevant sections of the policy are also published in the student diary and it is available on the school's website. There have been no changes to this policy this year.

4.4 Anti-Bullying Policy

The school's Anti Bullying Policy fosters a cohesive approach to the issue of bullying and includes specific initiatives that are designed to promote pastoral care, wellbeing and safe school communities. This policy covers the bullying of students with disabilities. Disabled children and young people need to know they have the right to be safe from bullying, what bullying is, how to keep safe and what to do if adults do not do enough to stop the bullying. The dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching and intrinsic to our education ministry. There have been no changes to this policy this year and it is available on the school website.

4.5 Complaints and Grievance Policy

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly, and confidentiality is always maintained. There have been no changes to this policy this year and it is available on the school website.

5.0 School Determined Improvement Targets

Each year the school implements the School Improvement Plan. 2021 was a very rewarding year.

Key improvements achieved this year	Key Improvements for 2022
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<p>Mission of Jesus Christ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school created resources to further engage students in Religious Education including Storytelling Kits. • The school was provided with an Aboriginal Spirituality Kit to be used in classrooms to help further embed Aboriginal Spirituality into our Religious experiences. 	<p>Mission of Jesus Christ</p> <p>Our Goal for 2022 is for students to explore their faith intertwined with Aboriginal Spirituality. We aim to do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that Religious Education will be inclusive of Aboriginal Spirituality and prayer opportunities. • Ensuring that our Prayers and Liturgies are more inclusive of Aboriginal Spirituality - modelled by the Leadership of the school, Indigenous Education workers and our Leader of Evangelisation.
<p>Learning and Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school worked towards developing an "agreed practice" for the learning and teaching of writing using the Clarity Learning Collaborative work by Dr Lyn Sharratt. • The school worked towards ensuring our learning was personalised for all students through differentiation. 	<p>Learning and Teaching</p> <p>Our goal for 2022 is for all students to show learning, growth and engagement in Literacy - in particular, Writing. We aim to do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to develop our whole school agreed practices, and be accountable to these. • Continue to use the writing data wall to inform practice, our Case Management Meetings and celebrate learning. • Ensuring our K-2 Literacy block is consistent, aligned to a strong evidence base and inclusive of all learners.
<p>Pastoral Care</p> <p>The school worked towards engaging our families to improve student well-being and learning. We aimed to do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school Leadership team meeting once per term with our parent group to collaborative discuss opportunities for students. • The organisation of various family friendly events that focus on literacy, numeracy, digital technologies, spirituality and wellbeing. 	

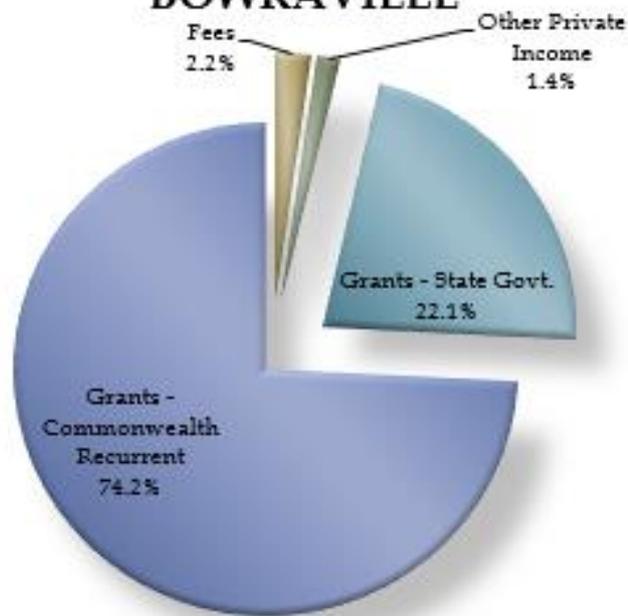
6.0 Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Lismore Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary 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 2021 is presented below:



2021 INCOME - St Mary's Primary School BOWRAVILLE



2021 EXPENSE - St Mary's Primary School BOWRAVILLE

