



Effort Wins Success

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Blackall

2020 Annual School Report



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Blackall

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

Principal

Samantha Suthers

Address

109 Thistle Street
Blackall QLD 4472

Total enrolments

75

Year levels offered

Prep – Year 6

Type of School:

Co-educational

School Overview

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School is located in the far west of Central Queensland, in the outback town of Blackall which has a population of approximately 1500 in town and 1800 in the shire. The Josephite Sisters established St. Joseph's in 1917. Since that time, as the only Catholic school in the area, the school has grown to include five classes, two in multi-age settings. We also have a Kindergarten on site and a strong partnership exists between the school and Kindergarten, ensuring successful transitions to school for our youngest learners. A building program in 2019 saw the refurbishment of our school which now boasts beautifully designed facilities and learning spaces for staff and students. Our small class sizes result in a strong family atmosphere based on Gospel values, and we are an integral part of the St. Patrick's parish. Our school Mission Statement emphasizes both the valued partnership between parents and school, and a child-centered education which recognises and respects the needs and talents of each individual. As a staff we model gospel values by our words and actions. We seek to reflect them in our relationships with all members of our local community and see this as vital to our mission of proclaiming the Good News. St Joseph's partners with The Cathedral College in Rockhampton for the delivery of Japanese for our students and provides opportunities for students to experience a wide range of extra-curricular activity. Our motto "Effort wins success" reflects our commitment to our Catholic identity, an inclusive approach, and the encouragement of each student's full potential. We are a little school with a big heart!

More information on our school can be accessed from myschool.edu.au

Curriculum Offerings

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

St Joseph's is a Prep to Year 6 school organised into five class groupings. Our curriculum reflects Gospel Values while our tradition is based around the work and story of St. Mary MacKillop. Many opportunities are provided for our children to reach their spiritual, academic, physical and emotional best. We believe our students need to be life-long learners, equipped with the skills required to learn, transfer learning, use ICTs, contribute to teams, manage change and be self-aware. A range of specialist lessons are provided for our students including Physical Education, Music, Drama, Visual Arts, STEM and Japanese. There is also the option to access guitar and piano lessons via zoom.

Extra Curricula Activities

St Joseph's thrives on a range of Extra Curricula activities that benefit all students, parents and staff. The activities we offer, aim to support and develop the spiritual, physical and educational outcomes for all and allow everyone to come together to celebrate what is fantastic and unique about St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Blackall.

St Joseph's Feast Day provides an opportunity for students of Blackall to combine with St Joseph's Barcardine students to celebrate this feast each year. St Joseph's also engages in a number of feature days including: National Day of Action Against Bullying, Walk to School Day, Day for Daniel, Under 8's Day, Reconciliation Week, Book Week and Catholic Education Week celebrations.

Students from St Joseph's are involved in variety of community and social justice events including: Combined Schools ANZAC Day Memorial, Blackall Community ANZAC Day Memorial, visitations/performances to the Blackall Retirement Village, Mother's Day Breakfast and the Father's Day Cook-off.

'Making Jesus Real' is a value-based program which aims to recognise and be witness to the teachings of Jesus each day and encourages students to become aware of the goodness in themselves and each other. All students are involved in preparing for Masses or Prayer Assemblies throughout the school year.

The Junior Joeys Group, inspired by the work of Mary MacKillop, initiates fundraising ventures and community events for charities and causes to support local, national and international organisations.

All students are provided with opportunities to be involved in academic activities, including the ICAS - Mathematics, Science and English Testing Competitions and Kids Connect and Minds@Work. St Joseph's offers online Japanese lessons through the support and assistance of The Cathedral College in Rockhampton.

Students from St Joseph's are provided with numerous sporting opportunities. Students engage in Swimming, Athletics, Rugby League, Touch Football, Netball and various other sports throughout the year. Students also compete at district and regional trials within the various sporting codes. The Sporting Schools Community program involves students engaging in sport and physical activities which they would usually not have access to in a small rural community.

St. Joseph's students are also exposed to various cultural experiences. These experiences engage students in the areas of dance, movement, ICTs, creative art, drama and music. Other events include: Year 5/6 annual Camp to Fairbairn Dam/Canberra, Arts Councils and Challenge Cup Rugby League/Netball.

St Joseph's has a significantly sized playground area: a full-sized Rugby League/Cricket oval and the MacKillop Centre which is a multi-purpose enclosed space allowing for indoor sports, musical and various community events. We also share a prayer space with our local Parish in which we spend time reflecting, learning, and celebrating together.

Some extra-curricula activities had to be curtailed in 2020 due to COVID 19 pandemic.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

The use of ICTs is particularly evident at St. Joseph's. Interactive Projectors, TVs and ViVi Wireless Presentation Systems have been installed in every classroom ensuring students are exposed to and immersed in the technological and interactive processes of teaching and learning. Years 3 to 6 students are provided with a 1-to-1 computer for classroom and home use.

All students in our Early Years (Prep-Year 2) are supplied with 1-to-1 iPads. Edison Robots, Probots, Bee Bots and Dash Robots have also been introduced to engage students and to enhance and explore the concepts of coding and computational thinking within digital pedagogies. Teachers are expected to incorporate ICT and IT Pedagogies in all Learning Areas when teaching, assessing and communicating student learning.

Social Climate

Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture

Our school's Religion Program and the 'Making Jesus Real' (MJR) Program provides a basis for the way we treat each other and how we interact. It is a values-based program, which aims to recognise and be witnesses to the teachings of Jesus in everyday living.

Whole school assemblies are held every Monday and Friday where we recognise academic achievement, principal's award for students who are seen to be demonstrating our school virtues, student who exhibit MJR values/attitudes, children's birthdays, and extra-curricular individual achievements. During Friday assemblies, class groups present classroom work and lead the assembly in prayer.

Our Mini Joeys program in Term 4 provides prospective parents and students an insight into the values and practices inherent not only within St. Joseph's, but also within Catholic Education. Further, prospective Prep students are given an insight into the daily routines and expectations within the school.

The Junior Joeys Group, made up of Year 6 students, initiate fundraising ventures and community events for charities and causes.

Students from St Joseph's are involved in a variety of community and social justice events and continually work to support their local and wider community by showing generosity and serving others.

Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

Every person in the St Joseph's community has a right to feel safe and be safe. St Joseph's strives to create an educational environment where each individual is respected, accepted, included and free from fear or threat. This safe environment will enable all members of the community to reach their full potential.

The school has anti-bullying and behaviour management policies in place that work hand-in-hand with behaviour modification programs. Students, staff and parents have collaboratively worked towards enacting this policy thus ensuring bullying and behaviour management strategies are implemented when the need arises. Dealing with bullying in all its forms is a shared responsibility. Where possible, St Joseph's will co-operate with parents to address any bullying that occurs inside or outside the school environment.

Strategies for involving parents in their child's education

Parents, Caregivers and Grandparents are integral members of the St Joseph's family who are continually invited to attend school activities. Parents are encouraged to be involved in classroom procedures, educational experiences, sporting opportunities and join with us in celebrating special events throughout the year e.g. School Masses, assemblies, Mother's Day Breakfast, Father's Day Cook-off.

The St. Joseph's Parents and Friends Association meets monthly and maintains a high and positive involvement in the school in a variety of ways. The St Joseph's School Board also meets monthly and makes a valuable contribution in policy development and implementation. Both groups play an integral role in supporting our school.

At the beginning of each year, classroom teachers facilitate a concise presentation which covers a variety of topics including: curriculum content, classroom, homework and behavioural expectations. It is a great opportunity for parents to meet their child's teacher. Parent/Teacher interviews are conducted twice throughout the year.

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

With the rising costs associated with electricity, at St Joseph's we are very conscious of energy consumption. We ensure that lights, air conditioners and any electrical appliances are turned off after use, or when students/teachers are not in rooms. In 2016, we installed solar power throughout the school to reduce our carbon footprint and make use of the year round sun Central Western Queensland provides. Teachers are encouraged to be responsible, sustainable members of society and to consider how their everyday practices impact on the school's environmental footprint. These considerations relate to photocopying, water use and classroom consumables.

Characteristics of the Student Body

The Josephite Sisters established St Joseph's school in 1917 and it is part of St. Patrick's Parish, Blackall. The school is the only Catholic (or Christian) school in the area. Two of the five classes in our school consists of two-year levels in a multiage setting, leaving Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 as single stream class groups.

Being a small school, we pride ourselves on our strong family atmosphere which is based on Gospel Values. As a staff we model these values by our word and actions. These values are reflected in all our dealings with all members of our school community. The St Joseph's community enjoys the close-knit family qualities of many small town Catholic schools. Children, parents and teachers work in partnership to provide and nurture the development of each individual. We believe that this partnership is vital in our mission of proclaiming the Good News.

Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2020 was 97.57%.

Management of non-attendance

Students who are absent from school are marked as absent through TASS. Notes are made on student's attendance roll if the school is notified of student's absence. If a student is absent and the school has not received a reason for the absence, a SMS text message is sent out to parents asking them to contact the school to explain while their child/children are absent. Should a student be absent for more than two days in a row, without contact with the school, the school will try ring to clarify student absence. All attempts to make contact will be recorded in the TASS system.

Importance is placed on identifying and recording student absenteeism for both compliance and student protection reasons.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	11.00	7.00	0.00
Full-time equivalents	8.40	3.13	0.00

Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	
Bachelor Degree	100%
Diploma	
Certificate	

Major Professional Development Initiatives

Teaching staff from St Joseph's are involved in a variety of Professional Development activities that both supports and develops individual's professional learning, spiritual and faith development. This year, teachers have been involved in professional learning around enhancing teaching and learning of Spelling, moving from surface to deep to transfer learning, using data and data walls to engage our teaching and learning, enhancing wellbeing knowledge and practices for staff and students, developing a wellbeing framework, WHS and Student Protection. Our Bishop's In-service Day focused on our ESCIP report.

Once again, we have continued with the role of Curriculum Mentor within the school and established a culture of improvement by using Learning Walks and Talks within the school. Teachers are partaking in Co-Teaching opportunities and time is given for teachers to observe lessons. The Curriculum mentor works with teachers to develop their teaching capacity within the school.

The percentage of teachers engaged in professional development was 100%.

Total funds expended on Professional Development

The total of funds expended on teacher professional development was \$10,700.

Average Staff Attendance and Retention

The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 93.18 %.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 98.41%.

School Income

<http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

(The School information below is available on the My School website).

Find a school

Search by school name

Search by suburb, town or postcode

Sector Government Non-government

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results

In 2020, NAPLAN did not proceed as a result of the disruptions caused by COVID-19. Previous NAPLAN results are available via the My School website at www.myschool.edu.au.

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school's NAPLAN results.

Key Student Outcomes and Value Added

St Joseph's tends to score at, or around the state and national average in all year levels across a number of testing areas. Collecting and analysing NAPLAN achievements and trends are becoming an established practice with both the Leadership Team and teachers. This focused tracking allows us to cater for professional learning and development in key areas of student achievement and student support.

Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

Strategic progress in 2020

- Using the key values, identified in 2019; Respect, Responsibility, Prayerfulness, Service and Integrity; work to embed these values in key documents and display these throughout the school. They are to be constantly referred to.
- Refine the data collection plan and timetable to enable the school to effectively track students' learning and progress AND develop the capacity for all staff to understand, analyse and discuss this data.
- Develop explicit, coherent and sequenced whole school aligned curriculum documents. These will support and include current and future pedagogical practices and give a clear outline for all who work at St Joseph's.
- Set school wide targets in Literacy and Numeracy for improvement with accompanying timelines and rigorously monitor the progress of these targets.
- Embed peer mentoring and coaching as an integral part of the professional learning community. Plan intentional release time for neighbouring classroom cohorts to plan. Encourage teachers to continually reflect on their teaching practice and use the AITSL tool to identify key goals in which they need to work on. Goal setting meetings will occur with the Principal throughout the year to track and encourage growth with the professional teaching community.

Strategic Priorities for 2021

- **Catholic Identity-** Enhance the school's Catholic Identity through quality education, interactions, beliefs and actions. Strengthening our understanding of Mary MacKillop's spirit of faith and service, our St Joseph's virtues and what this means for us as a Catholic school.
 - **Goal:** To educate our school community on what an 'ideal' Catholic school looks like and work towards shifting our thoughts and understandings in a positive direction.
 - **Student-Focused Target:** By the end of 2021 we will develop deeper connections to the traditional teachings of the Bible to our St Joseph's Values Education. Both students (93.3%) and staff (62.5%) saw a significant increase in the area of Value Education when comparing our 2015 results.
- **Effective Teaching and Learning-** That our school has a culture of data informed practice where every student is engaged and learning successfully in their own ways.
 - **Goal:** To improve our teacher engagement with data to inform our teaching and learning.
 - **Student-Focused Target:** By the end of 2021, students' DRA and PAT-M data will show a growth in the areas we focus on in our short-term cycles.
- **Pastoral Support and Wellbeing-** Development of School Wellbeing Model involving all key groups (students, parents and staff) to ensure every student's educational needs are met.
 - **Goal:** To support and increase student and staff knowledge of mental health and wellbeing.
 - **Student-Focused Target:** By the end of 2021, students will have an increased knowledge of mental health and wellbeing. This will be measured through the use of Be You Surveys.

- **Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing-** To systematically identify, develop and evaluate structures, processes, resources and targeted partnerships which enrich learning for every student.
 - **Goal:** To embed the teaching and learning of spelling and word study inquiry more deeply to achieve a coherent, sustained focus with a particular focus on transferring student spelling knowledge into the context of writing across all KLA's.
 - **Student-Focused Target:** By the end of 2021, the teaching of spelling and word study inquiry will be embedded into the context of writing. By the end of 2021, students will show a deeper level of understanding of spelling and word study, transferring this knowledge to a range of writing contexts.

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

As part of our School Review and Improvement Process, information was collated from school community members, students, staff and parish to devise a School Development Plan which will guide our journey for the future.

Satisfaction surveys are sent out to the school community to collect valuable feedback on the work of our school. The 2019 survey sought information about Catholic Ethos and Identity; Leadership, Partnership and Resourcing; Effective Teaching and Learning; Pastoral Support and Wellbeing and General comments about the school. Survey results indicated that our parent, staff and student community were happy with many aspects with these identified areas and were able to provide key feedback for improvement as well.

The P and F Association and School Board provide us with important feedback for the school's growth and improvement. These two working parties are integral in the school's success and instigators for areas for development. Much of the feedback we get from our parent body is by 'word of mouth'. We work hard to notify all that we have an 'open door' policy, inviting them to continue to share their concerns and/or commendations with the teachers and Leadership Team.