



Effort Wins Success

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Blackall

2023 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

53

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. 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-centred 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 activities. 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 Information and Communication Technologies (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, Dance, Visual Arts, STEM, ICTs 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.

The 'Joey's Way' seeks to incorporate all aspects of the Religious Life of the School. The Religious Life of the School incorporates four areas: Religious Identity and Culture, Prayer and Worship, Evangelisation and Faith Formation and Social Action & Justice. The Junior Joey's 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.

St Joseph's also engages in a number of feature days including National Day of Action Against Bullying, Ride to School Day, 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 a variety of community and social justice events including CARITAS fundraising activities, 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.

All students are provided with opportunities to be involved in academic activities, including the ICAS - Mathematics, Science and English Testing Competitions. St Joseph's offers online Japanese lessons to our Year 5/6 students through the support and assistance of The Cathedral College, Rockhampton. The Cathedral College, Rockhampton also offers online instrumental music lessons as an option for parents to engage their children in learning guitar or keyboard.

Students from St Joseph's are provided with numerous sporting opportunities. Students engage in Swimming, Athletics, Rugby League, Touch Football, Netball, Soccer, Cricket, Basketball 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 which engage students in the areas of dance, movement, ICTs, creative art, drama and music. Other events include the Year 5/6 annual camp, Arts Council performances 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 where we spend time reflecting, learning, and celebrating together.

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 2 to 6 students are provided with 1-to-1 Chrome Books for classroom use.

All students in our Early Years (Prep-Year 2) are supplied with 1-to-1 iPads. Robots, 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

At St Joseph's, the Joey's Way is actively taught through specific lessons involving the School's Identity and Culture. These lessons focus on our 5 School Virtues of Respect, Responsibility, Integrity, Prayerfulness and Service as well as a trauma informed approach to learning (Berry Street) and Mindset Continuum (James Anderson). Students also focus on their social and emotional development through Mindfulness and the Smiling Minds Curriculum.

Our students aim to celebrate and live out 'The Joey's Way' through:

- Celebrations of significant feast days relating to our school - St Joseph's Day, Mary MacKillop's feast day
- Prayer assemblies and Liturgical celebrations i.e. Masses of specific Catholic events and Australian events
- Special events - Mother's Day breakfast, Father's Day Cook Off, Grandparents Day.

The Joey's Way is how we live out the Gospel Values, our School Virtues and our rich history in our daily lives. Whole school assemblies are held every Friday where we recognise academic achievement, principal's award for students who are seen to be demonstrating our school virtues, students who exhibit Joey's Way 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 Joey's program 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 Joey's Group, made up of Year 6 students, initiates fundraising ventures and community events for those in need and special 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.

With the help from the School Board, St Joseph's has developed Student Engagement and Wellbeing Guidelines that work hand-in-hand with our school's expectation of students' behaviour. Students, staff and parents have collaboratively worked towards enacting these expectations 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. Caregivers 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/guideline development and implementation. Both groups play an integral role in supporting our school.

At the beginning of each year, school leadership and 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, all at St Joseph's are very conscious of energy consumption. Lights, air conditioners and any electrical appliances are turned off after use, or when students/teachers are not in rooms. In 2016, solar power was installed throughout the school to reduce our carbon footprint and make use of the year-round sun provided in Central Western Queensland. 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.

St Joseph's is part of the Waste Watch project. The school has installed Subpod compost systems in the vegetable garden and each room has a compost bucket for use in collecting food scraps for the garden. The school is exploring alternative and sustainable methods of reducing waste that goes into landfill.

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 consist of two-year levels in a multiage setting, leaving Prep, Year 5 and Year 6 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 2023 was 90.78%.

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 why 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 to ring to clarify student absence. All attempts to make contact will be recorded in TASS. Importance is placed on identifying and recording student absenteeism for both compliance and student protection reasons. Parents are encouraged to provide a medical certificate for children who have extended or frequent absenteeism due to illness.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	11.00	7.00	0.00
Full-time equivalents	9.00	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 working with Dr Selena Fisk to gain a deeper understanding of using data and data walls to engage our teaching and learning. We have also been working with James Anderson on Growth Mindsets and The Mindset Continuum.

The school continues to enhance knowledge and practices for staff and students around wellbeing and is continuing to develop an understanding of a trauma informed approach through Berry Street training and Masterclasses. Outback Futures is working with students and staff this year on the Resilience Project and is providing workshops for students and professional learning for staff. Workplace Health and Safety and Student Protection professional development is an ongoing focus for our teachers and staff. The Bishop's In-service Day focused on our Religious Identity of the school.

The school has a number of graduate teachers and is providing Curriculum Mentoring within the school and working with consultants from the Rockhampton Catholic Education Office to further develop their pedagogy. This external support has taken on a multi-delivery method with opportunities for face to face coaching, zoom conversations and team teaching in the classroom.

The leadership team are actively developing their knowledge and understanding of current education priorities through partaking in further university study.

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 \$8,800.

Average Staff Attendance and Retention

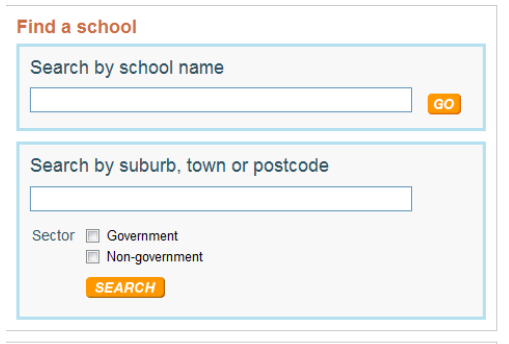
The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 95.23%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 91.67%.

School Income

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

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



The screenshot shows a search interface titled "Find a school". It contains two search boxes: "Search by school name" with a "GO" button, and "Search by suburb, town or postcode" with a "SEARCH" button. Below the second search box, there are radio buttons for "Sector" with options "Government" and "Non-government".

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for Years 3 and 5 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 is an established practice for both the Leadership Team and teachers. This focused tracking allows the school 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 2023

Catholic Identity- Support and develop our community's spiritual formation.

- Goal: To provide holistic inclusive formation opportunities for our students and community to nurture postcritical belief and to promote contemporary expressions of Catholic Identity.

Effective Teaching and Learning- Clarify and establish an explicit and agreed position on the research-based teaching practices that need to be evident in every classroom. Support teachers in their understanding and implementation of the effective teaching methods subscribed to and ensure that there is consistency of practice evident in every classroom, every day.

- Goal: For every student to achieve growth in literacy and numeracy by using data to guide and inform instruction and applying visible learning strategies.
- Goal: Develop and refine a whole school pedagogical framework to build teacher capacity and confidence.

Pastoral Support and Wellbeing- To implement a trauma informed approach to student wellbeing.

- Goal: Development of School Wellbeing Model involving all key groups (students, parents and staff) to ensure every student's educational needs are met.

Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing- Developing student's self-efficacy.

- Goal: Supporting students and families to develop strategies and skills that build self-efficacy.

Strategic Priorities for 2024

Catholic Identity- Support and develop our community's spiritual formation.

- Goal: To provide holistic inclusive formation opportunities for our students and community to nurture post-critical belief and to promote contemporary expressions of Catholic Identity.

Effective Teaching and Learning- Clarify and establish an explicit and agreed position on the research-based teaching practices that need to be evident in every classroom. Support teachers in their understanding and implementation of the effective teaching methods subscribed to and ensure that there is consistency of practice evident in every classroom, every day.

- Goal: For every student to achieve growth in literacy and numeracy by using data to guide and inform instruction and applying visible learning strategies.
- Goal: Refine our whole school pedagogical framework to build teacher capacity and confidence.

Pastoral Support and Wellbeing- To implement a trauma informed approach to student wellbeing.

- Goal: Implementation of School Wellbeing Model involving all key groups (students, parents and staff) to ensure every student's educational needs are met.

Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing- Developing student's self-efficacy.

- Goal: Supporting students and families to develop strategies and skills that build self-efficacy.

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 2021 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 of these identified areas and were able to provide key feedback for improvement as well. In 2022 we had our School Review and again parents were asked for their feedback. Parents/carers value the school's pastoral care and family/community oriented culture.

The P&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.