



# Holy Cross Primary School

## 2023 Annual School Report



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Catholic Schools  
Parramatta Diocese

## Introduction

### **About the Annual School Report**

Holy Cross Primary School is registered by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) as a member of the Catholic system of schools in the Diocese of Parramatta.

The Annual School Report provides parents and carers and the wider school community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. The Report describes the achievement of school development priorities in 2023 and gives information about the next years priorities.

This Report is a legislative requirement under the Schools Assistance Act 2008 and the Education Amendment Act 2004.

The information in this Report is complemented by the school website where other school publications and news can be viewed or obtained from the school.

## Key Messages

### **From the Principal Miss. Louise O'Donnell**

I am pleased to present the Annual School Report for Holy Cross Primary. It has been our privilege to work in partnership with our families this year to develop the learning and the faith of our students.

This year, as always, we continued to encourage a high standard of achievement and enjoyment of learning through quality and contemporary learning programs that have been designed to meet the needs of every learner. Each individual is at the centre of all that we do - developing a love of learning, a strong sense of self and the skills and attitudes to be successful in a changing world.

The teachers developed personal professional learning goals, related to our school priorities. These goals promoted ongoing improvement of practice in order to raise achievement of student learning outcomes. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Standards guide professional learning within the school and assist staff professional growth.

We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people providing a child safe environment where our students are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Every person involved in our school has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all our children.

As the principal of Holy Cross, I hope that this Annual School Report will give an insight into our wonderful school community.

The Annual School Report is a government initiative that allows our parents and carers to gain information about some of the structures and performance of our school and its role in the wider community. It is, however, a written document that cannot replace that very real and human need for personal interaction. We invite all parents and carers who wish to discuss any aspect of this report to make contact and work with us collaboratively.

### **From the Parents/Carers**

At Holy Cross there is a strong partnership between the school and home. Parent feedback was regularly sought prior to Sharing our Learning each term and new initiatives were always well publicised at these meetings and in the school newsletter.

As parent members of the school we have been extremely happy with the care and dedication shown by all staff members towards our children. From school leaders down to the classroom teachers we have always felt that our children have been supported and cared for in the way that we hoped for when enrolling them in a Catholic school. It is clear from discussions with the teachers that they know our children well as learners and that they have strategies to support them with their goals. The teachers are always approachable and we appreciate having the opportunity of an afternoon to chat with them if necessary.

Communication from the school and from the teachers is always clear and easy to understand. The Compass portal is excellent and very easy to use and we receive information in a timely and professional manner about what is happening at school. We really appreciate all the opportunities we have as a family to be involved in the school.

Parents and carers were formally surveyed in a centrally administered feedback system that provided information to staff about their child's experience and their own experience of school. The results will be used to look at further improvements at the school.

### **From the Students**

As student leaders we were really excited about the opportunities we had to show leadership at Holy Cross during 2023. We loved having lots of exciting events to lead at our school.

During the year we celebrated Mother's Day with morning tea and some fun activities outside so that the mothers could join in with their child. Father's Day had the fathers join in with a special breakfast followed by several games that they could join in, including hand ball and soccer. Grandparent's Day was a highlight with grandparents enjoying a liturgy followed by a concert that included raps from Year 6, jokes, stories, poems and songs from other grades in the school.

The iHelp leaders assisted with days to raise funds for community outreach including the St Vincent de Paul Winter and Christmas Appeals and they also promoted a drive for special items for the Jesuit Catholic Services Appeal.

Lots of students had opportunities to participate in inter-school gala days as well as a swimming carnival, cross country and our school athletics carnival and they were also very involved in our school sports carnival and inter-school sport gala days.

Students at the school were formally surveyed in a centrally administered feedback system that provided information to staff about the students and their experience of school.

## School Context

### History of the school

Holy Cross Primary School Glenwood, was established in 1999 as part of the parish of St Bernadette's Lalor Park. In 2002, the new parish of Stanhope/Glenwood was formed with Holy Cross Primary School as its first Catholic primary school. The School has grown from just 35 students in 2002 to 390 students in 2022. The school facilities include an administration block, library, open classrooms that provide opportunity for 21st century learning, new spacious playgrounds and playing areas with synthetic grass with areas designated for soccer, basketball and a marked running track, full sized basketball court, covered outside learning area, multi-purpose learning centre, new student bathrooms and before and after-school and vacation care facilities. Holy Cross Primary School has developed a strong relationship with the parish and works closely with the parish priest and assistant priest to strengthen ties between the school and parish communities.

### Location / Drawing Area

Holy Cross Primary School is located in Glenwood and draws on students from the immediate area of Glenwood. The School is within the St John XXIII Parish and forms an integral part of the mission of the Catholic Church in education. Our School, along with St Mark's Catholic College and St John XXIII Primary School, both located at Stanhope Gardens, form the Catholic Learning Community of St John XXIII Parish.

## Workforce Composition

### Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile	
Total Number of Staff	36
Number of staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	0
Number of full time teaching staff	16
Number of part time teaching staff	10
Number of non-teaching staff	10

### Total number of teaching staff by NESA accreditation level

Teachers at the school are either accredited as conditional, provisional or proficient as defined by the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004 (NSW). Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher is voluntary.

The contracted number of accredited teachers within Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) are as follows:

Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) accredited teachers	
Conditional Teachers	363
Provisional Teachers	125
Proficient Teachers and/or above	3495

Teacher status at Holy Cross Primary School can be sourced directly from the school.

## Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member working within CSPD is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including: whole of school staff days, subject-specific engagements, conferences, meetings and a range of professional learning opportunities provided by CSPD.

The school takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking its staff's professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes.

Specific and focused Professional Learning for the staff of the school this year has included:

- Staff deepened English content knowledge of spelling and developed a whole school inquiry based approach to instruction so that it is integrated with current literacy practices.
- Responding to the changing linguistic needs of our community the teachers explored ways to support and assist students to develop English language proficiency.
- Participated in the Jarara School's Totem Challenge to gain a deeper understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to country and identity.

# Catholic Identity and Religious Education

## Prayer, Liturgical Life and Faith Experiences

Education within the Diocese of Parramatta is a ministry of the Catholic Church, walking with humility in the way of Jesus, serving all of God's people. The Gospel messages of love, forgiveness, tolerance and compassion are lived experiences that are visibly evidenced at school. We offer families high-quality accessible education that challenges each student to discover a meaningful, hope-filled and flourishing life. Our caring teachers share faith and learning with students, including through their own example. Every day, be it in the playground, at an assembly or in the classroom our students experience a genuinely religious way of understanding the world. The invitation to meaningful prayer and liturgy, as well as participation in the Sacraments, nurture and give expression to the religious dimension of school life in the context of the Church's celebration of the liturgical year.

## Social Justice

All students at the school are encouraged to regularly engage in activities to support Catholic Mission with fundraising and awareness-raising initiatives. Students are encouraged to work closely with their local parish, community groups, support local charities and participate in outreach or immersion experiences for the benefit of the whole community and the student's personal development.

This year students and staff from the school engaged in the following initiatives and activities:

- The iHelp group set up a prayer wall for Turkey and Syria after the earthquake praying for the displaced, the hungry and those in pain.
- A guest speaker addressed the iHelp student group about homeless and in response the students conducted a school Winter Appeal for St Vincent de Paul.
- The school community participated in the World Day of Prayer for care of creation based on the encyclical of Pope Francis' Laudato Si.

All of these initiatives enabled the students and staff to practise their faith through action as Jesus demonstrated in the Gospels.

## School, Home and Parish Partnerships

Parents and carers have been actively encouraged to engage in a variety of school activities including parent forums, information evenings, parent/teacher/student meetings, liturgies, social events and opportunities to provide feedback. Regular communication with parents and carers occurred through phone calls, meetings and the Compass information platform.

## Religious Education

At the heart of our school is the Religious Education program. It is through this area of study that students learn to value the Catholic identity, traditions, values and Christ's teaching. Our Religious Education program is embodied by the quality of our relationships and how we deal with the daily issues of life.



CSPD schools use Sharing Our Story, a Religious Education curriculum that has been used for more than 20 years. In all subject areas, we offer an education completely consistent with the teaching of the Church on the dignity of all aspects of the human person. We also appreciate the need to provide age-appropriate learning opportunities.

### **Professional Learning of Staff in Religious Education**

Professional Learning in Religious Education offered to staff this year included:

- A priority was to develop and strengthen teacher knowledge and understanding of the Sacraments of the Catholic faith through exploring scripture.
- The Religious Coordinator worked with teachers to explore their learning cycles providing the theological background and providing feedback.
- Teachers were involved with planning liturgies and were responsible for setting up for mass to develop an understanding of the structure and symbols.

## Learning and Teaching

### **National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)**

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia participated in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The purpose of NAPLAN is to provide information to parents and carers and teachers about the achievements of students in literacy and numeracy. Questions are based mostly on the literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills students have learnt from previous years of schooling.

Each year the results are analysed by the school to inform teaching and learning with a view to improving student performance. Commencing in 2023, NAPLAN test results are reported using proficiency standards. 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.

The percentages of students achieving at Exceeding and Strong proficiency levels are reported in the table on the next page.

### NAPLAN Results Year 3 2023

Year 3	Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
	School	Australia
Reading	80%	67%
Writing	94%	76%
Spelling	66%	61%
Grammar and Punctuation	70%	54%
Numeracy	89%	65%

### NAPLAN Results Year 5 2023

Year 5	Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
	School	Australia
Reading	88%	74%
Writing	82%	66%
Spelling	86%	69%
Grammar and Punctuation	85%	64%
Numeracy	81%	68%

## Student Profile

### Enrolment Policy

Holy Cross Primary School follows the Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) Enrolment Policy Procedures and Guidelines. The full text or a link to the full text of the school's enrolment policies, including all prerequisites for continuing enrolment, can be obtained from the school office or can be accessed on the school's website.

### Student enrolments

Student enrolments 2023	
Number of Boys	Number of Girls
195	195
Total Enrolments: 390	

### Student attendance

Student attendance rates 2023			
Year	Attendance Rate	Year	Attendance Rate
K	95%	4	95%
1	93%	5	95%
2	93%	6	95%
3	91%	School Average: 94%	

### Managing non attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents and carers, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.

The compulsory schooling age range is 6-17. Parents and carers are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, explaining the absences of their children in writing within several days to the school, and taking measures to resolve attendance issues involving their children.

School staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences. They maintain accurate records of students' attendance, follow up unexplained absences through written and verbal communication, implement programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise, and provide clear information to students and parents/carers regarding attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.

The school principal or their delegate may grant permission for late arrival or early departure from school, leave or exemption from attendance only in individual cases, on written request from parents and carers. For longer exemptions, an application for approval is made through Diocesan authorities. The principal/delegate will undertake all reasonable measures to contact parents/carers promptly if an unexplained absence occurs. If truancy is suspected, the principal will contact the parents/carers to ascertain the reason for the absence. If a satisfactory response is not received, the matter will be referred to the relevant staff at CSPD who will follow up unexplained absences as per legislative requirements.

### **Characteristics of the student body**

The table below shows the number of students in each of the categories listed.

Student Body Characteristics	
Language background other than English (LBOTE)	233
Students with disabilities (SWD)	96
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	4

## Wellbeing

The wellbeing and safety of all students is central to the purpose of Catholic Education and we acknowledge that healthy relationships and exceptional pastoral care are core to each child's positive experience at school. Holy Cross Primary School is a place where students are nurtured to grow, to belong and to be safe.

A sense of wellbeing and connectedness promotes optimal development of the person as a whole and contributes to academic success. We have a strong focus on pastoral care and our school has a counsellor to support our students. CSPD provides resourcing for additional wellbeing initiatives and teams to support attendance, behaviour and intervention for students at risk.

Our wellbeing initiatives include:

- Established an outdoor sensory room with tools that students could use to self regulate heightened behaviour such as stress, anger or over-stimulation
- Throughout the year we celebrated student achievement by awarding Personal Best, Positive Behaviour for Learning and Appreciation certificates.
- The whole school community actively participated in the Day for Daniel to raise awareness for child safety, protection and harm prevention.

Holy Cross Primary School bases student wellbeing on the [CSPD Student Wellbeing Policy \(2022\)](#) and the [CSPD Student Wellbeing Framework](#). The guidelines identify the rights and responsibilities of every student in the school and are based on the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. Corporal punishment is expressly forbidden at the school.

Related policies include:

- [Bullying of Students - Prevention and Response Procedure \(2022\)](#)
- [Student Use Of Digital Devices And Online Services Policy \(2022\)](#)
- [Guidelines for Parents and Carers in Raising Complaints \(2023\)](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Policy \(2022\)](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Framework](#)
- [Student Attendance Policy \(2021\)](#)
- [Student Attendance Procedures \(2022\)](#)
- [Bullying of Students - Prevention and Response Procedure \(2022\)](#)
- [Weapons Procedures \(2022\)](#)
- [Banned Substances Student Procedures \(2022\)](#)
- [Family and School Partnership Principles](#)

### **Actions promoting respect and responsibility**

Holy Cross Primary School actively promotes respect for others and responsibility for self. During the past year, our community has engaged with the following actions and opportunities:

- PBS4L lessons continued to be taught focusing on students' positive behaviours and interactions with one another inside and outside the classroom.
- Celebrated Harmony Day to recognise the uniqueness of our school's cultural diversity with students wearing orange, creating posters and art work.

- Year 6 students receive wristbands to advocate for the demonstration of the school agreements promoting these by example with our younger students.

## Community Satisfaction

During 2023, CSPD and our school utilised a variety of measures to obtain feedback from parents and carers, students and staff regarding community satisfaction.

Areas of strength from the parents/carers feedback include:

- Teachers are accessible and are readily available to meet and discuss student progress and set ongoing learning or social goals.
- The student engagement and wellbeing initiatives that the school arrange each term build a really strong welcoming community.
- The staff know the students and the school agreements of being safe, respectful and doing your personal best are a focus in every learning space.

Areas of strength from the student feedback include:

- Acknowledged that teachers assisted them to improve in their learning and that they were encouraged by teachers to think about what they learn.
- Engagement in regular feedback and working collaboratively with their teachers is valued by the students.
- Students acknowledged the positive behaviours encouraged by the school through PBS4L creates a safe environment for them.

Areas of strength from the staff feedback include:

- Leaders are approachable, open minded, pastoral and show trust in their staff. They would like to see more extensive induction for new staff.
- Staff loved the changes to programming documents, the implementation of wellbeing week and the provision of additional release time when required.
- All staff members are included in discussions to seek and hear all points of view on student learning and school procedures.



## School Improvement and Learning

### Priorities

Current Year Priorities		
Priority 1	Staff engaged in essential learning of the new syllabus participating in a deep dive of understanding the Focus Areas, Outcomes and Skills & Knowledge. Together we planned learning sequences that support excellence in student learning .	Achieved.
Priority 2	Staff discussed and developed agreed practises within the Mathematics block reflecting upon the assessment waterfall chart to ensure our students could confidently articulate what they are learning, why they are learning it and how they can improve.	Achieved.

  

Projected School Priorities		
Priority 1	To increase the raw score of student performance in the Australian Standardised Spelling Age Test as well as the Hearing and Recording Sounds Early Years Assessment tests, Vulnerable students will be provided with daily intervention in small groups.	
Priority 2	To develop a strong foundational understanding of fractions and decimals to build a strong mathematical base for problem solving. The current syllabus documents will be revisited and teachers will develop learning sequences with leaders of learning.	

## Financial Statement

Financial information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth and State Government in the Financial Questionnaire.

School Financial Information for 2023 is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$4,210,505
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$0
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$1,120,237
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$1,041,754
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$197,456
Total Income	\$6,569,952

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$284,982
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$4,697,889
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$1,876,607
Total Expenditure	\$6,859,478

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<sup>1</sup> Commonwealth relates to Commonwealth Recurrent Grants including per capita funding and special purpose grants

<sup>2</sup> Capital relates to Government Capital Grants received for construction of school assets

<sup>3</sup> State relates to State Recurrent Grants including per capita funding, interest subsidy and special purpose grants

<sup>4</sup> Fees relate to Diocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income from parents/carers

<sup>5</sup> Other refers to Other Capital Income including amounts charged for Diocesan Building Levy from parents

<sup>6</sup> Capital Expenditure refers to expenses incurred mainly for School Buildings, Furniture and Equipment

<sup>7</sup> Salaries refers to the total of all Salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation, workers compensation and leave

<sup>8</sup> Non-Salary refers to all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenses