



Catherine McAuley

2023 Annual School Report



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Introduction

About the Annual School Report

Catherine McAuley 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 Ms. Mary Refalo

Founded by the Sisters of Mercy Parramatta, Catherine McAuley Westmead is a Catholic girls' school with a strong Mercy charism. The school opened on the present site in 1966 as a Catholic secondary school for girls in Years 7 to 10. Years 11 and 12 were introduced in 1986. Today the school offers comprehensive education for girls from Years 7 to 12. The school operates within the Catholic Schools Diocese of Parramatta. We pride ourselves on being authentic to the Catholic vision of the Venerable Catherine McAuley. There are currently 1200 students enrolled in the school, many from the local area including the Catholic parishes of Westmead, Toongabbie, Winston Hills, Girraween, North Parramatta, Wentworthville, Harris Park and Parramatta. A significant proportion of students attend from a wider geographic area and Year 7 students come from over 55 different primary schools. Places in all year groups are highly sought after.

Catherine McAuley Westmead is a vibrant, diverse and multicultural community with expert, innovative and dedicated Leaders of Learning and teaching staff. This allows for a broad curriculum, with flexible choices that cater for the wide range of student interests and abilities. We are a comprehensive school that is inclusive and equitable. Our approach to learning prioritises the skills required for young women to participate actively in a dynamic world as autonomous lifelong learners who are connected, adaptable, discerning and articulate. An extensive extra-curricular program provides a holistic education and enables students to experience success and achieve excellence in a wide variety of areas. The learning environment is complemented by a comprehensive wellbeing structure that includes a strong house system, support of Leaders of Learning Wellbeing and homeroom teachers, and a stage appropriate program that builds the strength and skill of contemporary young women.

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

Parents are involved in many aspects of school planning, community events, education and wellbeing. The Parents and Carers Group meet once a term and are actively involved in school functions such as Open Day, the school swimming and athletics carnivals, and Mercy Day. The views of parents are sought regularly through surveys and interviews, and parents have direct contact with all staff, Leaders of Learning and the school Leadership Team through phone calls, diary entries and email.

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 college. The results will be used to look at further improvements at the college.

From the Students

In 2023, students actively participated in a variety of academic, social justice, cultural and sporting activities in the school. Students contributed to decision making through membership of the Senior Student Leadership Team and the Student Representative Council, which had members from all levels in the school. Student representatives to both bodies were self-nominated and elected by their peers. Our recognised and acknowledged school strengths includes students who actively uphold the Mercy values of excellence, integrity, hospitality, courage and justice. They ensure a safe and inclusive learning environment and are confident and empowered learners, engaged in the school's dynamic learning and extra curricular programs. Students were accountable for their learning and actions, they possessed a deep sense of school spirit and they remained connected with the school after graduation through the Alumni Association.

Students at the college 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 college

Catherine McAuley Westmead was established in 1966. It was founded by the Parramatta Sisters of Mercy. Prior to that time, primary and secondary students were catered for at St Patrick's School Parramatta. Stage 1 was completed in November 1966 and students in Years 7 to 10 moved into their new school. Strong representation from the Parents and Friends Association resulted in the provision of schooling to Year 12. The first Year 12 class graduated in 1987. The school retains vibrant links with the Parramatta Sisters of Mercy and has a strong focus on faith in action and excellence in girls' education.

Location / Drawing Area

Catherine McAuley is located in Westmead and draws on students from the areas of Parramatta, the Hills districts, Wentworthville and Toongabbie. It serves the parishes of Parramatta, Winston Hills, Girraween, Wentworthville, Harris Park, North Parramatta and Westmead.

Workforce Composition

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile	
Total Number of Staff	123
Number of staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	0
Number of full time teaching staff	75
Number of part time teaching staff	19
Number of non-teaching staff	29

Total number of teaching staff by NESA accreditation level

Teachers at the college 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 Catherine McAuley can be sourced directly from the college.

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 college 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 college this year has included:

- In 2023, the focus was on stretching students in their reading and writing in each subject area, and using exemplar texts to model excellence for students.
- Teachers worked in small groups to co-plan and co-evaluate lessons, with a focus on the classroom pedagogy they were using and its effectiveness on student learning.
- Teachers developed the school's Learning Framework by accessing contemporary learning principles and applying them in the school's context.

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 college. 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 college 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 college engaged in the following initiatives and activities:

- Students built awareness and fundraised for Caritas Australia's work in supporting women across the world complete education and find employment.
- Students worked on awareness raising, fundraising and donation of goods to the Parramatta Women's Shelter to support local women in need.
- Students developed awareness and fundraised for the Mercy Works focus on providing sustainable nutrition for women and children in East Timor.

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 college 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:

- The Staff Formation day in 2023 focussed on staff knowing and living the Mercy charism within the school environment.
- Teachers accompanied students on World Youth Day and participated in formation opportunities as part of this pilgrimage.
- Religious Education Staff workshopped aspects of curriculum to develop their programs and content delivery.

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 7 2023

Year 7	Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
	School	Australia
Reading	89%	68%
Writing	81%	63%
Spelling	86%	73%
Grammar and Punctuation	79%	64%
Numeracy	80%	67%

NAPLAN Results Year 9 2023

Year 9	Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
	School	Australia
Reading	83%	63%
Writing	78%	58%
Spelling	88%	71%
Grammar and Punctuation	73%	56%
Numeracy	80%	64%

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

Eligible students who leave school before receiving their Higher School Certificate (HSC) will receive the NSW Record of School Achievement (RoSA). The RoSA has been designed to provide grades for all Stage 5 (Year 10) and Stage 6 (Preliminary) courses completed during secondary education.

In 2023:

- The number of students issued with a RoSA in Year 10 was 1.
- The number of students issued with a RoSA in Year 11 was 3.

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

Percentage of students in performance bands 4, 5 and 6 (trend data) in select courses as compared to the state.

HSC Results						
HSC Subject	Percentage of students in top 3 bands					
	2023		2022		2021	
	School	State	School	State	School	State
English Standard	88%	59%	83%	56%	91%	58%
English Advanced	100%	95%	100%	94%	100%	93%
Studies of Religion 1	95%	84%	87%	79%	82%	69%

Total number of Year 12 students engaged in either a VET or NESAs endorsed courses: 42.

NESA endorsed courses and or VET courses undertaken by Year 12 students include: Active Volunteering, Beauty Services (Make-Up), Fitness, Skills Work Vocational Pathways, Studies in Catholic Thought.

School HSC Highlighted Performances

Percentage of students in performance bands 4, 5 and 6 (trend data) in highlighted courses as compared to the state.

HSC Results		
HSC Subject	Percentage of students in top 3 bands	
	2023	
	School	State
Mathematics Standard 1 Exam	100%	43%
Studies of Religion II	96%	82%

HSC Results Comment

Catherine McAuley's HSC results remained strong in 2023, with 53% of students achieving a Band 5 or 6 in any of their subjects and 88% achieving a Band 4, 5 or 6. In the 2023 HSC,

72% of the courses studied at this school achieved average results higher than state average. Of particular note is that students studying accelerated courses in the Preliminary year performed as well as their peers in their HSC year. In the 2023 cohort, two students were named all rounders and one student's Drama practical work was selected for the 'Onstage' exhibition. The Dux of the school for 2023 achieved an ATAR of 99.05.

Student Profile

Enrolment Policy

Catherine McAuley 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
0	1191
Total Enrolments: 1191	

Student attendance

Student attendance rates 2023			
Year	Attendance Rate	Year	Attendance Rate
7	95%	10	93%
8	94%	11	94%
9	93%	12	94%
College 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.

Student retention rates

The retention rate of students for Year 10 to Year 12 was 85%.

Post School Destination

Each year the college collects destination data relating to the Year 12 student cohort. The table below sets out the percentages of students for the various categories.

Post School Destination	
University	90%
Technical and Further Education (TAFE)	4%
Workforce	1%
Other/Unknown	5%

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)	654
Students with disabilities (SWD)	204
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	8

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. Catherine McAuley 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:

- The Leaders of Learning Wellbeing focussed on collecting, analysing and responding to data related to student resilience and attendance.
- Year and school assemblies promoted student participation in school and external events, recognising student achievement and building school spirit.
- The merit achievement system was overhauled to improve the efficiency of the system and therefore the appropriate recognition of students.

Catherine McAuley 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 college.

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

Catherine McAuley actively promotes respect for others and responsibility for self. During the past year, our community has engaged with the following actions and opportunities:

- Students attended seminars on digital safety and respectful relationships.
- Students participated in hospitality events to support the Catholic community of Parramatta at St Patrick's Cathedral.
- Students attended a social justice forum and workshop for the Jesuit Refugee Service, with refugees and asylum seekers as guest speakers.

Community Satisfaction

During 2023, CSPD and our college 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:

- The communication provided each week through the weekly review is excellent. Cannot fault the school in anyway. really happy so far.
- I really love that the The Mercy Values are a central focus on the students. I love that the school has a strong focus on the Catholic Faith.
- My daughter feels safe at school and I appreciate the care provided to keep them safe and equip them to make better choices.

Areas of strength from the student feedback include:

- Students talk about Catherine McAuley Westmead as a faith-based school that teaches them important values.
- Students regularly say that their teachers are supportive, helpful and friendly.
- Students who are new to the school often report that they are welcomed and that their peers are very friendly.

Areas of strength from the staff feedback include:

- Professional learning meetings are an opportunity to share ideas and best practice.
- Having time to collaborate with colleagues ensures I plan my lessons well for the students in my classes.
- The students at Catherine McAuley are very settled and have a culture of working hard across all of their subjects.

School Improvement and Learning

Priorities

Current Year Priorities		
Priority 1	To grow to in our commitment and practice as Catholics in the Mercy tradition through our participation in the Catholic Identity surveys and professional learning.	Still Working Towards.
Priority 2	To develop further resilience in all students through fostering a strong environment for students and professional learning that supports this work.	Still Working Towards.

Projected School Priorities		
Priority 1	To improve the learning of all students by more than one year's growth, through consolidation and application of high yield pedagogies for learning.	
Priority 2	To retain students studying Mathematics at the higher levels by increasing their mathematical confidence and engagement, therefore building on the school's already excellent results in this subject.	

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 ¹	\$13,619,276
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$3,650,327
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$5,758,779
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$693,576
Total Income	\$23,721,958

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$293,163
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$16,205,078
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$6,994,900
Total Expenditure	\$23,493,141

¹ Commonwealth relates to Commonwealth Recurrent Grants including per capita funding and special purpose grants

² Capital relates to Government Capital Grants received for construction of school assets

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

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

⁵ Other refers to Other Capital Income including amounts charged for Diocesan Building Levy from parents

⁶ Capital Expenditure refers to expenses incurred mainly for School Buildings, Furniture and Equipment

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

⁸ Non-Salary refers to all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenses