



Holy Cross Primary School

2024 Annual School Report



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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 2024 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. Our school prides itself on our strong Catholic identity offering our students a quality Catholic education based on the teachings of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community. Our school community continued fostering a nurturing environment where students flourish academically, emotionally and socially.

Holy Cross is a community with a strong commitment to school improvement and 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.

In 2024 we showcased some wonderful achievements and accomplishments including , a semi finalist in Voice of Youth Competition, several students in the top 25% of Maths Olympiad and one student in the top 10%, Write a Book in a Day and lots of sporting achievements.

Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing continued to be a strong focus this year. Art therapy was introduced to meet the needs of students who experience anxiety. Weekly lessons supported our three school agreements and our

commitment to the safety and wellbeing of all students. We pride ourselves on providing a safe environment where our students are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Our Captivate Strings Music Program in Year 3 and Year 4 has allowed our students to explore their creative potential, instilling a sense of teamwork as they learn to play their stringed instrument. We look forward to the continued growth and success of this program in the years to come.

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

There is a strong partnership between the school and home at Holy Cross. 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.

We have particularly appreciated the new initiatives to our school including the explicit teaching of spelling strategies, open learning spaces each term , the Public Speaking Competition in all grades and the new cricket nets and the additional shade sails enhancing our beautiful playground.

Parent members of the school have been extremely happy with the care and dedication shown by all staff members towards our children. From discussions with teachers it is clear 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.

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

In 2024 the Year 6 students have participated in many fantastic experiences that have helped us grow as learners and leaders. We had the opportunity to compete in the diocese speaking competition - Voice Of Youth. We created a speech about a subject we were passionate about such as ants, A.I., animal welfare and many more.

Another highlight of 2024 was camp where we had the opportunity to work together on our leadership skills as a whole grade. We completed many activities including rock climbing, laser tag and a high-ropes course overcoming fears and challenges along the way. Reflection Day was another highlight this year. We reflected on our incredible time at Holy Cross, discussed high school and reflected on scripture with our teachers.

We also have memories of wonderful celebrations including Mothers Day and Fathers Day and our book parade.

This year, our Year 6 students have had the wonderful opportunity to engage in various sports, including the athletics carnival, cross country, Mark Taylor Shield , and various gala days.

It has been inspiring to witness our classmates come together and embrace these activities, fostering a sense of camaraderie and community spirit.

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	44
Number of staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	1
Number of full time teaching staff	23
Number of part time teaching staff	11
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	458
Provisional Teachers	102
Proficient Teachers and/or above	3258

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:

- A team Faith in Action teachers worked together offering voluntary formation experiences (head, heart and hands) for students and attended many learning days led by our diocese.
- Staff explored how to transfer skills and knowledge from explicit spelling lessons to a range of writing contexts in the English block and beyond in other Key Learning Areas.
- We explored the Disability Standards for Education to ensure that all students have access and can participate in rich learning experiences despite their disability.

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 school community participated in a Water Walk on World Water Day to raise awareness of the global water scarcity and raising funds for Caritas.
- The iHelp group facilitated a monthly food drive for the Jesuit Social Services supporting communities who are affected by the rising cost of living.
- During the Season of Creation, the iHelp group introduced Return and Earn recycling to our school in response to Pope Francis' Laudato Si document.

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:

- Religious Education Coordinator supported staff through modelling, co-planning, co teaching and evaluating the effectiveness of scripture lessons.
- Teachers were involved in planning liturgies within their grade and across the school and organising daily meditations supported by the Parish Deacon
- All staff attended a Faith Formation Day led by the Jesuit Social Services inspiring us to action through contributions to those in need.

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 2024

Year 3	Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
	School	Australia
Reading	86%	66%
Writing	91%	77%
Spelling	79%	61%
Grammar and Punctuation	77%	54%
Numeracy	86%	63%

NAPLAN Results Year 5 2024

Year 5	Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
	School	Australia
Reading	77%	71%
Writing	82%	67%
Spelling	77%	68%
Grammar and Punctuation	70%	65%
Numeracy	77%	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 2024	
Number of Boys	Number of Girls
190	208
Total Enrolments: 398	

Student attendance

Student attendance rates 2024			
Year	Attendance Rate	Year	Attendance Rate
K	93%	4	93%
1	92%	5	94%
2	94%	6	93%
3	93%	School Average: 93%	

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)	248
Students with disabilities (SWD)	107
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:

- Art therapy was offered to decrease student anxiety by improving self esteem, resolving problems, expressing feelings, and problem solving.
- Students participated in the Grow Your Mind program to assist with building resilience, supporting respectful relationships and consent education.
- Staff attended a practical Youth Mental Health First Aid course to assist children who may be experiencing a mental health problem or crisis.

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:

- A change to our reminder system was trialled in all grades and then after teacher and student feedback was received the new system was implemented.
- We continued celebrating student achievement awarding Personal Best, Positive Behaviour and Appreciation certificates at our Sharing our Learning.
- Year 6 students received wristbands to advocate for the demonstration of the school agreements promoting these by example with our younger students.

Community Satisfaction

During 2024, 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:

- Opportunities after Sharing our Learning where parents/carers can go into the classroom and see teachers in action and students responding is helpful.
- Appreciation for the availability of teachers to discuss students academic and social interactions and jointly set long and short term goals together.
- The Public Speaking Competition provided confidence building and encouraged creative thought and expression for all students in our school.

Areas of strength from the student feedback include:

- Teachers are supportive and guide us through our learning step by step building upon prior knowledge, making it progressive rather than repetitive.
- The teachers are able to cater for all the needs of students with varying academic abilities. They always ensure the learning is interactive and fun.
- We love the new cricket nets, equipment and soccer nets as we have a wider variety of activities at lunch time and recess and for our sport lessons.

Areas of strength from the staff feedback include:

- Professional learning is driven from our current data and decisions are made as a team with all staff contributions appreciated and valued.
- The importance that is placed on wellbeing is valued by staff and the creative ways that the Leadership Team supports all staff members.
- The staff are appreciative of the wonderful knowledge and support that our diversity team and school counsellor bring every day to all our classes.

School Improvement and Learning

Priorities

Current Year 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.	Achieved.
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.	Still Working Towards.

Projected School Priorities		
Priority 1	To improve our students' understanding of their own faith through experiences with the 'Encountering Jesus' Religious Education curriculum. We will participate in the Enhancing Catholic Identity Project in partnership with Catholic University Leuven.	
Priority 2	In 2025 we will implement InitialLit in Kindergarten, appoint an Instructional Coach, use explicit teaching strategies to deliver syllabus content and implement Cars and Stars to assist with reading comprehension supporting English teaching.	

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 2024 is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$4,336,510
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$1,151,112
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$1,097,442
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$202,597
Total Income	\$6,787,661

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$416,618
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$5,212,529
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,829,047
Total Expenditure	\$7,458,194

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