



St Bernadette's Primary School

2023 Annual School Report



St Bernadette's Primary School
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Introduction

About the Annual School Report

St Bernadette's Primary School is registered by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESAs) 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 Mrs. Lisa Gerrard

St Bernadette's Primary School, Dundas Valley, is a community focused, Catholic parish school catering for boys and girls from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Our mission is to come together as a learning community to nurture each person in a respectful atmosphere, centred on the love of Christ, by offering a child-centred and creative curriculum. The school strives to build a Christ-centred community where faith is integrated with daily life.

We provide learning and teaching experiences which enable the children to deepen their faith understandings, investigate, solve problems and explore their learning. Learning programs are tailored to the various student needs, including counselling, special education, literacy and numeracy intervention programs. We recognise the importance of creating a learning environment that provides opportunities to develop 21st century learning. Technology is integrated into the learning at St Bernadette's Primary School across Key Learning Areas.

In 2023, we also offered a range of extra-curricular activities including public speaking, Japanese, as well as athletics, gymnastics, dance and swimming. Students have the opportunity to participate at zone and diocesan levels in sport and at various sporting gala days.

We value a partnership between home, school and parish and realise that our goals are achieved when we work together. In the words of our school motto at St Bernadette's Primary School, We Come to Learn, Live and Love.

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 significant members of the community.

In 2023, parents were invited to participate in the school through the Parent Committee as well as through formal and informal parent groups, election barbecues and social activities.

Parents were also invited to become involved in many areas of the school, including a endance at Mass, sport, library, reading, assemblies and canteen. At St Bernadett e's Primary School we have valued working in partnership with parents, supporting each other for the benefit of the children.

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

The Student Representative Council (SRC) was established at St Bernadette's Primary School to provide an avenue for the student body to be an integral part of the school decision-making process, as well as to make the school a better place to come to learn, live and love.

Through the SRC, the children have had the opportunity to communicate their concerns, suggestions and ideas for improving our school. The SRC provided leadership opportunities for its members, enabling them to develop and model responsibility, honesty, reliability and a commitment to ensuring St Bernadette's Primary School has been a happy and safe place. Members of the SRC were elected by the students and staff. Being a member of the SRC carried many responsibilities, but the greatest one was being a positive role model to other students.

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

St Bernadette's Primary School was opened in 1958 by the Good Samaritan sisters and since 1972 the school has had a lay principal. St Bernadette's Church was also part of the school buildings until 1965, when the new church and presbytery were built. More buildings were added as the school grew, with some of the buildings being built by the parents. In 1999, the school received a refurbishment grant from the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta and work commenced in early 2000 to refurbish existing learning spaces and build a new literacy support room, a special education room, technology room, new library, librarian work room and a teacher resource room. In 2008, the administration and library blocks were changed to meet the requirements of the new child protection legislation and to increase security for the office staff. With the Building the Education Revolution (BER) the school has built learning spaces which are spacious and that meet the learning needs of our children in the 21st century. In 2021 and 2022 the school underwent further changes with the upgrading of our Library and Toilets with the assistance of a minor capital works grant.

Location / Drawing Area

St Bernadette's Primary School is a community focused, Catholic parish school catering for boys and girls from Kindergarten to Year 6 (K-6). Located in the residential area of Dundas Valley, we also have students attending from surrounding suburbs of Carlingford, Ermington, Telopea, Northmead and Oatlands.

Workforce Composition

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile	
Total Number of Staff	23
Number of staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	0
Number of full time teaching staff	10
Number of part time teaching staff	6
Number of non-teaching staff	7

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 St Bernadette's 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:

- To develop language proficiency in all students by building teacher understanding and capacity around the EAL/D Progressions.
- To engage all members of the St Bernadettes in the life and mission of the Catholic faith community, through involvement in authentic mission initiatives.
- The numeracy focus is to support teachers in unpacking the new NESA Mathematics Curriculum.

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:

- Students raised funds and awareness for the work of CARITAS through mission markets.
- The community raised money for The Manning Foundation through sales of cheese toasties.
- The community raised funds to support a teacher attending World Youth Day 2023.

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 teacher shared their journey to World Youth day with the staff.
- Staff spirituality formation day had a focus on different forms of prayer.
- Religious Education Coordinator worked with staff individually to reconnect to the Sharing our Story Document.

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	88%	67%
Writing	100%	76%
Spelling	83%	61%
Grammar and Punctuation	71%	54%
Numeracy	75%	65%

NAPLAN Results Year 5 2023

Year 5	Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
	School	Australia
Reading	95%	74%
Writing	86%	66%
Spelling	91%	69%
Grammar and Punctuation	82%	64%
Numeracy	91%	68%

Student Profile

Enrolment Policy

St Bernadette's 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
100	80
Total Enrolments: 180	

Student attendance

Student attendance rates 2023			
Year	Attendance Rate	Year	Attendance Rate
K	96%	4	94%
1	94%	5	93%
2	94%	6	92%
3	94%	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)	117
Students with disabilities (SWD)	43
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	1

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. St Bernadette's 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:

- Regular assemblies recognising student achievement.
- New PBS4L initiative to acknowledge class achievement.
- New play areas and lunchtime groups were established to support socialisation.

St Bernadette's 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

St Bernadette's 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:

- Focused activities aligned to PBS4L identifying respectful learners.
- Participation in Harmony Day with a multicultural focus.
- Students supporting a food drive and learning about the work of the Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS).

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:

- Parents feel welcome when they visit the school.
- Parents believe that their child is encouraged to do his or her best work.
- Parents believe that their child feels safe at school.

Areas of strength from the student feedback include:

- Students feel that they try hard to succeed in their learning.
- Students believe that schooling is useful in their everyday life and will have a strong bearing on their future.
- Students have friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices.

Areas of strength from the staff feedback include:

- Staff have confidence in senior leadership to make the right decisions for their organisation.
- Staff support the mission of the Catholic Church.
- Staff believe that they work cooperatively with their colleagues.

School Improvement and Learning

Priorities

Current Year Priorities		
Priority 1	The literacy focus is on improving writing outcomes students K-6 with a focus on spelling and vocabulary.	Still Working Towards.
Priority 2	The Mission focus is on building theological capacity in order to move students from Christian Values Education to Recontextualisation. For students to draw a connection between scripture and outreach.	Still Working Towards.

Projected School Priorities		
Priority 1	The wellbeing focus is for students to increase their sense of belonging and improve their ability to articulate and regulate emotions.	
Priority 2	The numeracy focus is to extend and stretch our students' mathematical understanding through challenging tasks, explicit teaching and deep questioning.	

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	\$2,430,927
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$656,849
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$513,104
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$88,887
Total Income	\$3,689,767

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$54,858
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$2,664,548
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$954,696
Total Expenditure	\$3,674,102

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