



St Benedict's Catholic Primary School Yeppoon

2023 Annual School Report



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School, Yeppoon

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

Principal

Julie McLaughlin

Address

1 Laceys Road
Pacific Heights
Yeppoon QLD 4703

Total enrolments

360

Year levels offered

Prep – Year 6

Type of School:

Co-educational

School Overview

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School is a two-stream, Prep – Year Six school located at the northern end of the Capricorn Coast in Yeppoon. Opened in 2009, the school is part of the Capricorn Coast Parish and has strong links with the local Benedictine community. Our school mission statement emphasises these links to the Benedictine tradition as together we seek to create a welcoming, respectful community where all learners feel safe and supported. We strive to be reflective, self-directed, lifelong learners who grow as responsible global citizens living in ways that are aligned to the Benedictine values of love, prayer, discipline, humility, stewardship, hospitality and community. We take Jesus Christ as our model and foundation, working as part of the church to bring about the harmony, fulfilment and satisfaction we believe God intends for all people. St Benedict's offers an academic education of the highest standard in an environment guided by Christian values. Specialist lessons are provided for all students in Physical Education, Music, Drama and ICT. Instrumental music lessons are available and extra-curricular activities include choirs and sports teams. A vital aspect of student learning and development is the relationship between school and home. St Benedict's strives to be a community that is compassionate, just, respectful and where families and children feel important, are happy and experience success through holistic learning opportunities.

More information on our school can be accessed from myschool.edu.au

Curriculum Offerings

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

St Benedict's Catholic Primary School is a community of learners inspired by the Benedictine vision. Our Benedictine Charism is central to all aspects of our learning, therefore, reflecting the message of Jesus Christ.

Together we seek to create a welcoming, respectful community where all learners feel safe and supported. We want all to be reflective and self-directed lifelong learners who grow as responsible global citizens living lives of hospitality.

Our teaching practices create an enjoyable, safe and supportive environment where all learners can grow. This is demonstrated through the implementation of our Genius Hour, which emphasises the teaching and learning of robotics, coding, problem solving, group initiatives and 3D printing and through our engagement with the Arts through students participating in a specialised Drama and Performance Hour and six Art/Charism intensive days throughout the year.

We showcase our students' talents through hosting an annual school concert which builds on the drama and performance module. All students from Prep to Year 6 perform in a singing choir and verse speaking choir. Families and the local community are encouraged to attend our performance along with secondary students from our local Catholic Colleges. Alongside this our students are given the opportunity to be a part of our local Colleges' school musicals. This cooperation across the arts gives students opportunities to explore and develop their performance abilities.

Extra Curricula Activities

Our instrumental music program is broad and well attended with approximately 70 students undertaking the opportunity to extend their talents. This program includes the teaching of piano/keyboard, guitar and vocal sessions individually or in small groups. These musicians regularly participate in our school masses and are given the opportunity to partake in community events.

Students have the opportunity to participate in a Chess Club who compete in the local Chess competitions held in Rockhampton. We have a well-established gardening program and LandCare group. Students can participate in Coding Club, Art Club and Lego Club throughout the year.

Multiple school teams are involved in the local club touch football and rugby league competitions. School netball teams participate in the Capricorn Coast Netball Association competition during Terms 2 and 3. These teams also nominate and participate in local and regional carnivals.

All students in Years Five and Six participate in the Gala Days, interschool sports program during Terms 2, 3 and 4. This includes netball, rugby league, soccer, t-ball, AFL, touch football and Oz Tag. The Year 5 & 6 children participate in beach activities including fishing, beach cricket and football, surf lifesaving skills and surfing.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are an integral part of the teaching and learning program from Prep through to Year 6. ICTs are used to enhance student learning by providing students with the opportunity to access a wide variety of learning tools to engage and communicate their learning. ICTs are used to encourage creativity and critical thinking, while providing additional purposes and audiences for learning.

Our Prep to Year 4 classrooms engage with programs such as Seesaw, Studyladder and Book Creator. These programs complement our classroom teaching as well as integrating ICT into everyday learning. Our Year 5 and 6 classes engage in multiple problem solving and investigative activities which involve robotics and coding through a specialist digital technology hour each week.

With the exception of Prep and Year 1, all classes access their homework online via Google Classroom. This allows students to use their knowledge of digital technologies, practice skills involved with ICTs and continue to develop these skills whilst completing traditional homework activities.

All classes from Prep to Year 4 are provided with a specifically designed Genius Hour which targets the use of ICTs with a STEM investigative model. This occurs for one hour each week. All students have the opportunity to use 3D printers throughout the year.

Our Year 6 cohort are involved in a one-to-one iPad program where curriculum is delivered through the use of iPad technology.

Social Climate

Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture

In the tradition of St Benedict, our community places an emphasis on learning for life, self-reflection across all Learning Areas experienced through academic, sporting and cultural endeavours.

In the Benedictine tradition of prayer, welcome, community and work, we listen, love and learn with Jesus, as we work and pray in the pursuit of peace. Each class puts this into practice as they provide a student hosted morning tea for parents, grandparents, extended family and parish throughout the year. Students serve morning tea, sit with the community and within a social setting where hospitality is at the centre of the experience.

Each year we host two major community orientated events. Grandparent's Day is hosted by our Year 1 cohort and supported by staff and Year 6 students. Grandparents from Year 1 are invited to participate in a morning of games, gardening and connection with their grandchildren. We invite the local parish community to join us, we have the local Cycling without Barriers group (volunteer cycling group who take the aged for assisted bike rides around the community), join us to provide 'bike rides'. This day is extremely beneficial for all involved. During Catholic Education Week we host a Random Act of Kindness morning tea for all families, grandparents and the parish. St Ursula's and St Brendan's Colleges provide musical entertainment, our Prep students perform and our Year 6 students host morning tea.

A qualified counsellor provides counselling sessions every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. This professional offering includes working individually with students and parents, group skilling sessions and working within classrooms.

Our learning support program provides many opportunities for students to learn and practice social skills which assist in their overall learning and achievement.

Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

The Student Code of Conduct guides expectations for all behaviour at St Benedict's. The Catholic Education Anti-Bullying Policy is also implemented at St Benedict's. Cyber safety is included in the learning program for our Year Five and Six students. This is also reiterated exclusively with the Year 6 cohort with contractual conditions taught as part of their one to one iPad program.

Annual Staff student protection training includes information, updates and expectations in these areas. Information is regularly provided to parents for their own education and to enable them to discuss with their children the importance of online safety.

The Child Safety (Daniel Morcombe) Curriculum is implemented across all year levels during Term 1 each year. In 2023 St Benedict's, along with our Parents and Friends Association, engaged the services of Mr Brett Lee, cybersafety expert. Brett addressed all year levels, teaching and support staff and a parent evening.

Strategies for involving parents in their child's education

All parents at St Benedict's are automatic members of the Parents and Friends Association upon their child's enrolment at the school. Following the election of an executive, the Association and School invite all parents to the monthly meeting of the Association.

St Benedict's School has a School Board that includes parent members. Parents interested in Board membership are invited to the annual pre-service training. This provides parents with the opportunity to examine their gifts and offer their service to the Board through their monthly meetings.

Each class holds an information evening in week 3 of the school year to assist parents understand the year ahead. During this session parents are also invited to assist in the classroom. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in our school tuckshop and at other community events.

Parent education sessions are provided at Parents and Friends Association meetings and on other occasions outside of these meetings.

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

St Benedict's is aware of its environmental footprint and has introduced several initiatives to reduce our impact on the environment both local and global.

The school installed four large tanks to reduce our water consumption. Two tanks harvest water from our buildings and this is stored for use in our toilets and gardens. Another two tanks store recycled water from our local council which is used for the irrigation of our school oval.

We have an active gardening group who plant and tend a variety of fruits and vegetables. The garden promotes the use of a worm farm and recycled cardboard and food scraps. Children involved with this group collect recyclable items daily and place them in composting bins.

Our Year 4 class actively monitor our waste output. They address the school's needs in regards to recycling, have initiated the installation of recycling bins for cans, poppers etc with Containers for Change. They report to the school community as required.

We have cleared an area of the school which is adjacent to our local creek. The removal of lantana and other noxious weeds continues with our grounds staff and student volunteers. We established native vegetation which will enhance the environment, improve water quality and allow students to study this environment over time.

We have engaged a number of local groups to assist with the rehabilitation of this area and received a \$5000 grant from Landcare Australia to allow us to continue this rehabilitation through our Junior Landcare Group. We have installed four native bee hives which enhances the local flora and assists with the growth of fruit and vegetables.

As part of their Benedictine Charism study and focus on social justice and sustainability, our Year 5 classes have purchased and planted ten fruit trees along our fence line. The concept they hope to build on is providing for the environment and the community with fruit being free for the community in an easily accessible spot in the school.

We have approximately 90 solar panels installed and from this we have greatly reduced our power consumption across the whole school. All classrooms have timer switches installed which automatically turn off air conditioners after a period of time. LED lighting has been installed throughout the school. These dim when not being used and they have proved to be very efficient especially those used to power security lighting at night.

Characteristics of the Student Body

Our school is a part of the Capricorn Coast Parish and through its naming has developed strong links with Benedictine community. Our Benedictine Sister, Kym Harris plays an active role in the spiritual and broader community life of St

Benedict's Catholic Primary School. Sr Kym Harris is an active member of our school as a member of our school board and through providing regular professional development opportunities for our teaching and ancillary staff.

St Benedict's has continued to be a vibrant and welcoming learning community. This culture can be attributed to the close, complementary relationship enjoyed amongst the staff, students, parents and parish community. Our school is currently at its highest enrolment numbers with a greater stability being evident. This can be attributed to a quality offering of education, professional teaching and support staff as well as a large influx of residents to the Capricorn Coast community.

As part of the parish, our school endeavours to be involved with parish activities and to maintain open lines of communication with the wider parish community. Our Parish Priest, Fr Matthew Moloney, continues to play a valuable role within the school as we develop our Benedictine charism. A parish representative is also a member of the school board. Our Principal and staff are members of various parish committees ensuring ongoing communication between all groups.

St Benedict's is a part of the wider Yeppoon community and maintains strong links with Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, St Ursula's College, St Brendan's College, and other local schools. Along with these schools, St Benedict's enjoys close ties with local community groups such as St Vincent de Paul and the local RSL.

As a Catholic School, we at St Benedict's strive to witness to the mission of the Catholic Church - to proclaim the Good News. By offering a learning environment that encourages all to work together in a challenging environment, we strive to empower all members of our community to become reflective and self-directed learners who are actively involved in their communities.

Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2023 was 87.78%.

Management of non-attendance

All student absences from school require notification to the school via phone, email or letter. Unexplained absences are communicated to parents each morning via SMS by 10.00am. Unexplained absences greater than two days are followed up by a member of the administration via phone or email.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	28.00	19.00	1.00
Full-time equivalents	24.00	11.07	0.60

Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	7%
Bachelor Degree	86%
Diploma	7%
Certificate	

Major Professional Development Initiatives

St Benedict's continues to provide quality professional development opportunities including:

1. Catholic Ethos & Identity
 - Dialogue conversations in relation to Religious Education Curriculum
 - Engaging with Prep – Year 6 teachers for Religious Education Curriculum planning and assessing which involves teachers being release for planning days with our Assistant Principal Religious Education
 - Meditation practices with staff and students
 - Prayer focus for 2024 with staff and students.
2. Effective Teaching and Learning
 - Maths Project: continue to have a focus on Mathematics through Math's planning audits with John Campbell Mathematics Consultant - CEDR
 - English
 - Participation in Reading Pilot - CEDR
 - Reading & Writing Hour
 - Review process, expectations and implementation
 - What is a running record and how does this inform our practice and planning.
3. Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing
 - Education around the use of same planning format for all Reading, Writing and Mathematics Hours
 - Intervention for individual students documented effectively
 - Continue classroom walkthroughs for Reading, Writing, Mathematics and Religious Education
 - Regular review through professional conversations of Reading, Writing and Mathematics Hours (as a result of walkthrough observations and drawing on teacher professional development goals).

The percentage of teachers engaged in professional development was 100%.

Total funds expended on Professional Development

The total of funds expended on teacher professional development was \$53,700.

Average Staff Attendance and Retention

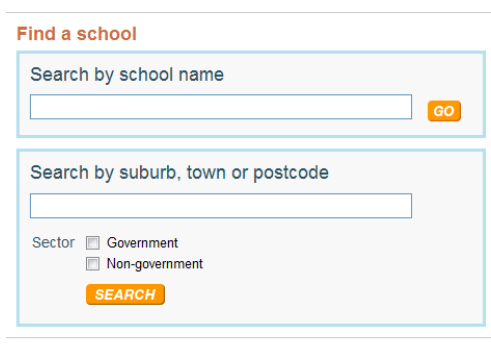
The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 91.55%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 100%.

School Income

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

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



The screenshot shows a search interface titled "Find a school". It features two search options: "Search by school name" with a text input field and a "GO" button, and "Search by suburb, town or postcode" with a text input field. Below these is a "Sector" section with two radio buttons: "Government" and "Non-government". A "SEARCH" button is located at the bottom of the search area.

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for Years 3 and 5 are available via the My School website at www.myschool.edu.au.

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school's NAPLAN results.

Key Student Outcomes and Value Added

St Benedict's has a clear focus on providing academic, cultural, physical, relational and spiritual experiences and opportunities for all students. We implement a targeted approach for Reading, Writing and Numeracy through specifically planned 'hours'. Individual student goals and needs are identified and implemented during these times.

We continue to engage with consultants from Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton (CEDR) for both Literacy and Numeracy, focusing heavily on the adjustments which are made for all students to specifically target their individual needs. This focus requires teachers and support staff to have a clear understanding of the purpose of our Reading Writing and Mathematics Hours, to focus on how these are written and employed to ensure planning is suitable, matches students' needs and clearly articulates, particularly for those students who are identified on our NCCD data, the adjustments being made. This will continue as we move into 2024. Additional to this, teachers will be expected to use the six NCCD planning and programming days, which have been allocated to all classroom teachers, to meet with our learning support teachers to review and write ILP's and PLP's which advocate for and design learning opportunities which match student needs.

In addition to programs implemented for these focus areas we offer specialist teaching, instrumental programs, sporting opportunities, retreat, art and prayer intensives. Our school strives to include an outward focus where students support and serve the school, local and wider communities.

NAPLAN results for 2023 continued to be strong across Literacy and Numeracy. The 2023 Year Three results were strong across Spelling, Writing, Reading and Numeracy with the school mean being above the National average for these areas and well above in Grammar and Punctuation. The Year Five cohort performed strongly in Writing, Spelling and Numeracy with Reading and Grammar and Punctuation being well above the National average.

Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

Strategic progress in 2023

The key goals for 2023 from our School Improvement Plan included:

- The continued review and enhancement of knowledge and delivery of new Religion Curriculum P – 6
- Planning effective units which matched the Religious Education Curriculum
- Developing the analysis and documentation of individual students' needs
- Developing student driven planning through Reading, Writing and Mathematics Hours.

Along with these goals, teachers continued to engage with ongoing reviews of their planning. Regular leadership led discussions are held at least three times per term. This was complemented with discussions around the planning for and documenting of teaching and learning for those students who were included in NCCD data.

We continued to review and improve the teaching of writing. Our students remain above the State and National average for writing; however, we continue to work on achieving the same growth as that which is evident in reading. In 2022 we trialled a writing running record and further refinement was employed in 2023. This has given our teachers greater insight and reporting capabilities. Specifically, we have implemented the following:

Development of a writing running record

- ongoing recording of student progress under headings of grammar, punctuation, fluency
- implemented twice over the period of a term depending on the writing task being completed
- simple ongoing record needed to build direct individual teaching.

The process continued to be a part of the professional conversation with leadership team members through face-to-face meetings. These meetings occur after classroom walk throughs have been conducted and observations made.

Mathematics continued to be a focus as we concluded our participation in the Diocesan Mathematics Project. This project involved three mentor teachers who inserviced teachers across the year. We are supporting this new learning in 2024 with focussed maths audits planned.

The results from the ECSI project continued to inform our professional development and planning for Religious Education and our beliefs and teachings about Jesus Christ. This parallels our ongoing planning and implementation of the Religious Education Curriculum.

Strategic Priorities for 2024

Continued planning, reflection and professional development is planned for:

- Teacher Observations & Classroom Walkthroughs
- Reflection and discussion sessions after walkthroughs
- Data analysis and teacher reflection and planning
- Face to face meetings to discuss the above teaching of Reading, Writing and Mathematics
- Continued professional development, discussion and planning for the implementation of the Religious Education
- Curriculum from Prep – Year 6.
- Math's Planning Audits with DCEO Mathematics Coordinator
- Participation in Diocesan Reading Pilot
- Review of Comprehension assessment and data collection

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

St Benedict's enjoys an active parent community who support the cultural, spiritual, sporting and academic pursuits of the school. Parents are well represented at many school events and activities in which students are involved.

Our holistic approach to education and the development of individuals continues to provide positive feedback to the school. We currently have waiting lists for all classes with the exception of Year 6. Our Preparatory Year enrolment applications for 2025 far exceed capacity and we have significant enquiries for 2026 and 2027.

The results of our satisfaction survey produced a 90% or above result for most areas.

The teaching and support staff have remained very stable and this contributes to the confirmation of their satisfaction with St Benedict's as a learning community.

Our Parents and Friends Association is small, however, highly positive and successful. We run only two fundraising activities each year. One a Pie, Cookie Dough or similar drive and our annual Twilight Markets. These are continuing to grow and are now considered to be one of the events on the Capricorn Coast. The School Board is always well supported with a variety of parents contributing a specific skill set which supports the school Principal.