



# St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald

2021 Annual School Report



**Catholic Education**  
Diocese of Rockhampton

# **St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Emerald**

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

## **Principal**

Mrs Tegan Green

## **Address**

6311 Gregory Highway  
Emerald Qld 4720

## **Total enrolments**

268

## **Year levels offered**

Prep – Year 6

## **Type of School:**

Co-educational

## **School Overview**

St Brigid's Catholic Primary School is located in the Central Highlands town of Emerald and services Emerald and surrounding communities. The area is influenced predominantly by agricultural and mining industries. Opened in 2014, St Brigid's is a young and growing school with a vibrant school community. The school adopts the charism of the Congregation of St Brigid, or the Brigidine Sisters, which is supported by our motto "Gentleness and Strength" and displayed through our students' daily actions. The school caters for two streams of each year level, Prep to Year Six, and has an onsite Kindergarten. The partnership between the school and Kindergarten is strong, ensuring successful transitions for our youngest learners. The school grounds are spacious and well presented with very modern classrooms providing dynamic teaching spaces and innovative technologies. All students participate in specialist lessons in Physical Education and The Arts. A close link with St Patrick's Catholic Parish is developed through involvement of our school community in Masses, liturgical celebrations, morning teas and special events. We are committed to providing a welcoming, family atmosphere that fosters Gospel values, parent partnerships, student well-being and academic excellence to ensure all students are able to develop to their full potential socially, academically and spiritually.

More information on our school can be accessed from [myschool.edu.au](http://myschool.edu.au)

## **Curriculum Offerings**

### **Distinctive Curriculum Offerings**

St Brigid's Catholic Primary School has strong partnerships with Marist College Emerald and the St Patrick's Parish community including having a number of joint curriculum and community activities coordinated between the schools and parish. Our school has integrated technology accessible across all year levels, including a 1:1 Chromebook hire program from years 4-6. Each year our Years 5 and 6 students participate in the "Minds @ Work" STEM program, where our students placed third across Central Queensland. St Brigid's participates in the "Readers Cup" each year, sending multiple teams to compete with other schools from around the region. We also offer many sporting programs through Physical Education lessons including netball, touch football and rugby league.

### **Extra Curricula Activities**

- All students are involved in school liturgies and Masses and in Parish Masses throughout the year
- Students compete in the speech and choir sections of the Central Highlands Eisteddfod
- School choir for students in Year 3 – 6
- Students are encouraged to gain representation in local and regional sporting teams
- Students participate in fundraising projects for Caritas and other charities close to the school community
- Students in years 5 and 6 participate in a local school debating competition
- Students attend performances by visiting groups e.g. Arts Council, authors, artists, musicians
- Students run and participate in Under 8's day as a celebration of the Early Years
- Students attend sessions from visiting coaches such as NRL Development, AFL Queensland, QRU, QLD Cricket, QLD Tennis and the Greg Norman Foundation
- Students participate in community-run celebrations such as Australia Day, ANZAC Day, and Sunflower festival
- Upper school students participate in the Mayoral Summit for school leaders
- Students participate in school camps to The Caves, The Great Barrier Reef and Fairbairn Dam
- Students go on school excursions to various parks and local facilities
- Students assist the Neighbourhood Centre in varied appeals.

### **How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning**

At St Brigid's we believe that Technologies require contexts for purposeful inquiry about how systems work. Pedagogies for designing should develop knowledge, skills and processes that are differentiated to ensure high expectations to meet diverse student needs. Students need to engage with a range of technologies including:

- Digital systems
- Critical and creative thinking
- Design and computational thinking
- Comprehensive understanding of traditional and emerging technologies.

St Brigid's has a variety of digital devices: Teacher laptops, iPads and sync boxes, year level sets of student laptops and Chromebooks. Students in years 4 -6 are a part of the 1:1 Chromebook hire program, which sees every student with their own Chromebook which can be taken home at the end of the day for study and homework. In addition to this, the school has class sets of 'Bee Bot and Pro bot' robotic devices, Lego WeDo and Cosmo. All classrooms have internet access and interactive whiteboards or interactive panels. Students, teachers and parents use Seesaw and the Google classroom suite for online learning, feedback and communication. The school newsletter is electronic and emailed to families fortnightly. Parents have access to Parent Lounge where they can update their child's information, complete permission notes for excursions and camp, pay school fees and access end of semester report cards. Furthermore, the school utilises an SMS service, School app, Facebook page and Twitter account that provide relevant information regarding reminders, upcoming events or important news.

## **Social Climate**

### **Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture**

St Brigid's school is a family-oriented community with a focus on gentleness and strength, compassion and resilience. The school community is supportive and works to foster positive relationships at school and within the greater Emerald community. Our Parents and Friends Association provides a wonderful link between home and school as well as a focus on parent engagement. Close relationships with the other Catholic Schools in Emerald and working with the government and independent schools in the area has developed strong relationships and networking opportunities for students and staff. A close link with St Patrick's Parish and the involvement of our school community in Mass, morning teas and special events has further developed the school's place in the Emerald Catholic community.

St Brigid's employs one full-time learning support teacher who works closely with staff, families and our children to implement individual and classroom-based programs that support learning. We also employ an ESL teacher two days a week to work with students both individually and within the classroom.

Personal reflection and development initiatives such as Making Jesus Real (MJR), including "family groups" are implemented across the school. The Parish Priests play an integral part in the school community with regular classroom visits and reflection time with the school staff.

Counselling services are shared across the Catholic Schools, providing children with access to one-on-one counselling and small group sessions. Access to professional support services such as Speech/Language and Occupational Therapists is available through a reciprocal relationship between the school and professional practices.

St Brigid's implements the Child Safety Curriculum from Prep to Year 6 and has strong ties with the Queensland Police Adopt-a-Cop program.

### **Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies**

Along with the Queensland Police Service and Diocesan personnel, St Brigid's is proactive in educating students on cyber safety and anti-bullying strategies. The Child Safety Curriculum is implemented at every year level. Students participate in learning the "ethical and social protocols" related to cyber safety throughout the Australian Curriculum - Digital Technologies Subject. Students, parents and staff are required to sign and follow an ICT code of conduct. Anti-bullying days are recognised and supported and the concept of bullying is reviewed regularly in MJR family groups and through the "Daniel Morcombe" program.

### **Strategies for involving parents in their child's education**

At St Brigid's, the parent body is involved in the school community through several initiatives:

- Parents and Friends Association – parents are involved in assisting the school with resourcing, pastoral care, catering and much more. Meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month.
- School Board meets the second Wednesday of the month
- The school's learning improvement agenda is communicated through the newsletter
- The fortnightly e-newsletter, outlines whole school and class learning goals/focuses, provides information regarding current educational news, communicates coming events and publishes student successes
- Parent/Teacher interviews, the Parent Handbook, curriculum information sessions, phone calls, regular emails, notes home, classroom billboards, the school Facebook page, the school app and text messages help to keep the lines of communication open, resulting in strong bonds between school and home

- Immediate student feedback and communication is provided to parents through Seesaw
- Parents are encouraged to be involved in classroom activities such as: individual and small group reading and math support, attending/ volunteering at sporting events, Masses and liturgies, assembly, curriculum based celebrations; Book Week, Science Week, Literacy and Numeracy Week, Under 8s Day, Catholic Education week, school concerts and class presentations
- Parent volunteers coordinate and run the tuckshop.

## Reducing the school's environmental footprint

St Brigid's engages in recycling practices. Excess food scraps are sent home with families for their chickens and recycling and general waste bins are used throughout the school. In the eating area, we also have the "Containers for Cash" bins to help with recycling. St Brigid's recycles paper and cardboard separately with different coloured bins for different recyclable materials. The school's gardens are predominantly native flora, which assists with water conservation. A school garden including citrus trees, fruit trees and a greenhouse can be used by students and staff, and we offer any produce to community groups who may use them. Through the Australian Curriculum students engage in learning about sustainability. Air conditioners have predetermined temperatures and are set to timers to avoid overuse. Within classrooms, practices such as turning off lights and fans during breaks are advocated. Solar panels are fitted to the school. The school uses bore water for the oval and main grassed areas around the school.

## Characteristics of the Student Body

The students at St Brigid's are from a broad range of families generally belonging to one of four demographics: rural, mining, small business and town services. The remote location of Emerald ensures the town is self-sufficient; thus, creating a wonderful country town atmosphere. In the school's inaugural year many students with different stories from varied walks of life combined to form the first student body. The result was a group of passionate and hardworking students with high levels of determination and resilience. Once an itinerant area, Emerald has settled post-mining boom and the school community reflects this. Our school welcomes families to our school community from all over Australia and the world. This is evident in the number of children now enrolled from language-speaking backgrounds other than English. We cater for a diverse range of students' needs physically, emotionally and socially and provide support across all these areas for students and families.

## Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2021 was 93.98%.

## Management of non-attendance

Our student attendance processes fall in line with systemic requirements. Following the roll being marked in the morning an SMS is sent to families who have students away with unexplained absences and a second roll is taken in the afternoon. If no contact is made for two days a Leadership Team member follows up with a phone call. Attendance data is regularly reviewed by Leadership Team members. Parents have the option of reporting absences to the school through email, phone or using the school absentee phone line.

## Staffing Information

### Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	23.00	14.00	1.00
Full-time equivalents	21.40	9.52	1.00

### Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
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Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	4.35%
Bachelor Degree	86.96%
Diploma	8.70%
Certificate	

## Major Professional Development Initiatives

Major professional development initiatives include:

- Collaborating in developing teacher pedagogy and best practice regarding the teaching of writing and spelling, through professional development, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and walk-throughs
- Applying the NAPLAN writing criteria to writing samples to make judgements and inform learning goals
- Analysing the data in PLCs
- Creating focus goals for each year level
- Sharing focus goals and teaching strategies with Teacher Assistants to support writing development within the classroom
- Developing non-negotiables for literacy block
- Providing Student Protection and Workplace Health and Safety training and utilising 'Riskman' as a central recording portal
- Leadership Upskilling – Safeguarding Graduate Certificate through Australian Catholic University, Leading with Integrity for Excellence (Brown Collective)
- Attending Bishop's In-service Day
- Providing In-school Early Career teacher support program
- Ensuring Individual teacher goals setting and professional development opportunities
- Professional Development sessions run by Catholic Education Office via Zoom
- Kagan Cooperative Learning.

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 \$25,500.

## 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 92.58%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 91.67%.

## School Income

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

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

**Find a school**

Search by school name

Search by suburb, town or postcode

Sector  Government  Non-government

## **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](http://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**

Our school motto “Gentleness and Strength” is central to all things at St Brigid’s. At St Brigid’s the education of the whole student is the focus. The educational and spiritual development of each student is the priority. We are continually using data to drive quality teaching and monitoring learning growth using a variety of sources including NAPLAN data and trends, and standardised testing for reading and mathematics.

Our NAPLAN data has begun to show trends with matched students showing growth across all areas, however, numeracy has been highlighted as an area for improvement. St Brigid’s continues to use this data to identify areas of need within the school by way of resourcing and professional development.

## **Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps**

### **Strategic progress in 2021**

In 2021 the school improvement goals were determined by the National School Improvement Tool audit which identified several areas for development and improvement across four domains: Catholic Identity and Ethos, Effective Teaching and Learning, Pastoral Support and Wellbeing, and Leadership, Partnership and Resourcing.

Our 2021 goals were:

- Develop teacher’s religious pedagogy through Kagan Cooperative Learning
- Information sessions around ECSI for staff, students and families – for the upcoming ECSI surveys
- Improving curriculum understanding and pedagogical practices within number
- Implement systematic collection, analysis and use of student achievement data in literacy and numeracy
- Implementation and review of new School Behaviour Management Policy
- Development of teacher knowledge and pedagogical practices in the classroom for behaviour management
- Implement a range of initiatives to make more effective use of available resources to enhance teaching and learning (e.g.: cross-grade groupings for literacy and math, extension classes)
- Development of school R.A.P.

### **Strategic Priorities for 2022**

Reflecting on the 2021 goals and the events of the school year, including the impact that COVID-19 continued to have, a review was conducted and new goals were set for 2022. Strong consideration had to be taken into account with an increased number of early-career teachers commencing in 2022, and through the reflection of responses collected through student, parent and staff Satisfaction Surveys conducted in 2021. The following goals for 2022 were prioritised:

- Continue to develop teacher’s religious pedagogy through Kagan Cooperative Learning
- Implement systematic collection, analysis and use of student achievement data in literacy and numeracy
- Improve student learning in numeracy by increasing consistency around school-wide pedagogical practices and data analysis (Leading Mathematics Project commencing in 2022)
- Improve the mental health and wellbeing of the whole learning community integrating with the school behaviour policy - including well-being data collected through BeYou surveys
- Implement the technical rollout of the Chromebook hire scheme to the year 4 2022 cohort and develop a school-wide checklist to support the implementation of 1:1 Chromebook – including support and development in the area of ICT capabilities.

## Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

The staff, students, families and community are very supportive and appreciative of the contributions our school makes to the academic, emotional, social and physical well-being of our students. Through past satisfaction surveys and review processes, specific areas highlighted were the individual care children receive, the happy, welcoming and supportive atmosphere and the professionalism of the staff.

Parental involvement in the school community is high and the continued support of school events, the Parents and Friends Association and the general support of the school are continuing to grow.

This year we completed our student, parent and staff satisfaction surveys. Some of the results are below:

### Students:

- 92.7% of students agreed: The school has the technology and equipment needed to support their learning
- 80.2% of students agreed: The school has the equipment they need to enjoy activities and programs outside the classroom
- 90.6% of students agreed: At St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald, they are encouraged to do the best they can
- 90.6% of students agreed: Teachers help them to understand what they need to do to succeed in school
- 90.6% of students agreed: They feel safe at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald.

### Parents

- 90.2% of parents agreed St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald is a welcoming and caring community where everyone is treated with respect
- 87.0% of parents agreed: St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald has a good reputation in the local community
- 82.9% of parents agreed: Teachers have high expectations that all students will learn successfully.
- 81.3% of parents agreed: Teachers at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald are highly skilled and knowledgeable
- 85.4% of parents agreed: St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald celebrates successes and improvements in results
- 85.4% of parents agreed: There is a high priority on student wellbeing at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald
- 90.2% of parents agreed: There is a happy, positive atmosphere at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald.

### Staff

- 93.8% of staff agreed: Teachers have high expectations that all students will learn successfully
- 96.9% of staff agreed: St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald encourages students to reach their full potential
- 90.6% of staff agreed: Teachers cater for the individual needs of students
- 87.5% of staff agreed: There is a high priority on student wellbeing at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald
- 93.8% of staff agreed: Student Protection processes are clearly communicated to all staff at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald.