



St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald

2019 Annual School Report



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

System

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

Principal

Mrs. Tegan Green

Address

6311 Gregory Highway
Emerald 4720

Total enrolments

257

Year levels offered

P - 6

Type of School:

Co-educational

Curriculum Offerings

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

St Brigid's Catholic Primary School was opened by the Rockhampton Catholic Education Office in 2014. As a relatively young school, growth has stemmed from the lower years. St Brigid's is currently two stream from Prep to Year 5 and single stream in Year 6. This Catholic School, which is located in the township of Emerald, services families from Emerald, Comet, Anakie and surrounding rural properties. Agriculture, mining, small business and government services are the main industries within this region. The final stage of building development was finished in December 2017. St Brigid's is now equipped to function as a two-stream school from Prep to Year 6. Religious Education is a distinctive feature of the curriculum offered. St Brigid's Catholic Primary School has a Kindergarten with the same name, situated on the same campus.

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.
- 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 attend student organised and run ICT Conference – “Kids Connect”.
- Upper school students participate in STEM programs run through Central Queensland University “Minds@Work”
- Upper school students 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 Sydney/Canberra 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. 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. Furthermore, the school newsletter is electronic, emailed to families fortnightly, along with a 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 for 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 working relationships and networking opportunities for students and staffs. 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.

Personal reflection and development initiatives such as Making Jesus Real (MJR), including "family groups" are implemented across the school. The Parish Priest plays 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 counseling and small group sessions. Access to professional support services such as Speech/Language and Occupational Therapists are available through a reciprocal relationship between the school and professional practices.

St Brigid's implements the Child Safety Curriculum from Prep to Year 6.

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 groups.

Strategies for involving parents in their child's education

At St Brigid's, the parent body are 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
- School Board membership
- 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
- 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. The school's gardens are predominantly native flora, which assists with water conservation. A school garden including citrus trees, avocados and a greenhouse is in the process of being built. 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.

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 compassionate 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. Over the past five years we have welcomed many new 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.

Average student attendance rate (%)

92.79 %

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. 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.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	22.00	17.00	0.00
Full-time equivalents	19.60	11.19	0.00

Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	4.55 %
Bachelor Degree	90.91 %
Diploma	4.55 %
Certificate	

Major Professional Development Initiatives

- All teachers collaborate in developing teacher pedagogy and best practice regarding the teaching of writing and spelling, through professional development, PLCs and walk-throughs.
- Applying the NAPLAN writing criteria to writing samples to make judgements and inform learning goals.
- Analyse the data in PLTs.
- Teachers, under the guidance of the APC, create focus goals for each year level.
- Teachers share focus goals and teaching strategies with Teacher Aides to support writing development within the classroom.
- Development of non-negotiables for literacy block.
- Student Protection and Workplace Health and Safety – 'Riskman' is a central recording portal.

- Graduate Mentoring
- Leadership Upskilling – Safeguarding Graduate Certificate through Australian Catholic University, Leading with Integrity for Excellence (Brown Collective)
- Bishop’s In-service Day
- Making Jesus Real
- Weekly Professional Development sessions run by Catholic Education Office via Zoom.
- In-school graduate teacher support program.

The percentage of teacher participation in professional development was 100 %

Total funds expended on Professional Development

The total of funds expended on teacher professional development was \$ 85,900

Average Staff Attendance and Retention

97.91 %

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 87.27 %

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

GO

Search by suburb, town or postcode

Sector Government Non-government

SEARCH

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

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. Due to the age of St Brigid’s, NAPLAN results are yet to show any set trends. In 2017 and 2018 we received base line data on our first two intakes of Preps from 2014/2015. Student growth from Years 3 to 5 will be available after the completion of NAPLAN testing, by this same cohort, in 2019/2020. St Brigid’s was however a trial school for NAPLAN Online and so there will be variables/considerations required to match the pen and paper results of 2017/2018 with the online results of 2019/2020. Matched students have shown growth overall. However, writing has been highlighted as an area for improvement.

Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

Strategic progress in 2019

In 2019 the school improvement goals were determined by the National School Improvement Tool audit which identified several areas for development and improvement:

- By the end of 2019, all staff will be provided with opportunities to reflect upon their own instructional practice by learning from and with each other and other education professionals
- By the end of 2019, a whole school approach to writing will be developed in alignment with our explicit improvement agenda
- By the end of 2019, leadership, staff and Board Members will develop a behaviour policy in line with the St Brigid’s vision and mission statements
- By the End of 2019 all students across all year levels will improve by at least one level on the writing NAPLAN marking guide – each year level will work on their identified focus skill.

Considerable progress was made in these areas during 2019. Students demonstrated measured gains in their writing against the NAPLAN marking guide. Writing continues to remain a focus but with an emphasis on spelling in writing. We will also see leadership and teachers undertaking learning walks in each other’s rooms to enable opportunities for professional development within our school community. The school vision statement was completed in consultation with the staff, community and board, and new behavior policy is still in the process of being developed.

Strategic Priorities for 2020

The strategic priorities for 2020 and beyond are identified as recommendations in the National School Improvement Tool audit held early in 2019 and after reviewing the 2019 School Improvement Plan:

- Continue to implement the school’s improvement plan, ensuring that progress towards targets is monitored, initiatives and programs are implemented as intended and evaluated for their effectiveness in producing desired improvements. Ensure that the analysis of a range of whole of school performance data informs the specific improvements sought as future plans are developed.
- Refine and expand the current assessment schedule to include a wider range of academic data. Ensure that attendance, behaviour and student wellbeing performance data are systematically collected, analysed and used to reflect on school policies and practices. Consider how: Data sets can be disaggregated to ensure a deeper analysis; case studies used to identify priorities, take action and monitor progress; and software utilised to undertake sophisticated data analyses.
- Build a deeper reflective culture amongst staff by providing them with opportunities to reflect upon their own instructional practice by learning from and with each other and other education professionals and developing there identified areas through self-directed and school supported professional development.
- Develop a whole-of-school approach to providing explicit and timely feedback to students about their learning.

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

In 2018 St Brigid’s families, staff and students participated in a school satisfaction survey which indicated overall satisfaction with the school. Areas that were highlighted were the individual care children receive, the happy, welcoming and supportive atmosphere and professionalism of the staff. Parental involvement in the school community is high and parent education sessions are well attended. 2020 will see satisfaction surveys distributed throughout the school community once again to collate more up-to-date feedback.