

2020

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT

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Together in Christ



ROSARY PARK
CATHOLIC SCHOOL BRANXTON

Rosary Park Primary School

Station Street, BRANXTON 2335

Principal: Sallyanne Stanbridge

Web: <http://www.branxton.catholic.edu.au>



www.mn.catholic.edu.au

About this report

Rosary Park Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO), Maitland-Newcastle. The CSO as the 'approved authority' for the diocesan registration system formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act (1990), is responsible for monitoring the compliance of member schools in the manner that has been approved by the Minister of Education. The Annual School Report (the 'Report'), provides parents and the wider community with fair, accurate and objective information about various aspects of school performance and development. Additionally, the Report complements and is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

Detailed information about the School's improvement journey is documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which is developed, implemented and evaluated in consultation with key stakeholders. Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can be also be obtained from the My School website.

Message from key groups in our community

Principal's Message

At Rosary Park Catholic School, Branxton we invite children, parents and staff into a relationship with Jesus Christ. It is through our teaching of Religion, our engagement with the Sacraments and our witnessing of the Gospel story that our children will come to know Jesus within an authentic Catholic community.

This annual school report is an opportunity for us to reflect on our school year, and to celebrate our varied achievements.

In 2020, Rosary Park Catholic School Branxton once again enjoyed a busy, productive and successful 2020 despite the challenges that COVID presented us. These challenges meant that a number of our school activities were cancelled. The strict COVID guidelines forced us to re-vision the way we undertook many of our school activities in 2020. However we did so with innovation, hope and the support of our wonderful school community.

I would like to thank the school's hardworking staff for their dedication, and hard work. Every day they invest so much of themselves in the lives of our children.

The P&F Association continue to be a wonderful support for our school. They not only continue to work hard to raise valuable funds for our children, but also give continual assistance with any new initiatives that the school undertakes.

Parent Body Message

Our Parents and Friends Association had limited opportunity in 2020 to fundraise as they do normally as a parent group. However children were still given the chance to buy gifts for Mother's and Father's days so some small fundraising did occur.

As is usual practice our AGM of the Parents and Friends was held via the Zoom platform in November and our P and F executive appointed for 2021.

We wish to thank the staff of Rosary Park for their wonderful dedication, flexibility and support for children and families during such a difficult year.

Student Body Message

COVID meant that many of our representations of the school at local and regional events were unable to go ahead. However it was still an honour to lead our great school in our final year of primary school.

School Features

In response to the needs of the Catholic community of the Bronx, Greta and the surrounding districts, the Sisters of Mercy, Singleton Congregation, established the first Catholic school in 1886. The school was built upon the spirit and charity of The Mercy Nuns with assistance from the parishioners. We took this spirit with us at Rosary Park.

A new school was built on the St Brigid's site and it was decided that the Infants would be accommodated at St Mary's Greta. St Brigid's was the Primary School (years 3 to 6) and St Mary's Greta, the Infants (Kindergarten to year 2). After 125 years a new school has been built at 36 Station Street, Bronx.

The K to 6 school in Bronx began construction in August 2010 and was ready to be occupied on Monday 10 October 2011. It was built on land kindly donated by the Parish. The school has now grown to 330 in numbers with significant number increases anticipated soon with the continued development of the Huntlee estate. With new housing developments being constructed, Rosary Park is now double stream K-5 and growing by a class each year.

In April 2020 it was with much excitement that we moved in to eight new classrooms which offer our children modern, contemporary learning facilities. We eagerly await approval to complete our building project with the two final classrooms.

Rosary Park offers a variety of activities for our children. These include sporting competitions, camps, excursions, Tournament of the Minds and Chess.

Student Profile

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Years K – 6. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2020: Additional information can be found on My School website.

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
160	147	4	307

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The [Enrolment Policy](#) applies to all school enrolments within the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. School authorities manage local enrolment processes and procedures in a manner consistent with the rationale and guiding principles articulated in this Enrolment Policy and accompanying procedures. It aims to:

- Set direction for school procedures and practices for enrolling students into Catholic primary and secondary schools within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.
- Establish a common, consistent approach in enrolment practices.
- Assist the system of Catholic schools to:
 - provide schooling, where possible, for children of Catholic families who seek enrolment
 - cater for the individual needs of each child equitably within the constraints of the available teaching and material resources
 - encourage parents enrolling their children in Catholic schools to give support to parish and school life, especially in education in faith.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2020 was 93.62%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group						
Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
93.72	94.01	93.92	93.27	94.71	92.47	93.27

Managing Student Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The School, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, School staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the School community
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented
- documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern
- the Regional Directors of Catholic Schools Office (CSO) or designated CSO officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom the School's strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2020:

Total number of staff	36
Number of full time teaching staff	14
Number of part time teaching staff	9
Number of non-teaching staff	13

Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

Teachers at this School are either accredited as conditional, provisional or proficient as defined by the NSW Teacher Accreditation Act 2004. Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher are voluntary. The number of teachers within the Diocesan Schools System (systemic schools) at these levels is as follows:

- Conditional 260 teachers
- Provisional 136 teachers
- Proficient 2060 teachers

Additionally, there are approximately 3 teachers who are currently actively engaged in the submission process at the higher levels of accreditation. Teacher status at individual schools can be sourced directly from the School.

Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Schools Office (CSO). The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff 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.

Summary of professional learning at this school

Release was given from the School Improvement Plan (SIP) budget for teachers to work together in Professional Learning Team meetings (three times/term) where student data in reading was analysed and appropriate decisions made in teaching and learning strategies. Professional Learning occurred for staff in the teaching of reading & vocabulary and how to analyse data and identify learners' needs based on this.

Rosary Park began its participation as a part of the Catholic Schools Office *Leading Learning Collaborative* with Lyn Sharratt a leading academic and educationalist. This has led to the appointment of two Pedagogical Mentors; these are teachers in the school who work closely with their colleagues to focus on students' data and their progress, especially in our focus area of reading.

As part of our school's ongoing focus on Creative and Critical thinking and contemporary learning, our year 5 and 6 students continue to participate in a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program. Our children in Kindergarten participated in the *Successful Foundations* initiative which fosters a focus on play in the early weeks of Kindergarten to assist children in making a smooth transition to school. This will continue in 2021 with expansion into year 1, which complements our focus on integrating play into our subject areas in Kindergarten.

In 2020 Rosary Park continued as a Gifted Education Lead School (GELS). A GE team was formed and a Gifted Education Mentor (GEM) appointed to work on a school initiative. The team received Professional Development from the diocese and worked to raise the profile of Gifted Education in our school.

Catholic Identity and Mission

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle participate, under the leadership of the Bishop and in partnership with parents and parishes, in the mission of the Church to provide quality education in the context of a living Catholic Christian tradition. Within this context, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle aspire to be:

“Communities of living faith where the heart of all we do is Jesus Christ.”

(Adapted from: The Catholic School's Office Diocesan Vision Statement, 2016)

As such, they are to:

Be truly Catholic in their identity and life;

Be centres of the 'new evangelisation';

Enable students to achieve high levels of 'Catholic religious literacy'; and

Be led and staffed by people who will contribute to these goals.

(Catholic Schools at a Crossroads, 2007)

One of our main goals in 2020 was to re-vision our school's Vision and Mission statements, to better reflect the Mercy charism of the founding sisters of Mercy who began our school so many years ago.

All staff worked through a reflective and collaborative process during 2020 to review these Vision and Mission statements with the input of our Catholic Schools Office Education officer. These new statements have now been shared with our parish and school communities and we will continue to work on their implementation and familiarisation throughout our school community. This will involve, in part, the formulation of a more structured approach to teaching our children about the six pillars of Mercy (service, respect, hospitality, compassion, justice and courage) which form an integral part of our Vision statement.

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

The School provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. The Catholic Schools' Office Learning Framework is brings together structures that relate to quality learning and experiences in schools across the Diocese.

The Learning Framework provides a context for the development of learning and its key components, informed by research, are built around five essential elements:

- Continual focus on Leading Learning
- Cultures built on Collaborative Learning
- Rich and purposeful Personalised Learning
- Creating the conditions for Supportive Learning
- Building capacity through Professional Learning

In 2020 the School Improvement Plan (SIP) focused on the teaching of reading and spelling. Across grades 2-6, the Spelling Mastery program was implemented to develop a school wide, explicit approach to teaching in this area. This program was levelled across the grades and taught daily. In Grades K-2, the focus was on the teaching of reading and spelling through Initial Lit, a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching phonics.

Teaching and Learning in Reading and Spelling was the focus of our Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) meetings throughout 2020. Student data in these key areas were addressed in these meetings and it was pleasing to see children's growth in these areas as we analysed our data walls in these collaborative meetings three times/term.

Teachers have been following the work of Lyn Sharratt an educationalist engaged by the Catholic Schools Office of Maitland/Newcastle. As part of her work, two staff work as pedagogical mentors, analysing data and working together with their colleagues to improve student outcomes. The school focus on Creative and Critical Thinking and integrating play in the younger grades continued. In addition, our students in years 5-6 continued a Bring Your own Device (BYOD) program which offers a more flexible approach to learning and greater opportunity to integrate collaboration and problem solving into the learning environment.

Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists the School's planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

Due to the impact of Covid-19 this year, the Education Ministers agreed that NAPLAN would not proceed in 2020. This decision was taken to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education, including potential online and remote learning.

Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies guidelines and procedures are informed by the Student Well being and Pastoral Care Policy.

The Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy 2017, aims to provide a framework for the policies, programs, resources and practices implemented at system and school level with the purpose of supporting and enhancing the wellbeing of students, and all within its school community. It refers to the overall climate of care that exists within a Catholic school.

The environment is designed to be safe and inclusive, one that promotes academic rigour. A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents, and the wellbeing of all.

The Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy for Students can be found at www.mn.catholic.edu.au/about/policies

There were no changes to the policy in 2020.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned the CSO [Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy](#) and to the [Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion Procedure](#). The dignity and responsibility of each person is promoted at all times along with positive student behaviours whilst ensuring respect for the rights of all students and staff. Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this School. The School does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by School persons and non-School persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the School. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the School's website.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Catholic Schools Office has established an [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) which is implemented by our school and all schools in the diocese. It provides a framework for school communities to work together to prevent and address issues of student bullying, in order to build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each person. The CSO monitors the implementation of this policy.

The full text of the Anti-Bullying Policy may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website at this link.

Complaints Handling Policy

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has established a [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the diocese. The rationale for the policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of our contemporary world. CSO monitors the implementation of this policy.

The full text of the [Complaints Resolution Policy](#) may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website at this link.

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

Rosary Park follows a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework, which promotes the formation of positive relationships and behaviours. As with any area of the curriculum, these need to be explicitly taught so we discuss and teach in class a weekly focus rule to actively highlight to the school community our expectations. These rules reinforce the importance of respect and responsibility.

As part of our strong focus on developing and nurturing relationships at Rosary Park, during 2020 our staff team worked to review our Student Leadership policy to offer our senior students a more shared leadership approach and greater opportunities for student voice. This involves the formation of four teams that focus on our Catholic ethos and our core values (the teams are Environmental, Mercy, Active Lifestyle and Positive Behaviour for Learning). Our student leaders are chosen from these teams. Students will have opportunities to put forward their ideas to better our school in these varied areas and are well aware of the responsibilities that a leadership role entails.

Throughout 2020 our children continued their participation in initiatives such as Mini Vinnies with Winter and Christmas appeals to assist those in need locally. Whilst COVID meant that our year 4 children could not visit other year 4 children at nearby Mercy schools, we nevertheless still held a very successful Mercy day where Rosary Park children participated in face painting, water games and guessing competitions to raise funds for Mercy Works which assists the needy throughout Australia. Such initiatives are indicative on the focus that our school places on respect for self and others.

School Improvement

The School implements the systems review Cycle of improvement which outlines the processes and benchmarks for creating the culture and practice of continuous improvement with students as the focus. Strategic Plans and School Improvement Plans are future focused documents that map the School's directions, aimed specifically at improving educational and pastoral outcomes for all students through the following areas:

- Catholic Formation and Mission
- Learning and Teaching
- Leadership
- Wellbeing and Partnerships

Each year, the School develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. A copy of the Strategic Improvement Plan and the Annual Improvement Plan may be obtained from the School administrative office.

Key Improvements Achieved

Rosary Park values and encourages Academic Achievement. All individual and group achievements are acknowledged with weekly merit and Principal Awards. Any achievements and awards are published in the fortnightly newsletter.

All Year 5 and 6 (and some in year 3 & 4) students participated in the Newcastle Permanent Maths test. We also had a student in stage 3 accepted into the Diocese's Gifted Education Virtual Academy. The further expansion of Creative and Critical Thinking skills into grades 2-6 is ongoing, although our participation in this was hampered by COVID.

In 2020 our key improvement area in learning and teaching again focused on improving our student data in reading and spelling. Using the principles of educational academic Lyn Sharratt in her book 'Clarity' we met three times/term to analyse assessment, then discuss and plan rich teaching and learning experiences to improve our students' scores. The results saw impressive improvements in reading fluency skills for our children K-6 & goals set in this area achieved. We also recognised the importance of children possessing a rich and varied vocabulary to enhance their skills as a reader. All classrooms featured a vocabulary wall where 'rich' words are defined, analysed and used to enhanced reading and writing skills.

Utilising Sharratt's ideas of walls that talk, 'bump it up' walls were used extensively across the school. These give children the opportunity to gain immediate feedback on their work, to reflect on how they are going and to improve it. In all classes strategies employed such as this saw pleasing improvements in the quality of children's work.

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

In 2021 our focus will remain on improvements in reading and spelling, with an emphasis on the importance of vocabulary to help achieve this. Our focus on reading will expand into using our reading skills and vocabulary knowledge to analyse word problems in Mathematics- especially in the older grades.

In the latter part of 2021, it is our hope to begin to shift our focus onto student improvements in writing, using the close correlation, between reading and writing. We are excited to continue our journey as a school as part of the Diocese's Leading Learning Collaborative as we delve further into the work of Lynn Sharratt to achieve greater improvements in student learning.

Community Satisfaction

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers. At the beginning of each review phase school's undertakes extensive surveying of all stakeholder groups. This data is shared with the school community and contributes to the priorities for future planning.

Parent satisfaction

Rosary Park enjoys the support of a hard working Parents and Friends group. They work to support the school through fundraising and with our Mercy caring group that reaches out to families in need in our school community.

As with all Catholic schools in the Maitland Newcastle diocese, Rosary Park participated in a 'Tell Them from Me' survey in 2020 that invited responses on a variety of areas of school life from staff, students & parents. The percentage of parent satisfaction data was higher than the average achieved by school in general across the diocese.

Overall, the replies from parents who completed the survey were positive. They commented on the dedicated, hardworking staff who worked flexibly and creatively to engage their children in a very different learning landscape that COVID presented to us. The care for the wellbeing of children and families during this trying time was also commented upon.

Parents commented on the sense of community and the welcome that they feel. Communication is very good from the school, they feel that they are kept well informed of school activities and children's learning.

Student satisfaction

In the above-mentioned 'Tell Them From Me' survey, the children in years 4-6 who completed it, spoke often of the safe and supportive environment they experience at Rosary Park. It is clear that our focus on positive behaviour and the fostering of respectful relationships makes for a safe learning environment for our children which is so vital if children are to achieve as learners. Children also spoke of the awareness that they have teachers and staff that they can talk with if something is causing them difficulties.

Teacher satisfaction

Staff were also invited to complete the 'Tell Them From Me' Survey in 2020. Their comments and the data demonstrated a positivity and a sense of collegiality felt by teachers of Rosary Park. Their comments showed the professionalism that they demonstrate, how they feel supported by the school leadership and recognise and value the importance of working closely with families to gain the best outcomes for our children.

Financial Statement

This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

School Financial Information for the 2020 year is detailed below:

Recurrent and Capital Income 2020	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$2,927,628
Government Capital Grants ²	\$950,969
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$844,508
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$488,436
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$183,110
Total Income	\$5,394,651

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2020	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$2,266,484
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$3,089,409
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,124,360
Total Expenditure	\$6,480,253

Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.

END OF 2020 REPORT