



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Biloela

2021 Annual School Report



Catholic Education  
Diocese of Rockhampton

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Biloela

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

## Principal

Tina Knight

## Address

166 Rainbow Street  
Biloela Qld 4715

## Total enrolments

141

## Year levels offered

Prep to Year 6

## Type of School:

Co-educational

## **School Overview**

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Biloela provides a quality education, based on the values of Jesus, for approximately 150 students from Prep to Year Six. It is situated in Central Queensland in a semi-rural community that hosts a number of industries including mining and farming. St Joseph's Catholic Kindergarten is within the school grounds and provides a pre-prep program; strong links between the school and Kindergarten ensure successful transitions for our youngest learners. The school was founded in 1939 by the Sisters of Mercy and the community of faith continues today in a strong atmosphere of prayer, worship and care for others. The success of the school is attributed to the close, complementary relationship enjoyed amongst staff, students, parents and parish community. Therefore, the school is the hub of the community with many parents engaging fully in school life. St Joseph's recognises its role in the community and responds enthusiastically to the needs and activities of the local area.

St Joseph's has a strong emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy, enhanced through the effective use of technologies which are integrated into learning areas. The Learning Support Program responds to the needs of identified students requiring assistance. The school offers instrumental music and opportunities to be a member of the school band. Students are given the opportunity to enhance their speaking skills in the Eisteddfod and other competitions. St Joseph's School takes pride in their sporting achievements as children compete in the various levels of sporting competitions. Most importantly, St Joseph's School is committed to educating all our children and catering for their individual needs in a faith-filled learning environment.

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

## **Curriculum Offerings**

### **Distinctive Curriculum Offerings**

St Joseph's School, as a community, models itself on Jesus Christ. We endeavor to foster a love of learning and Make Jesus Real by respecting and encouraging one another. We strive for excellence in education and share our gifts in the service of others. We do our best for God and country by encouraging one another to develop as Christian people. The Sisters of Mercy and the virtues demonstrated by Catherine McAuley such as compassion, respect, unity, faith and service are important to our Catholic Identity.

As 21st Century learners, all students at St Joseph's are encouraged to increase their competency in Computational Thinking through programs such as Bebras, Scratch, EV3 robots, BeeBots and Lego WeDo. STEM is taught as part of Science in all year levels across the school. Students in the lower years have one-to-one access to iPads and students in the upper school from Year 4, have one-to-one access to Chromebooks, to enhance learning opportunities. Specialist subjects such as The Arts and HPE are provided each year. However, other subjects such as Numeracy Skills and Literacy Skills are specifically chosen each year to supplement the learning targets of the school.

### **Extra Curricula Activities**

St Joseph's has a proud tradition of sporting ability and is greatly involved in district sport. Many students represent St Joseph's at a school, district and regional level. For the last six years our school has been recognised as an Outstanding Tennis School in Queensland.

The school also has a well-represented choir and the instrumental lessons offered through the school are becoming increasingly popular. Students have the opportunity to be involved in Robotics and Computational Thinking competitions throughout the year. A large number of our students perform in the Biloela Eisteddfod in class groups, small groups and as individuals. The school enters a number of groups in the verse speaking and choral sections.

Students are involved in a number of service and community activities each year. These include support for the local Anzac Day services, Catholic Mission, Project Compassion, Heart and Cancer Foundations, St Vincent de Paul, the Biloela Show and the St Joseph's Parish Fair.

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

A variety of devices are used as an integral component of the curriculum to enhance student learning opportunities, to promote student achievement and to support communication between the school and students. Devices most commonly used include Chromebooks, laptop computers and iPads. A one-to-one Chromebook program is in place for students from Years 4 to 6. Parents enter into a Chromebook lease agreement, which allows these students to take the Chromebooks home from Year 5. All classes in the school have access to the use of iPads in their classrooms. Two class sets of Chromebooks are available for classes to use for their learning.

Professional development opportunities are provided to teachers each year to enhance their skills in the use of technology and the benefits for student learning. The school encourages the use of technology to improve communication between the school and the wider community. Our school has a Facebook page, and a link to an online newsletter is emailed to parents on a fortnightly basis. Teachers use Seesaw and Google Classroom to communicate and share classroom learning with parents.

## **Social Climate**

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

St Joseph's is committed to providing a child-safe environment by employing relevant practices and policies. In addition to being welcome to participate in Sunday Mass, students participate in regular whole school masses and class liturgies. St Joseph's has a behaviour management program which focuses on restorative practices and whole school bullying preventative measures. Within this approach, the Making Jesus Real and Virtues programs are a focus and are used to promote Gospel Values and positive student relationships.

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

St Joseph's has behaviour management procedures in place, developed in collaboration with the wider school community. At the beginning of each year, the students and parents sign an ICT Code of Conduct that sets the expectations of how technology is to be used by students. These procedures define expectations and procedures for general student behaviour, bullying as well as cyber bullying. The school participates in cyber safety promotional activities throughout the year, and students are taught how to interact safely in the cyber world. The Daniel Morcombe Child Safety program is also implemented at the school to assist students in acquiring strategies to deal with bullying and cyber-bullying.

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

All parents are encouraged and welcomed in classrooms to assist where possible. This includes the sharing of expertise and assisting in weekly tasks such as literacy groups. Parents are invited to participate and assist with day excursions that may be organised, and also school camps which take place in years five and six. Many parents assist with the implementation of the school sporting carnivals and team events. Parents also support students selected for district teams. The annual St Joseph's School Ball receives a high level of parent support and involvement and is a significant traditional annual event for the school community.

Fundraising activities and opportunities to build community are regularly promoted by the P&F Association to further include parents in supporting their child's education. Some of these include the St Joseph's Family Race Day, Rotary Arts and Craft, Mother's Day and Father's Day stalls and the annual Parish Fair.

### **Reducing the school's environmental footprint**

One of our key school rules is to respect our environment. St Joseph's school takes every opportunity to promote an awareness of the need to reduce the current impact our society has on the environment. Within the classrooms, students are taught about the need to care for our environment, and they also take part in whole school activities such as nude food days to promote further awareness. Other activities include caring for the school chickens, each class being allocated a garden to take care of, the year 6 gardening group and the school vegetable garden. Vegetables from the school garden are at times used in the school tuckshop, which operates once a week. To reduce the school's impact on the environment, solar panels have been installed.

## **Characteristics of the Student Body**

St Joseph's school is situated in Biloela in Central Queensland, which is well known for its diverse range of industrial projects. In addition to agriculture and a meat works, industrial projects within the local area include a number of mines and a power station. Many parents work in a shift work role. The school has a significant number of students for whom English is a second language. The school has students from a variety of backgrounds including students from Brazil, Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, Africa, Colombia and Vietnam. Supporting EAL/D students is a priority for the school.

## Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2021 was 94.63%.

## Management of non-attendance

St Joseph's school maintains attendance records for all students, recording data twice daily. Parents are expected to inform the school regarding reasons for non-attendance. Parents are notified if students are absent without explained reasons. Parents are formally notified of total days absent for each semester in the student reports. Unexplained non-attendance of students is carefully monitored by the school, and meetings are held with the principal and parents if students are absent for long periods of time without explanation. The school newsletter and class fortnightly newsletters are used to communicate school information to parents regarding attendance guidelines.

## Staffing Information

### Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	15.00	18.00	0.00
Full-time equivalents	12.40	9.49	0.00

### Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	
Bachelor Degree	93.33%
Diploma	6.67%
Certificate	

### Major Professional Development Initiatives

St Joseph's School participated in many major professional development initiatives in 2021. These included the Bishop's In-service Day, Student Protection and other mandatory training, Staff Religious Formation Retreats, Digital Technology and the use of ICTs in the classroom, Religious Education, Spelling and Word Study Project, Autism workshops, Computational Thinking/coding, EV3 Robotics, STEM and Science, Problem solving and reasoning in Mathematics and Embedding Indigenous Perspectives. Due to COVID-19 restrictions many of our professional development opportunities were offered by zoom, which meant more staff including Teacher Assistant were able to participate.

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 \$15,600.

### Average Staff Attendance and Retention

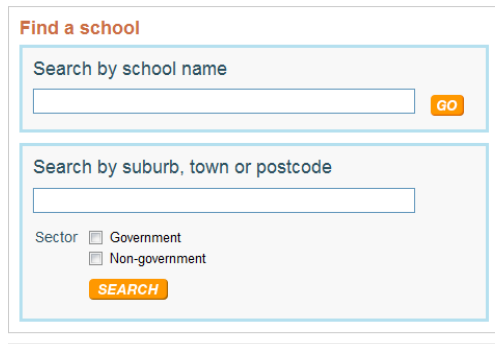
The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 92.29%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 90.91%.

## 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 contains two main search sections. The first section is "Search by school name" with a text input field and a "GO" button. The second section is "Search by suburb, town or postcode" with a text input field. Below this, there is a "Sector" section with two radio buttons: "Government" and "Non-government". At the bottom of the second section is a "SEARCH" button.

## 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 vision is to 'foster a love of learning.' St Joseph's is a school that values the importance of students experiencing success in the classroom. Our school mission is to make Jesus real by respecting and encouraging one another, striving for excellence in education and sharing our gifts in the service of others. We believe our students are animated learners who have learner qualities and have strategies for learning. Our students have a sense of belonging, seek meaning, know themselves as learners, and persist and enjoy challenges.

The school uses evidence from systematic whole school data collection and analysis to inform our school improvement and performance culture. NAPLAN is a standardised assessment tool, and the data derived from NAPLAN results in years 3 and 5 guides our whole school goals for enhancing student learning, as well as planning for staff professional development. The school also uses data from other whole school collection in the areas of reading, writing, spelling, numeracy and Science to monitor student learning growth and inform teaching practices. Differentiated curriculum remains a priority and the school will continue to develop skills in this area.

## Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

### **Strategic progress in 2021**

In 2021, our goals were:

#### **To promote the Catholic identity of the school through Restorative Practices and Making Jesus Real.**

The newly revised Mission Statement was embedded in many of our school practices such as newsletters and assemblies to help students, parents, staff and the wider community understand and apply the meaning of it. A Catholic Identity Team was established to steer and promote Catholic Identity within our school. Members of the FIARE team at CEO, provided assistance to understand the key concepts underpinning research such as post-critical belief, dialogue and recontextualization. This information was communicated to staff, the school Board and P&F.

#### **To develop effective teaching and learning using the Australian Curriculum and whole school pedagogical approaches, to improve student outcomes.**

Most classes in the school achieved the target of 75% of students in each year level to be achieving 'At Year Level' or 'Above Year Level' expectations in spelling in the context of writing by the end of 2021. There was an improvement in student engagement and enjoyment of reading throughout the whole school and less students were below

expected in reading at the end of the year. Students were given the opportunity to participate in Robotics and Computational Thinking Challenges, and Scratch was taught to all students in the school.

Teachers continued to engage in professional development in relation to embedding Indigenous perspectives across the Curriculum and the school received an extra grant to continue construction of the Yarning Circle at the school to help students in their understanding and application of Indigenous perspectives.

### **To systematically collect and analyse data to implement strategies to improve student outcomes.**

In 2021, students attempted NAPLAN online for the very first time, as a result we received mixed results in comparison to previous years. St Joseph's continued its development of a systematic approach to collecting and analysing data to determine if students were meeting learning targets and if curriculum approaches were effective. Analysis of assessment data guided our professional development for staff, which included whole school approaches to using the Australian Curriculum and engaging in a Spelling and Word Study Project. All teachers were provided the opportunity to further their understanding of differentiating the curriculum for all learners in their classroom.

### **To work towards maintaining a learning environment that is safe, respectful, tolerant, inclusive and promotes excellence.**

Making Jesus Real (MJR) was embedded in the life of the school and Restorative Practices continued to become more of a common language in the school, assisting to build positive relationships amongst staff, parents and students. Zones of Regulation sessions were provided for staff and parents.

## **Strategic Priorities for 2022**

In 2022, our priorities are to continue working on reaching the specific goals from 2021, with some additional goals in each of the areas. We will continue to consolidate the consistent whole school approaches to the teaching of Spelling and Word Study in the context of writing. Our specific target is for 75% of students in each year level to be achieving 'At Year Level' or 'Above Year Level' expectations in Spelling in the context of writing. We will work on sourcing new ideas and strategies to engage students in reading to enable them to increase their fluency as this was an area of need identified in 2021. Problem solving and reasoning skills will also continue to be a focus. By the end of 2022, all students from Prep to Year 6 will be given opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of computational thinking by using Scratch, Lego WeDo, EV3 robots or Beebots. A consultant from the Catholic Education Office will work with students in all classes regularly throughout the year to increase competency in computational thinking.

In 2022, it will be important for the school to continue the systematic approach to gathering whole school data on student learning and to understand and use CED3 to plan for differentiation within the classroom. Science data using Pat Science will be included in the systematic collection and analysis of data in 2022 and all teachers are expected to include STEM in two Science units this year.

Professional conversations and learning in relation to effective and appropriate ways of embedding indigenous perspectives across the Australian Curriculum will continue to be a focus, with new resources purchased and Indigenous Artists and Educators visiting the school to share their knowledge in this area.

To help monitor student wellbeing, the resources available through the CEDR Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework will be utilised, and Zones of Regulation will be explained to students, staff and the parent community. Increased confidence in the use and understanding of the updated Mission Statement has been apparent and will continue to be a focus for 2022, as well as continuing to develop a whole school language in Restorative Practices and Making Jesus Real.

## **Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction**

Staff members are provided with opportunities each term through staff meetings and individual meetings with members of the leadership team to provide feedback on all school related issues and directions. Staff are involved in the organisation of curriculum programs, which include student learning needs in information sharing and decision making. Surveys are conducted regularly to gauge parent, teacher and student satisfaction.

The parent body are involved in the future direction of the school through the P&F Association and the School Board. Parents are invited to provide formal feedback through discussions on the annual School Strategic Plan and surveys conducted for school improvement processes. Parents are regularly asked for feedback through online surveys sent out through the school newsletter.

The principal meets regularly with the students from each year level to discuss any concerns and to plan for initiatives suggested by the student body.