



2020

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT



St Bernard's Catholic Primary School

Warrina Street, BEROWRA HEIGHTS 2082

Principal: Mrs Gill Austin

Web: www.sbbdbb.catholic.edu.au

About this report

St Bernard's Catholic Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB). CSBB 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') demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies and CSBB. 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.

The Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, reliable and objective information about educational and financial performance measures as well as School and system policies. This information includes summary contextual data, an overview of student performance in state and national assessments, a description of the achievement of priorities in the previous year and areas for improvement. 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

As a newly appointed principal to St Bernard's in 2020, I have been honoured and humbled by the capacity of this community, teachers, students and parents to work together in challenging times, with respect for each other at the core of what they do. This is a vibrant community committed to enhancing the lives of each and every child.

The purpose of this report is to reflect upon a difficult year in which world events shaped our capacity to persevere, maintain standards and continue to progress as a learning community. Our students and teachers were well supported through a period of Home Based Learning, with our emphasis on student and family wellbeing. Our well resourced ICLT department ensured teachers were well placed to modify programs, and our students were able to adjust to a dynamic learning environment during a period of Home Based Learning, using a range of devices.

We are a Catholic school offering an inclusive education for children of all faiths. Our teachers are committed to our vision of Catholic mission and to striving for high standards and student growth in all aspects of the curriculum.

Parent Body Message

The challenges of 2020, allow us to reflect on many things and despite the difficulties there were many positives, including the friendships cemented amongst our community as we strived to support each other and the new and innovative ways we found to support the school by engaging and remaining in touch with our children's education by adapting to celebrations and events held on 'virtual meeting' platforms. In short, circumstances dictated that we adapted to a 'new normal' and we did it well.

We remain incredibly thankful to the teachers and staff who supported our children in their learning during lockdown, welcomed the children of essential workers throughout, and then reopened the classrooms as soon as practicable to remaining students, so our children could have a sense of normality as soon as possible.

The P&F looks forward to continuing to support the school and the community in the coming year.

Student Body Message

During the last year at St Bernard's, we have had a focus of developing student leadership skills, and coping with an ever changing environment due to COVID-19. Teachers and students alike, developed new skills to manage the challenges of Home Based Learning.

In the SRC (Student Representative Council), we focussed on ways to make our school more environmentally friendly. Solutions like the regeneration project (the planting of native plants and trees within the school grounds), and collecting food waste after breaks for chicken scraps, have made a noticeable difference in the sustainability of our school.

Throughout our time at St Bernard's we have learnt to use different elements of technology and use technology to enhance our learning. We have also been introduced to deep learning through a program called NPDL (New Pedagogies for Deep Learning), which is when students are taught skills to develop their competencies in critical thinking, communication, character, collaboration, citizenship and creativity.

At St Bernard's students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning, for the environment and for themselves and then in Yr 5, students are encouraged to develop their leadership skills further, through having a Kindergarten buddy, We are well prepared by our teachers in readiness for our leadership year in year 6 and our leadership roles.

School Features

St Bernard's Catholic Primary School Berowra Heights, is a Catholic systemic co-educational school. The School was established in 1971 by the Sisters of Mercy. It is situated in a beautiful bushland setting with students drawn from the surrounding suburbs of Mt Ku-ring-gai, Mt Colah, Cowan, Brooklyn and Mooney Mooney.

The School enjoys a reputation as a centre of excellence in teaching and learning which offers a balanced, holistic curriculum in a safe and caring environment. The vision is for the school community to be welcoming and to inspire one another to grow in faith, hope, love, respect, justice and joy.

The School offers a welcoming Christ-centred community, quality teaching and learning, specialist teachers in Physical Education, Japanese and Music, a well-resourced library and classrooms, Rock and Water program, Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL), Zones of Regulation, Worry Woo program, and ExSEL groups all support students in their social emotional development.

Religious Education is an integral part of the school and students are involved in developing liturgies for classroom and whole school celebrations. The senior students (Stage 3) are involved in a leadership program each year including a leadership camp, which provides them with opportunities to develop their leadership skills.

There are many opportunities for students to participate in a variety of sporting, cultural and academic activities, including public speaking, gala sport days and creative school performances. In 2020 our flexible learning spaces continued to create an environment for contemporary learning approaches, where student needs are central to the educational context. These spaces are equipped with new technology and modern furniture to facilitate the learning.

The HUB continues to engage both students and staff in collaborative learning opportunities where school initiatives such as New Pedagogies for Deep Learning, Cultures of Thinking and BYODD (Bring Your Own Device) are deeply embedded. We are fortunate to have spacious and beautiful green areas in our school. This year our charm Garden was completed. A beautiful space; that supported all things sensory for our students to explore.

Student Profile

Student Enrolment

Students attending the School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2020. Additional information can be found on the [My School website](#).

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
87	90	26	177

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The School follows the [Enrolment Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#). The policy encourages the local Catholic community, under the leadership of the parish priest and principal, to look upon the time of enrolment as a potential occasion for ongoing evangelisation. The policy calls upon parents to examine their present faith commitments, to develop their role as prime educators of their children in faith and to immerse themselves in the communal, liturgical, ministerial and service dimensions of the parish. Copies of this policy and other policies in this Report may be obtained from the [CSBB website](#) or by contacting CSBB.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for the School in 2020 was 95.54%. 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
96.75	94.60	96.47	95.40	95.79	95.43	94.35

Managing Student Non-Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents' legal responsibility under the NSW Education Act (1990) to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of

care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so, the School, under the leadership of the principal:

- provides a caring environment which fosters a sense of wellbeing and belonging in students
- maintains accurate records of student attendance
- implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise
- communicates to parents and students, the School's expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non-attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the Principal immediately any unexplained absences, non-attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non-attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the Principal, CSBB and the relevant Department of Education officer where appropriate.

Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the School in collaboration with parents, provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible. CSBB monitors each School's compliance with student attendance and management of non-attendance as part of the system's School Review and Development (SRD) processes. The School's attendance monitoring procedures are based on the Procedures for the Management of Student Attendance in the Broken Bay Diocesan Schools System (password required).

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2020:

Total number of staff	19
Number of full time teaching staff	8
Number of part time teaching staff	6
Number of non-teaching staff	5

Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

All teachers employed by the School are qualified to teach in NSW. Additionally, all teachers at this School who are responsible for delivering the curriculum are accredited with NESA. Effective from October 2007, the minimum qualification for a teacher in a systemic school in the Diocese of Broken Bay is a four year teaching degree.

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:

- Proficient: 1294 teachers
- Provisional: 105 teachers
- Conditional: 1 teacher

Additionally, there are approximately 25 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 learning (PL) of each staff member is highly valued. PL can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences and a range of programs provided by CSBB. The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking staff PL. Individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing PL. All teachers have been involved in PL opportunities during

the year related to improving student outcomes. The following table provides specific information relating to the focus of three of these staff development days.

Summary of professional learning at this school

Day 1 Leading Learning: Mathematics and the effective use of MAI (Mathematical Assessment Data) to track student learning

Day 2 Whole system Staff Development Day, Launch of 'Towards 2025' vision statement for Catholic Schools in Broken Bay.

Days 3,4 & 5 Preparation and development of Home Based Learning

Catholic Identity and Mission

As a Catholic community, the School shares in the mission of the local Church. The [Diocesan Mission Statement](#) is our statement of shared common purpose: "The Diocese of Broken Bay exists to evangelise, to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, gathered as friends in the Lord and sent out to be missionary disciples."

In partnership with parents as the first faith educators of their children and the local parish community, the School seeks to educate and form young people in the Catholic faith. The School provides formal Religious Education as well as retreats, spirituality days and social justice opportunities in which students are invited to serve others, especially the poor and those who are marginalised.

The School's Religious Education (RE) program is based on the [Broken Bay K-12 Religious Education Curriculum](#) and aims to provide students with meaningful, engaging and challenging learning experiences that explores the rich diversity of the Catholic faith and ways in which we live it.

Faith formation opportunities are provided for students, staff, parents and caregivers. Students regularly celebrate Mass and pray together. Students are invited to participate in age appropriate sacramental and missionary activities aimed at living out their mission as disciples of Jesus.

St Bernard's School is dedicated to our school vision and mission to work together, inspired by the example of Christ and to foster knowledge, understanding, reverence and commitment to the Catholic faith in a way that reflects the presence of an all-loving God. We work together in partnership and faith with parents, teachers and the parish priest to strive towards the Broken Bay 'Towards 2025' vision, 'at least as good as the very best'.

Faith formation opportunities are regularly offered to staff, students and parents and we join together in communal worship at masses, prayers and liturgies throughout the year. The extraordinary year of 2020 offered a challenge but the ability to bring together the wider school community via virtual platforms, meant we were able to extend our community and worship and welcome many family members from all around Australia and around the world. In 2020 we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of our St Bernard's Church and the School Captains, Principal and REC attended a special mass, along with a number of the parishioners who built the church.

As a Catholic school founded in the Mercy tradition, under the leadership of the Diocese of Broken Bay, we are committed to fostering a community that reaches out to people in need. Some of the examples of 'Outreach' initiatives in 2020 included: Project Compassion – Caritas 'Sock It to Poverty,' Candela Mercy Mission – Peru; 'The Dish' (an outreach van

supporting local 'needy') where Year 5 and 6 students prepared desserts and parents cooked dinner meals, and the St Vincent de Paul Winter and Christmas Appeals.

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 (S&T), Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), Creative Arts (CA) and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). In addition to this, the School implements the Diocesan Religious Education syllabus. Staff members are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning in all facets of the curriculum.

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Our current focus is in extending teacher knowledge and practice to provide differentiation in both literacy and numeracy. With the support of a literacy coach in English and an EMU Specialist in Mathematics, staff have identified and developed consistency in agreed school practices and are active in the process of gathering and analysing data, setting SMART goals for students and targeting instruction at the student's point of need. The teachers are using the National Literacy Learning Progressions as a valuable tool to assist them to develop targeted teaching and learning programs for students who are working above or below year-level expectations. Our EMU specialist works with mathematically vulnerable students in Year 1 to improve conceptual understanding in the number strand.

Teachers use our flexible learning spaces to promote creative and independent learning opportunities for all students through sound pedagogical practices. This includes a STEM room that is continually updated and equipped with resources such as robotics and recycled materials for design and make tasks that promote skills in collaboration, creativity and scientific thinking to support class programs. Our robotics has extended to the use of sferos, micro-bits and most recently, drones to broaden opportunities in digital literacy. Our Rock and Water room continues to support the teaching of the Rock and Water program which aims to develop strategies for a positive and strong growth mindset for all students.

The Hub, our school library is a collaborative environment for learning for teachers and students. In the Hub, teaching programs are developed together using the New Pedagogies for Deep Learning (NPDL) Framework and includes opportunities for students to develop and assess their performance in the six competencies of character, communication, citizenship,

collaboration, creative and critical thinking. Cultures of Thinking and Technology continue to be used as platforms for effective expression and engagement.

Digital literacy has continued to evolve in providing an optional BYODD (Bring Your Own Designated Device) for Years 2-6. Many of our staff are certified trained Apple Teachers with the necessary skills required to integrate digital technology across all Key Learning Areas. Teachers and parents are regularly provided with opportunities for professional learning to co-learn effective and purposeful use of technological applications.

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 [Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#). This policy is underpinned by the guiding principles from the National Safe Schools Framework (2013) (NSSF) that represent fundamental beliefs about safe, supportive and respectful school communities. These guiding principles emphasise the importance of student safety and wellbeing as a prerequisite for effective learning in all Catholic school settings. The Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Framework for Learning for the Diocese of Broken Bay Schools System (the Framework') utilises the NSSF ensuring that diocesan systemic schools meet the objectives of the NSSF at the same time as meeting the diocesan vision for pastoral care and wellbeing. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the CSBB website or by contacting CSBB. The policy was revised in 2019 to align with the [Australian Wellbeing Framework \(2018\)](#) for implementation in 2020.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned to the [Behaviour Support Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#). Policies operate within a context that all members of the school community share responsibility to foster, encourage and promote positive behaviour and respectful relationships. The policy aims to promote a safe and supportive learning environment to maximise teaching and learning time for all students. It supports the development of students' pro-social behaviour based on respectful relationships and clear behavioural expectations. The dignity and responsibility of each person is promoted at all times along with positive student behaviours while ensuring the respect for the rights of all students and staff. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the CSBB website or by contacting CSBB. There were no changes made to this policy in 2020.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The School's Anti-Bullying guidelines and procedures are based on and informed by the [Anti-Bullying Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#) and is aligned to the Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools and other related wellbeing policies and guidelines. All students, their families and employees within Catholic education have a right to a learning and work environment that is free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. Anti-Bullying policies support school communities to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying. Further information about

this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSBB website](#) or by contacting CSBB. There were no changes made to this policy in 2020.

Complaints Handling Policy

The School follows the [Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#). A distinctive feature of this policy is to ensure that complaints are addressed in a timely and confidential manner at the lowest appropriate management level in order to prevent minor problems or concerns from escalating. The expectation is that complaints will be brought forward and resolved in a respectful manner, recognising the dignity of each person concerned in the process. The policy recognises that a number of more minor or simple matters can be resolved without recourse to the formal complaint handling process but rather, quickly and simply, by discussion between the appropriate people. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSBB website](#) or by contacting CSBB. There were no changes made to this policy in 2020.

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

Throughout 2020, the Learning Support Team has worked diligently with teachers and parents in the implementation of the NCCD (Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability). The learning support team worked collaboratively with teachers to ensure that the high quality and comprehensive adjustments necessary to support students were in place throughout the school. Structures and processes were evaluated to ensure standards are consistently implemented to ensure student needs are being met.

During 2020 the school worked towards student and family wellbeing, with a number of initiatives designed to support connections between home and school, during a period of Home Based Learning, staggered return to school and Covid 19 restrictions, which impacted on the activities of the school community.

It was necessary to increase contact with families during Home Based Learning in an effort to relieve the stress and isolation many community members were feeling. Regular calls from teachers provided valuable professional feedback to parents about their child's progress during this period.

The school continued the development of the 'Positive Behaviours for Learning' framework and continued with student education around the 'Zones of Regulation'. The Zones of Regulation have continued to be an integral part of school life, promoting self regulation and emotional control. Students are taught to recognise the changes in their bodies and that they are beginning to feel overwhelmed in a given situation. Strategies are taught which help to de-escalate and move on.

The 'Rock and Water' program continued and the school regularly uses the SEL Continuum (Social and Emotional Learning Continuum) to inform practice and teach the necessary skills to be a resilient and content individual. From the SEL continuum, 'ExSEL' groups were formed, targeting specific social and emotional learning for students at point of need.

School Improvement

Strategic planning ensures a common purpose and agreed values are established. In Broken Bay systemic schools, this common purpose and agreed values along with goals, targets and key improvement strategies are documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). This SIP is a three year planning document and is used to record the School's progress in working towards priorities for improvement in three domains: Mission, Pastoral Care, Learning and Teaching. School improvement planning is supported systemically by the Diocesan Leading Learning initiative. This initiative is research based and has been developed in partnership with the University of Auckland. Building on Leading Learning in the Learning and Teaching domain, the Diocesan Learning Principles guide improvement strategies toward high quality contemporary learning.

Key Improvements Achieved

- Launched a successful 'Home Based Learning' program through the NSW lockdown due to the Covid19 pandemic
- Prioritised student well being during lockdown
- Launched a system wide strategy and vision 'Toward 2025' for school improvement
- Established a literacy coach to assist and develop teacher knowledge of research based best practice in the teaching of English
- Continued to develop programs in Science, Geography and History through the New Pedagogies Deep Learning framework
- Embedded the 'Zones of Regulation' and use of SEL continuum (Social and Emotional Learning Continuum) data to program for small groups at point of need
- Continued to embed IT to support the SAMR model

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

- Continue to support students and families in a changing environment due to the Covid19 pandemic
- Invest in STEM Technology, with professional learning for teachers and learning for students in drone technology and coding
- Engage the parent body in education workshops around the teaching of reading in K-2
- Refurbish the lower playground with games and activities designed to build collaborative and team based skills. Include a sensory path to promote self regulation.
- Strengthen differentiated teaching practices and use of data to improve the learning outcomes of all students
- Strengthen formative assessment practices to inform student goal setting

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, a variety of processes have been used to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

Parent satisfaction

The school conducted a school wide survey of parents, teachers and students, entitled the 'Tell Them From Me' survey, in term 4 of 2020,. The main findings of the survey were

- Parents feel welcome at school
- Parents feel informed
- The school supports student learning
- The school supports positive behaviour
- Students feel safe at school

General feedback from parents throughout 2020, was positive. Parents were asked to cooperate with strict NSW Health guidelines for schools and particularly praised the schools communication with parents throughout this period.

Student satisfaction

Students from years four, five and six also took part in the survey entitled the 'Tell Them from Me', The main findings from the survey were as follows

- Students feel safe attending St Bernard's
- Students feel teachers are responsive to their needs and encourage independence with a democratic approach
- Students understand that there are clear rules and expectations of classroom behaviour
- Teachers emphasise academic skills and hold high expectations for all students to succeed

Teacher satisfaction

Teachers also took part in the survey, 'Tell Them from Me,' the main findings from the survey was as follows

- There is a positive learning culture at the school
- Data is used regularly to inform practice

- Challenging learning goals are used in the classroom and shared with parents
- St Bernard's is an inclusive school

Financial Statement

Consistent with the NESAs requirements, financial income and expenditure for the School in 2020 is shown below. More detailed financial data is available on the My School website. Diocesan system financial reporting can be found in the Broken Bay Diocese Annual Report.

Recurrent and Capital Income 2020	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$1,575,117
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$439,345
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$530,826
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$826
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$102,873
Total Income	\$2,648,987

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2020	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$25,691
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$1,850,654
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$885,567
Total Expenditure	\$2,761,912

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