



# St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald

2017 Annual School Report



Catholic Education  
Diocese of Rockhampton

## The School's story

System:

**Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton**

Principal:

**Michael Roach**

Address:

**6311 Gregory Highway**

**Emerald QLD**

**4720**

Total enrolments:

**243**

Year levels offered:

**Prep to Year 6**

Type of School:

**Co-educational, Catholic School**

## 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 4 and single stream from year 5 to 6. This Catholic School, which is located in the township of Emerald services families from Emerald, Blackwater 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 classes under the directive of the Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton.
- 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".
- 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 volunteer at the River Pantry for those less fortunate.
- 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, class sets of student laptops and Chromebooks. In addition to this the school has class sets of 'Bee Bot and Pro bot' robotic

devices. All classrooms have internet access and interactive whiteboards. Furthermore, the school newsletter is electronic, emailed to families fortnightly, along with a SMS service and Facebook page that provide relevant information regarding: reminders, upcoming events or important news.

## Social Climate

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.

Counseling 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 used for involving parents in their child's education

At St Brigid's the parent body are involved in the school community through a number of initiatives.

- Parents and Friends Association – parents are involved in assisting the school with resourcing, pastoral care, catering and much more.
- School Board membership.
- The schools 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 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 tuck-shop.

## Reducing the school's environmental footprint

St Brigid's engages in recycling practices. Excess food scraps are sent home with families for their chickens. The school gardens are predominantly native flora, which assists with water conservation. A school garden including citrus trees, avocados and a greenhouse is currently in the process of being built. Through Australian Curriculum HaSS 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 in Emerald Queensland ensures the town is self-sufficient thus creating a wonderful country town atmosphere. In the school's inaugural year many students with different stories from varied walks of life combined to form the first student body. The result was a group of passionate and hardworking students with high levels of determination and resilience. Once an itinerant area, Emerald has settled post-mining boom and the school community is a reflection of this. Over the past 5 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 EALD children now enrolled.

## Staffing composition, including Indigenous staff

### Workforce Composition of all teachers

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	19	18	0
Full-time equivalents	17.3	9.61	0

### Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	
Bachelor Degree	94.74 %
Diploma	5.26 %
Certificate	

# Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development

## TOTAL FUNDS

\$ 55,200

## MAJOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

- All teachers to collaborate in developing teacher pedagogy and best practice in regards to the teaching of writing, through Professional development, PLCs and Instructional rounds.
- Whole school professional development - What is writing best practice? Christine Topfer 2018.
- 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 APC will create focus goals for each year level.
- Share focus goals and teaching strategies with Teacher aides to support writing development within the classroom.
- Development of non-negotiables for writing block.
- PSED – Personal Social Development Education – What is PSDE? Where does PSDE sit within our Religion, Health, and Physical Education curriculum?
- Student Protection and Workplace Health and Safety – ‘Riskman’ a central recording portal.
- Graduate Mentoring
- Upskilling leaders – Unlocking the Truth and Visible learning conference.
- Useful data – What is it? How do we collect it? How do we analyse it? How does it inform our practice?
- Bishop’s In-service Day
- Making Jesus Real

## The percentage of the TEACHING STAFF INVOLVED IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

100%

## Average staff attendance

98.07 %

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year

97.67 %

## School Income

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

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

**Find a school**

Search by school name

Search by suburb, town or postcode

Sector  Government  
 Non-government

## PERFORMANCE of our STUDENTS

### National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, and 7 are available via the My School website at [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au).

Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to accept the **Terms of Use** and Privacy Policy before being able to access NAPLAN data.

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

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 we received base line data on our inaugural Preps from 2014. Student growth from Years 3 to 5 will be available after the completion of NAPLAN testing, by this same cohort, in 2019. St Brigid's is however a trial school for NAPLAN Online and so there will be variables/ considerations required to match the pen and paper results of 2017 with the Online result of 2019. Matched students from 2015 to 2017 have shown growth overall however, writing has been highlighted as an area for improvement.

### Student Attendance

#### Average student attendance rate (%)

94.4 %

#### Describe how non-attendance is managed by the school

Teachers are required to mark class rolls by 9am and 2pm. If a student is recorded with an unexplained absence an SMS is sent to the family. With parent acknowledgement and explanation, the roll is updated accordingly. If a child records an unexplained absence for three consecutive days a phone call is made home for further explanation and to ensure the parent is aware of their legal obligation to send their child to school. When longer unexplained absences occur administrative staff call other persons on the students emergency contact list to further investigate these absences.

## Value Added

### The story of distance travelled

St Brigid's is currently in its 5<sup>th</sup> year of operation. Since opening in 2014 with many different students from different settings, we have focused on creating a supportive and nurturing environment to promote academic achievement. In 2017, our teachers and staff focused on using data to inform our teaching, learning and assessment cycles and to develop each student's literacy and numeracy levels. Over the past three years our student body has grown significantly with the majority of our growth in the lower grades. The year 3, 5, cohorts from 2016 achieved better results than that of the 2015 cohort. Reading and spelling data collected in early 2017 has shown further growth. In 2017 Teacher and students created 'students specific' SMART goals for reading. The Mini-lit reading intervention program was implemented for 'at risk' students. In 2018 the school body is consolidating its whole school practices around the teaching and learning of reading. In addition to this, staff are undertaking professional development and action research in the area of writing, with the goal to create learning intentions and success criteria related to writing for 2019. Prep, Year One teachers and teacher aides have all completed InitialLit training, in order to provide a whole school approach to the introduction of phonics and reading in the early years. Oral language data collected by teachers and a Local Speech pathologist shows that speech/ language continues to be an area of concern for our region and school community. This data is used to identify those that require extra support from professional within the community and to refer them on to these services.

### Report on 2017 Strategic goals

Our goals for 2017 were:

To develop a whole school reading program – which outlines:

- Common language
- Teacher pedagogy
- Decoding strategies
- Comprehension strategies
- Set targets – PM/ DRA / Probe levels
- Process to follow when student do not make targets
- Whole class reading goals
- Individual student reading goals

### The story of where you are going

The major focuses at St Brigid's continue to be reading, writing and spelling. The current focus on assessing student progress and initiating programs to develop each child will continue. The school has implemented, among other things, the use of NAPLAN, PM/ DRA and Oral language data to inform teaching and to monitor reading development across all year levels. St Brigid's has invested in ongoing professional development in regards to teacher pedagogy and student specific SMART Goals. In 2018 our focus is to consolidate good reading practice and investigate best writing practice. Our school enrolment data is still tracking towards being a full two-stream school by 2020.



## Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

The school underwent its first School Review and Improvement process at the end of 2017. This review highlighted the need to communicate the school improvement agenda to parents and the wider the community. Processes have been put in place to achieve this, with the school using the various social media platforms to communicate its goals for 2018.

Peer reviews of leadership team members, self-assessments and goal setting from teachers ensures their practice and the school's practice is reviewed each semester. Facilitated planning meetings are held each term to ensure teachers and leadership are collaborating to create curriculum documents across the school. Staff are required to reflect on unit plans and content at the end of each teaching cycle and to update these plans accordingly. Staff responsible for intervention programs collect data related to student progress each term to monitor progress and make adjustments where required. Those that organize programs or events call for peer feedback at regular intervals. Parent and teacher meetings are regularly encouraged to continue open and honest communication across the school.