



St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald

2023 Annual School Report



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Emerald

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

Principal

Tegan Green

Address

6311 Gregory Highway
Emerald QLD 4720

Total enrolments

297

Year levels offered

Prep – Year 6

Type of School:

Co-educational

School Overview

Nestled in the Central Highlands town of Emerald, St. Brigid's Catholic Primary School serves both the town and its surrounding communities, primarily influenced by agricultural and mining industries. Established in 2014, St. Brigid's is an emerging educational institution with a dynamic and vibrant school community. Embracing the charism of the Brigidine Sisters, the school upholds the ethos encapsulated by our guiding motto, "Gentleness and Strength," which manifests in our students' daily actions. Accommodating two streams for each year level from Prep to Year Six, alongside an onsite Kindergarten, St Brigid's cultivates a robust partnership facilitating seamless transitions for our youngest learners. The expansive and meticulously maintained school grounds feature contemporary classrooms equipped with cutting-edge technologies, offering dynamic teaching spaces. The school's close association with St. Patrick's Catholic Parish is manifested through active participation in Masses, liturgical celebrations, morning teas, and special events. Committed to fostering a welcoming, familial atmosphere, St. Brigid's prioritises instilling our Catholic identity, robust parent partnerships, student well-being, and academic excellence, thus ensuring the holistic development of each student—socially, academically, and spiritually.

More information on our school can be accessed from myschool.edu.au

Curriculum Offerings

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

St. Brigid's Catholic Primary School is committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful community where all learners feel safe and supported. Our school has integrated technology accessible across all year levels, including a 1:1 Chromebook hire initiative tailored for students in years 4 through 6. Each year our Years 5 and 6 participate in the "Readers Cup" and debating, sending multiple teams to compete with other schools around the region. We also offer many sporting programs through Physical Education lessons, including netball, touch football, rugby league and fitness.

Extra Curricula Activities

- All students are involved in school liturgies and Masses, including Parish Masses throughout the year.
- Students compete in the speech and choir sections of the Central Highlands Eisteddfod.
- School choir for students in Years 3 – 6.
- Students can participate in a variety of different lunch time clubs.
- Students can join in the gardening club each week.
- 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 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.
- School involvement in cultural community events such as NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week.
- Upper school students participate in the Mayoral Summit for school leaders.
- Students participate in school camps to Magnetic Island, The Great Barrier Reef and Fairbairn Dam.
- Students go on school excursions to various parks and local facilities.
- Students assist the Neighbourhood Centre in varied appeals.
- Year 5 and 6 students volunteer at Avalon Aged Care home once a month.

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 differentiated knowledge, skills and processes to ensure high expectations to meet diverse student needs. Students need to engage with a range of technologies, including:

- Digital systems
- Critical and creative thinking
- Design and computational thinking
- Comprehensive understanding of traditional and emerging technologies.

St Brigid's has a variety of digital devices: Teacher laptops, iPads and sync boxes, year-level sets of student iPads and Chromebooks. Students in years 4 -6 are a part of the 1:1 Chromebook hire program, which sees every student with their own Chromebook, which can be taken home at the end of the day for study and homework. In addition, the school has class sets of 'Bee-Bot and Pro-bot' robotic devices, Dash robots, Lego WeDo, Sphero Indi's and Cosmo. All classrooms have internet access and interactive whiteboards or interactive panels. Students, teachers and parents use Seesaw and the Google classroom suite for online learning, feedback and communication. The school newsletter is electronic and emailed to families fortnightly. Parents can access Parent Lounge to update their child's information, complete permission notes for excursions and camp, pay school fees and access end of semester report cards. Furthermore, the school uses an SMS service, a School app and a Facebook page to provide relevant information regarding reminders, upcoming events or important news.

Social Climate

Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture

St Brigid's School is a family-oriented community focusing on gentleness, 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 beautiful link between home and school and focuses on parent engagement. Close relationships with the other Catholic Schools in Emerald and working with the government and independent schools in the area have developed solid relationships and networking opportunities for students and staff. 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.

St Brigid's employs one full-time and one part-time learning support teacher who works closely with staff, families and our children to implement individual and classroom-based programs that support learning. We also employ an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher two days a week to work with students individually and within the classroom.

An Indigenous Liaison Officer serves as a vital link across several Catholic schools within the region, fostering an inclusive educational environment. Their primary objective revolves around fostering active involvement and participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families in all aspects of the educational journey and school community life. This multifaceted role extends support to school personnel by integrating Indigenous perspectives into various curriculum domains, thereby enriching educational experiences. Additionally, the liaison officer plays a crucial role in enhancing cultural sensitivity and understanding by facilitating awareness of cultural protocols and the unique requirements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families. Through their dedicated efforts, they contribute significantly to the creation of a more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment within our school.

Personal reflection and student well-being initiatives are implemented as part of a whole school program – "Well-being on Wednesday (WoW)", as well as in the individual classroom. Through the use of an online game called "Rumbles Quest" we can gain student well-being data to monitor our students' wellbeing and tailor well-being lessons to the needs of our students. In addition, several local community members, including our Parish Priests, play an integral part in the school community with regular classroom visits and reflection time with the school staff.

Counselling services are shared across the Catholic Schools, providing children access to one-on-one counselling and small group sessions. In addition, access to professional support services such as Speech/Language and Occupational Therapists is available through a reciprocal relationship between the school and professional practices.

St Brigid's implements the Child Safety Curriculum from Prep to Year 6 and strong ties have been established with the Queensland Police Adopt-a-Cop program, who also run road safety programs throughout the school.

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 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) code of conduct. St Brigid's and other local Catholic Primary schools engage with third-party presenters and organisations, such as Brett Lee from Internet Safe Education, to provide up-to-date support, tools and education for our staff, students and parents.

Strategies for involving parents in their child's education

At St Brigid's, the parent body is involved in the school community through several initiatives:

- Parents and Friends Association – parents assist the school with resourcing, pastoral care, catering and much more. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month
- School Board meets on the first Wednesday of the month
- The school's learning improvement agenda is communicated through the newsletter
- The e-newsletter (shared 3 times per term) outlines whole school and class learning goals/focuses, provides information regarding current educational news, communicates coming events and publishes student successes
- Parent/Teacher interviews, the Parent Handbook, curriculum information sessions, phone calls, regular emails, notes home, classroom billboards, the school Facebook page, the school app, and text messages help to keep the lines of communication open, resulting in strong bonds between school and home
- Immediate student feedback and communication is provided to parents through Seesaw
- 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 assist in the tuckshop.

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

St Brigid's engages in recycling practices. Excess food scraps are sent home with families for their chickens, and recycling and general waste bins are used throughout the school. St Brigid's recycles paper and cardboard separately with different coloured containers for different recyclable materials. The school's gardens are predominantly native flora, which assists with water conservation. Students and staff can use a school garden, including citrus trees, fruit trees and a greenhouse, and we offer any produce to community groups who may use them. Through the Australian Curriculum students engage in learning about sustainability. Air conditioners have predetermined temperatures and are set to timers to avoid overuse. Practices such as turning off lights and fans during breaks are advocated in classrooms and using fresh air through the open windows when able. Solar panels are fitted to the school. The school uses bore water for the oval and main grassed areas around the school.

Characteristics of the Student Body

The student population at St. Brigid's encompasses a diverse array of families, predominantly falling within four distinct demographics: rural, mining, small business, and town services. Situated in the remote locale of Emerald, the town's self-sufficiency contributes to a delightful country town ambiance. In its inaugural year, St. Brigid's welcomed students with diverse backgrounds and life experiences, fostering a student body characterized by compassion, diligence, and remarkable resilience. Over the past five years, this spirit has propelled a notable 20% increase in student enrollment. Our school community extends a warm embrace to families from across Australia and beyond, evident in the representation of children from non-English speaking backgrounds. With a commitment to inclusivity, St. Brigid's diligently caters to a wide spectrum of physical, emotional, and social needs, offering comprehensive support to both students and their families.

Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2023 was 89.36%.

Management of non-attendance

Our student attendance processes fall in line with systemic requirements. Following the roll being marked in the morning, an SMS is sent to families who have students away with unexplained absences, and a second roll is taken in the afternoon. If no contact is made for two days, a Leadership Team member follows up with a phone call. In addition, leadership Team members regularly review attendance data. Parents can report absences to the school through email, phone, Parent Lounge or using the school absentee phone line.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	22.00	17.00	1.00
Full-time equivalents	20.00	10.76	1.00

Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	4%
Bachelor Degree	92%
Diploma	4%
Certificate	

Major Professional Development Initiatives

Major professional development initiatives include:

- Collaborating in developing teacher pedagogy and best practice regarding the teaching of writing and spelling through professional development, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and classroom observations.
- Analysing multiple data forms (reading, writing, spelling, numeracy, being) in PLCs
- Creating focus goals for each year level
- Sharing focus goals and teaching strategies with Teacher Assistants to support reading and writing development within the classroom
- Developing non-negotiables for the literacy block
- Berry Street Education Model
- Development of number talk progressions in mathematics across all year levels
- Using data triangulation to assist with data analysis and planning
- Providing Student Protection and Workplace Health and Safety training and utilising 'Riskman' as a central recording portal
- Working alongside the Diocesan FIARE team to up-skill and build teacher knowledge in religion and Catholic Identity
- Attending Bishop's In-service Day
- Providing In-school Early Career teacher support program
- Ensuring Individual teacher goals setting and professional development opportunities
- Professional Development sessions run by Catholic Education Office via Zoom
- Kagan Cooperative Learning.
- Engaging with QCAA to build teacher understanding of Australian Curriculum Vs9.

The percentage of teachers engaged in professional development was 100 %.

Total funds expended on Professional Development

The total of funds expended on teacher professional development was \$46,400.

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 93.19%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 95.65%.

School Income

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

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

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for Years 3 and 5 are available via the My School website at www.myschool.edu.au.

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school’s NAPLAN results.

Key Student Outcomes and Value Added

Our school motto, “Gentleness and Strength”, is central to all things at St Brigid’s. At St Brigid’s, the education of the whole student is the focus. The educational and spiritual development of each student is the priority. We are continually using data to drive quality teaching and monitoring learning growth using various sources, including NAPLAN data and trends, standardised Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) for reading, spelling and mathematics, the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and summative and formative assessment within the classroom.

2023 – YEAR 3		
Writing	78% were strong or exceeding	Above state average
Reading	65% were strong or exceeding	Above state average
Spelling	43% were strong or exceeding	
Grammar & Punctuation	52% were strong or exceeding	Above state average

2023 – YEAR 5		
Writing	59% were strong or exceeding	
Reading	77% were strong or exceeding	
Spelling	56% were strong or exceeding	
Grammar & Punctuation	64% were strong or exceeding	Above state average

Numeracy	63% were strong or exceeding	Above state average
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Numeracy	51% were strong or exceeding	
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St Brigid's continues to use this data to identify areas of need within the school and to respond through resourcing and professional development.

Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

Strategic progress in 2023

In 2023 the school improvement goals were guided by the National School Improvement Tool audit and the Enhancing Catholic School Identity Survey, which identified several areas for development and improvement across different domains: Catholic Identity and Ethos, Effective Teaching and Learning, Pastoral Support and well-being, and Leadership, Partnership and Resourcing.

Our 2023 goals were:

- Improve our Catholic School Identity through the inspiration of Jesus Christ
- Implement systematic collection, analysis and use of student achievement data in literacy – with a focus on reading.
- Show growth in numeracy in the areas of problem-solving and reasoning – continuing in the second year of the Math Project.
- Increase student knowledge and school wide practices that support student wellbeing identified through the use of strategies from a trauma informed model.
- Develop a partnership with Avalon Aged Care Facility in Emerald.

Strategic Priorities for 2024

In light of the objectives established for the year 2023 and the unfolding events throughout the academic calendar, a series of periodic reflections and reviews were undertaken to evaluate progress and recalibrate objectives for the forthcoming year of 2024. These evaluations were informed by a comprehensive analysis encompassing feedback garnered from student, parental, and staff satisfaction surveys, in addition to insights gleaned from the Enhancing Catholic School Identity (ESCI) report, and discernible trends evident within available data sets over the course of the academic term. As a result, the following goals for 2024 were prioritised:

- To develop teacher confidence and knowledge in the teaching and assessing of religious education.
- Implement systematic collection, analysis and use of student achievement data in literacy – with a focus on spelling.
- Teachers and school leaders will take personal and collective responsibility for improving student learning and wellbeing, working together and learning from each other's practices through targeted classroom visits and observations.
- Increase student knowledge and school-wide practices that support student wellbeing, identified through strategies supported through the implementation of the Berry Street program as a whole-school and class approach.
- The school leadership team along with school staff will make deliberate and strategic use of partnerships with families with the purpose of improving student outcomes.

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

The school community, including staff, students, families, and external stakeholders, consistently demonstrates robust support and appreciation for St Brigid's pivotal role in enhancing students' academic, emotional, social, and physical development. This acknowledgment is substantiated by findings from previous satisfaction surveys and evaluative assessments, which notably underscore the exemplary individualised care afforded to students, the cultivation of a positive and inclusive atmosphere, and the commendable professionalism exhibited by the staff.

Parental engagement within the school community remains strong, with sustained participation evident in various facets such as school events, the Parents and Friends Association, and increasing support for the school in other various ways. This trend reflects a continuing upward trajectory, indicative of a growing and dynamic partnership between parents and the school.

In 2023 we completed our student, parent and staff satisfaction surveys. Some of the results are below:

Students:

- 81.7% of students agreed: I am proud to be a student at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald.
- 88.5% of students agreed: St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald has the technology and equipment needed to support my learning.
- 92.3% of students agreed: At St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald, I am encouraged to do the best I can.
- 86.5% of students agreed: When I have a problem with my work, my teachers help me.
- 95.2% of students agreed: I know what behaviour is expected of me at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald.
- 84.6% of students agreed: St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald recognises the achievements of staff, parents and students.

Parents:

- 90.9% of parents agreed: St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald is a welcoming and caring community where everyone is treated with respect.
- 79.9% of parents agreed: St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald emphasises justice and compassion.
- 82.5% of parents agreed: Parents, school leaders and staff work together and support each other.
- 87.7% of parents agreed: Staff at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald respond promptly to my enquiries.
- 82.5% of parents agreed: St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald is committed to academic excellence.
- 90.3% of parents agreed: Students and staff have an obvious sense of pride in the school.

Staff:

- 100.0% of staff agreed: Liturgies at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald are engaging and meaningful.
- 93.1% of staff agreed: There is a strong commitment to improvement at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald.
- 93.1% of staff agreed: St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald is committed to academic excellence.
- 100.0% of staff agreed: St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Emerald encourages students to reach their full potential.
- 96.6% of staff agreed: Students and staff have an obvious sense of pride in the school.