MacKillop Catholic Primary School
Mackay
2024 Annual School Report

Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

MacKillop Catholic Primary School, Mackay

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

Principal

Mrs Allison Blakey

Address

20 Nadarmi Drive
Andergrove QLD 4740

Total enrolments

157

Year levels offered

Prep – Year 6

Type of School:

Co-educational

School Overview

MacKillop Catholic Primary School is situated in Andergrove, Mackay. The school offers a Catholic education to approximately 160 students from Prep to Year 6. Our school community is guided by our School Mission Statement and strives to put into action the philosophies of 'working together', 'participating' and 'having a-go'. Our religious character is embodied by 'Faith and Service' demonstrated by the life and work of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop who was beatified on 19 January 1995, the same year that our school was established. MacKillop offers a comprehensive curriculum with specific emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy. The students are offered weekly specialist lessons in Physical Education, The Arts and STEM which was introduced in 2024. There are many and varied opportunities to be involved in extra-curricular activities such as Eisteddfod, sporting events and carnivals, Rock Pop Mime, Opti-Minds and the McDonald's Maths Competition. Learning support and extension activities are offered to enhance the curriculum. We hold fortnightly Class Masses at school with the Parish Priest presiding. Student welfare is a priority, and we employ a Counsellor two days a week to provide additional support for student wellbeing. Parental involvement across the school is strong, ensuring a close working relationship exists between home and school. This partnership is seen as essential for the education of every student. An Outside School Hours Care program is available for school families.

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

Curriculum Offerings

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

MacKillop Catholic Primary School is a small, welcoming school catering for students from Prep to Year 6. We are a one-stream school. We offer specialist teachers in the curriculum areas of The Arts, Physical Education and STEAM (introduced in 2024). In Term 3 of each year, Dance is taught by specialist teachers from "ZING Activ" previously known as "Dance Fever". We have a very successful Learning Support program that operates in our school. Through a spirit of 'Faith and Service', we strive to provide each child with a quality education in a caring Catholic environment. We offer a broad curriculum that empowers children to be responsible, successful, life-long learners.

Extra Curricula Activities

- Eisteddfod participation caters for both individuals and groups. We have all year levels entering the Choral Speaking Section of the Eisteddfod each year. It is through cultural experiences like this that the children develop self-confidence, discipline and perseverance skills.
- Students in Years 5 and 6 attend a school camp. Year 5 have previously attended a 2 night and 3-day leadership camp at Action Challenge, Hay Point and Year 6 students attended a Camp at Airlie Beach for 2 nights. Due to Action Challenge closing, both Year 5 & 6 students attended the Airlie Beach camp in 2024.
- Whitsunday Voices has continued to give students, teachers and parents access to renowned children's authors. This serves to promote joyful experiences of reading and writing within our school and wider community.
- Sporting Teams: Students can be involved in interschool sport and zone representative sport. The main sports offered include Rugby League, Netball, Touch Football, Cross Country, Athletics and Swimming. We also have the opportunity to enter a Rugby League and Netball team in the annual 'Challenge Cup' Diocesan Competition at Yeppoon.
- The University of NSW (ICAS) English, Mathematics, Computer Skills, Science, Writing and Spelling Competitions see children from Years 3 – 6 provided with the opportunity to participate and test their knowledge in nuanced and novel situations under a time limit. We also have classes participate in various writing competitions each year - Whitsunday Voices and Write4Fun - allowing students the opportunity to write for a purpose and a specified audience.
- Each year we have an Art Show at school as a culmination of our Visual Arts lessons where the children's artwork is displayed. In 2024, we held a STEAM Showcase as part of this event, displaying work students had produced during STEAM lessons.
- NAIDOC Week celebrations - the whole school celebrates the importance of the Indigenous culture within our national and local identity by having a NAIDOC Liturgy and other activities.
- MacKillop proudly participates annually in the Mackay City's ANZAC parade. With at least 50% of students represented, participation in the march has become a tradition within the school community.
- Premier's Reading Challenge allows students to participate in the worthwhile activity of reading for pleasure.

- DanceFever - each year we participate in DanceFever lessons in Term 3 with a company from Brisbane. The children are taught several traditional dances e.g. fox trot, tango etc and they showcase the dances they have learnt to their parents at the end of the term.
- Each year we host Under 8's Day for P-3 students and the neighbouring Kindergartens with various activities and where local community groups present e.g. fire brigade, ambulance and police.
- Opti-Minds - students in Years 5 & 6 are invited to participate in Opti-Minds which promotes higher order thinking and teamwork by asking the children to present their solution to a set problem at a regional gathering of schools. We enter either one or two teams each year.
- Mackay Primary Schools Mathematics Challenge – we enter one or two teams of Year 5 and 6 students each year.
- Spiritually, students participate in a variety of class, whole school and parish prayer celebrations and Masses. We have fortnightly class Masses at School presided over by the Parish Priest. We also work with the Parish to support students and families in preparing for the Sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and Eucharist.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

ICTs are integrated into all teaching and learning. All learning spaces at MacKillop have interactive device connectivity and inbuilt sound systems which are used to enhance the teaching and learning process. Each classroom is fitted with a Phonak Soundfield System which is designed to make the teacher's voice clear, thereby assisting with increased student attention, interaction and class participation. All teaching staff members are provided with a laptop and iPad, and these are used to create innovative programs and activities as well as accessing online resources to enhance the delivery of the Australian Curriculum. We use a variety of devices across the school – Prep, Years 1 & 2 utilise iPads; and Years 3 - 6 utilise Chromebooks; with a ratio of 1:1 devices for students from Years 1 – 6. There is also a set of Bee-Bots and Pro-Bots for students to use. In 2023, we introduced a 1:1 Chromebook program in Year 4. The school has access to educationally approved/secure Diocesan Links and Portals that provide safe access to educationally approved platforms for learning.

Social Climate

Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture

MacKillop is committed to providing a quality, inclusive Catholic Education for our students. Each week, the school introduces a "Manner of the Week". This is highlighted on our Monday assembly, discussed in each class and then observed and awarded at Friday's Assembly.

Religious Education is at the core of our school, and we continue to have a good relationship with our parish having our Parish Priest visit and leading Class Masses each fortnight. Liturgy and prayer form a consistent part of our school life. The school also celebrates many other significant liturgies.

Each class has a Class Coordinator who provides a pastoral link for families with social gatherings being organised regularly.

We have buddy classes operating at MacKillop. Upper classes are buddied at the beginning of the year with a lower level class e.g. Year 6 are buddies with Prep and Year 5 are buddies with Year 1. They travel to Mass together; and complete buddy reading and other activities together. This contributes to building a sense of community between classes and across the school.

Classes are rostered on to 'showcase' their class work to the rest of the community via an assembly each week. Classes also take responsibility once a semester for the School Office Display in our Administration Foyer.

Our School Counsellor works two days a week at MacKillop and is very well utilised. She provides a formal counselling service to individual students; as well as small group sessions and whole class programs when required to develop resilience and well-being in the students.

During 2023 and 2024, staff have been trained in Berry Street – Trauma-informed practice. We have implemented some whole school strategies such as Welcome Circles to start our day, Closing Circles to finish our day, brain breaks, ready to learn scales and ready to learn plans to support children in being ready to learn.

Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

At MacKillop we use a proactive approach to tackle bullying. We have several strategies that work in unison to provide a safe and happy learning environment for our students. We have comprehensive Behaviour Management and Anti-Bullying guidelines to which all staff, students and parents commit. At the commencement of the school year, each teacher explains our 'Student Guidelines' PowerPoint with the students to ensure everyone understands our rules and expectations at MacKillop. In 2025, we had leadership team members present the PowerPoint to each class. We also send home an electronic version of the Guidelines for parents in the first couple of weeks of school in the school newsletter.

Our school has implemented the Diocesan policies on Anti-bullying and Acceptable Use Agreements for students and staff. The school regularly communicates to parents and the school community about cyber safety issues. We also have appropriate policies in place to deal with the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices which requires that devices and phones are signed into the office in the morning and collected after school each day. Our school has several social/emotional learning programs in place to assist students in guarding against bullying at school. All Diocesan and school policies are reviewed on a regular basis. We also arrange local police officers or guest speakers to speak to the children about Cyber-bullying where required. Our school behaviour management plan and response to bullying policy are updated regularly and can be found on our school website and in our Parent Handbook.

At MacKillop, safe use practices and cyber safety are a focus of our whole school ICTs overview, and throughout the year, explicit teaching occurs on these topics during Child Protection Week and during Media Arts lessons. Where possible, we also access outside performances and educational opportunities from School Performance Tours, local police, child protection agencies, The Daniel Morcombe Foundation, 'National Day of Action Against Bullying' and the Safety Circus visit to Year 2 students each year. In Term 3 each year, all classes study the Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum.

Strategies for involving parents in their child's education

- Parent Engagement Group (formerly known as the P&F Association) - supports the school through fundraising, community building and parent engagement. All parents are welcome to attend the monthly meetings. They also coordinate the "Just One Thing" campaign where families are asked to list ways they can be engaged in the life of the school. In 2024 we reviewed the role of the P&F Association to have a heavier focus on Parent Engagement and thus the name changed to Parent Engagement Group.
- The School Board - one of the major roles of the Board is to respond to current and future school needs through policy development and review, visioning, maintenance and capital works. Our Board is a pastoral Board that functions under a shared wisdom model.
- Parent–teacher interviews are conducted in Terms One and Three. Parents may arrange an interview at any other stage during the year. This is our second year of holding Parent/Teacher/Student Interviews early in Term One to enable us to establish positive relationships with families.
- School camps, excursions, working bees, athletics and swimming carnivals, tuckshop and classroom assistance all provide other practical ways parents can be part of their child's education.
- Parents of children with learning or other difficulties are directly involved in their child's education through support meetings, Personal Learning Plan (PLP) meetings and review meetings which are held regularly.
- Communication with parents is encouraged and supported. This is achieved in a variety of ways – weekly newsletter, school website and text messages. We have established a school Facebook page that we also use to communicate with parents to keep them updated on events happening within the school and other important messages. In 2024, we have also introduced the Parent Orbit App as another communication tool for parents to utilise. Each teacher also sends home a class newsletter at the start of each term outlining curriculum content to be covered during the term, special dates and other information.
- Guest speakers and workshops are conducted for parents including various parent-initiated topics to encourage parent engagement.

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

There are several ways we aim to reduce our environmental footprint at MacKillop. We encourage teachers to turn off air-conditioners in Terms 2 & 3. During other terms the air-conditioners are to be set at an efficient temperature of 25 degrees. Wherever possible, paper is reused to reduce waste and the school has a recycling bin. Each class has a paper bin which our Year 6 students empty each day. MacKillop also uses the Paper Cut program to monitor and reduce printing and paper consumption with staff members receiving an allocation of printing each term. We also email most communication to parents or post on the app rather than printing notes. Classes are also encouraged to turn off lights, fans, data projectors/IWBs when leaving their rooms for lengthy periods of time or when not in use. In accordance with ACARA's Cross Curricular Priority: Sustainability, teachers are required to integrate learning

opportunities and real-life situations that focus on sustainable futures. This continued to be a focus in 2024 through our HASS Curriculum, focusing on inquiry-based learning. Solar panels are fitted to the school to offset our power consumption.

Characteristics of the Student Body

MacKillop is situated in the northern suburb of Andergrove in Mackay. It is an integral part of the parish of North Mackay. MacKillop is one of four Primary Catholic Schools and one Secondary Catholic College within the parish. Our current enrolment is 150 students – with the student population being drawn from across North Mackay but predominantly from the areas of Andergrove and Beaconsfield. Other areas include Slade Point, Blacks Beach, Eimeo, Bucasia, Shoal Point, Northview, Rural View, Habana and Central North Mackay. MacKillop has a student enrolment from a wide cross-section of the community. The school caters for a mix of socio-economic groups. We have several Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at MacKillop, and we celebrate culturally rich opportunities throughout the year, such as NAIDOC Week, Sorry Day – Reconciliation Week and Harmony Day. English is the predominant first language spoken by most students. Most students from MacKillop continue their secondary schooling at Holy Spirit College.

Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2024 was 89.93%.

Management of non-attendance

According to our Handbook, parents are required to contact the school if their child is absent (either sick or away on holidays etc.) either via the Parent Orbit app, phone, email, in person or a written note. Teachers are required to mark class rolls by 9.15am and 2.15pm daily. Following our roll marking procedures each morning, a text message is sent to families who have not notified the school of their child's absence. Prolonged or unexplained absences would involve the teacher phoning the parent or notifying the principal so that an interview and/or an explanation can be obtained from the parent/caregiver. Children that arrive late or leave early need to be signed in and out at the office. Semester absentees are printed on student report cards.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	First Nations Staff
Headcounts	14.00	18.00	2.00
Full-time equivalents	12.37	9.75	0.64

Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	14.29%
Bachelor Degree	78.57%
Diploma	7.14%
Certificate	

Major Professional Development Initiatives

In 2024, staff at MacKillop engaged in professional learning to support our whole School Improvement Plan goals. Some of these Professional development sessions included: 7 Pupil Free Days which focused on: Prayer and different types of prayer and implementation in the classroom with Guest Speaker, Catherine Simmonds from CEDR, Berry Street Training – Stamina and Engagement; and Character Modules over two days with personnel from Berry Street and Reading PD led by Sandra Comben from CEDR – focusing on Comprehension.

Each year all staff are required to complete Mandatory Training in Student Protection, Code of Conduct, WH&S, ICT Code of Practice and Modern Slavery.

The topic for our Religion Inservice day in 2024 presented by Catherine Simmonds from CEDR was 'Prayer'. We also had our annual Bishop's In-service Day.

Other Professional Development opportunities included: NCCD Training and Intra and Inter-school Moderation, and the leadership team attending a strategic planning day with leadership teams from other Mackay schools and Catholic Education Office (CEO) personnel.

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 $16,920.00.
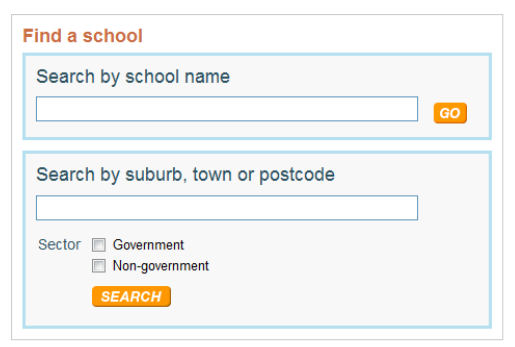
Average Staff Attendance and Retention

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 93.00%.

The percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 85.29%.

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

MacKillop Catholic Primary School is a small school community where students receive individualised attention from dedicated teaching staff. Regular staff meetings, professional learning sessions, and intra-school moderation enable teachers to engage in meaningful, professional conversations at the school and community level.

MacKillop participates in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) for students with disabilities. Inclusion in NCCD ensures that students with disabilities receive adjustments highlighted in their Personalised Learning Plan and the support required to achieve success and access education on the same basis as their peers.

MacKillop uses NAPLAN data, school-based formative and summative assessments and diagnostic assessments to identify areas of need for strategic planning, resourcing, and targeted professional development. Data gathered from NAPLAN, PAT Testing (Mathematics and Reading), and Diagnostic Reading Assessments (DRA Mini) continues to provide an opportunity to monitor student progress. In 2024, one of MacKillop's strategic goals was to improve student progress and achievement in reading.

In 2024, 35 Years 3 and 5 students sat the NAPLAN test. In 2023, NAPLAN introduced the Proficiency Level measurement scale which categorises student performance into four levels—Exceeding, Strong, Developing, and Needs Additional Support. 2024 NAPLAN results are not comparable to previous years. The 2024 NAPLAN results indicate that 70% of Year 3 and 46.5% of Year 5 students were at Strong or Exceeding for Writing. 62.5% of Year 3 and 54.6% of Year 5 students were Strong or Exceeding in Reading. Spelling results for Year 3 indicate that 50% were Strong or Exceeding, and 40% of Year 5 students were Strong. 2024 Grammar and Punctuation results show that 37.5% of students in Year 3 and 70% of Year 5 were strong. The 2024 NAPLAN Numeracy results are evidence that 58.4% of Year 3 students and 50% of the Year 5 students are Strong or Exceeding.

To enhance teaching and learning, teachers at MacKillop use data to make informed decisions about the learning needs of individual students and cohorts of students. Data derived from 2024 national assessments, diagnostic tests (PAT Testing and DRA Mini), and school-based evaluations enhances teaching and learning at MacKillop. One of the 2025 strategic goals is to improve student progress and achievement in concepts of writing.

Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

Strategic progress in 2024

Catholic Identity and Ethos

- *To deepen students understanding of prayer through the process of recontextualisation.*

In 2024 we continued our focus on Prayer and understanding prayer through the process of recontextualisation. We had a number of professional development sessions with Catherine Simmonds from CEDR throughout the year including: the four prayer types – creative, vocal, meditative and contemplative, reviewing prayer spaces in classrooms; deepening staff understanding of recontextualisation. Catherine also modelled meditation sessions in each classroom. We reviewed our Agreed Shared Practice for Prayer. Each term we had a different prayer focus which was modelled at staff meetings and then implemented in classrooms eg Term 1 – meditative prayer, Term 2 – creative prayer, Term 3 – vocal prayer and Term 4 – contemplative prayer. In Term 3, to align with our Feast Day staff and students were involved in a recontextualisation activity around the charism of Mary MacKillop. In Catholic Education Week, during our open classrooms, parents experienced a meditative or creative prayer.

Effective Teaching and Learning

- *To improve student progress and achievement in reading through the use of a range of data*

In 2024, teachers undertook various PD sessions with Sandra Comben from CEO and APC including: implementation of different reading strategies e.g. literacy circles, readers theatre. Sandra also provided coaching and modelling reading routines and comprehension strategies (reciprocal reading) in two classrooms. Teachers were involved in data conversations with APC/Principal to analyse student data – PAT-R, DRA, NAPLAN to assist with using this data to inform teaching and learning. Teachers were also involved in reading assessment moderation at staff meetings. Individual reading goals were established with students. One of our walkthrough visits each term focused on reading. We provided parent engagement opportunities around reading which included: parents visiting rooms for World Read Aloud Day in February as well as a 'Reading at Home' parent session. MacKillop was part of the Reading Pilot project – looking a reading assessment practices. As part of this, we reviewed our Reading Agreed Shared Practices. Teacher Assistants were also provided PD on reading focusing on alternate strategies to support reading in the

classroom. The APC included newsletter articles informing the school community on reading practices and showcasing reading across the school. We also participated in Extra Curricular Activities to promote reading – National Simultaneous Storytime and Premiers' Reading Challenge.

Pastoral Support and Wellbeing

- *To promote student wellbeing and learning by embedding a whole-school trauma-informed approach for behaviour management.*

All teachers and teacher assistants attended Berry Street Training in the January Pupil Free Days completing the final domains – Stamina, Engagement and Character. We continued with the implementation of Welcome Circles, Ready to Learn Scales and brain breaks in classrooms as well as introduced Closing Circles into our afternoon routine. We developed and implemented Ready to Learn plans for individual students as needed. The school community was informed via newsletter articles and a Parent Information Forum was led by Erin Sheldrick focusing on what is trauma-informed practice and introducing Welcome Circles. A bank of positive primers and brain break activities was developed. Walkthrough visits focused on Welcome Circles, Closing Circles and Berry Street strategies. Our Years 3 – 6 students completed the Resilience Project Survey and data was analysed by the Leadership Team in conjunction with Resilience Project team leader. Resilience Project lessons were implemented in all classrooms and new staff attended training. We also trialled completing the Rumbles' Quest Wellbeing Survey with Years 1- 6 students and analysed this data to inform our goals for 2025.

Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing

- *To consistently engage parents with reading and wellbeing practices in every classroom.*

In 2024, we continued the use of School TV as a resource for parents to provide targeted parenting information. Articles relevant to the school community were provided throughout the year e.g. vaping, Harmony Week. We continued providing class newsletters for parents each term. We continued with the new Parent/Teacher/Student interviews in Terms One and Three that we had trialled the previous year. We reviewed the structure of the P&F Association and moved to a new model that was more heavily focused on Parent Engagement. We renamed this as the Parent Engagement Group. During our first meeting we talked about parent engagement vs parent involvement and the difference. We provided a range of opportunities for parents to engage with their children's learning – e.g. Class Masses, Assemblies, Mini Fair, open classrooms during Catholic Education Week, picnic lunch, parent/teacher vs student Touch Football game, Arts Show/STEAM Showcase, Feast Day, Carol's Night etc. We also provide parent forums on reading which linked to our Effective Teaching and Learning goal.

Strategic Priorities for 2025

The school's strategic priorities and goals are developed by the leadership team in consultation with the staff. They are shared with the parent body in a variety of ways – newsletter, Parent Engagement Group and Board Meetings. Parents are given the opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions are welcomed and considered. The school priorities are set for three years. These priorities guide the annual goals over this time period. Regular monitoring of these goals takes place in a variety of ways – observations, data gathering, discussions, staff meetings and teachers' curriculum planning. Our goals, targets and strategies were chosen as priorities for our school improvement plan based on data gathered from NAPLAN results, the Enhancing Catholic School Identity (ESCI) report and Catholic Education Office initiatives.

Our strategic goals for 2025 are:

Catholic Identity and Ethos:

- To build teacher capacity to assist students to make meaning from scripture.

Effective Teaching and Learning:

- To improve student progress and achievement in concepts of writing.

Pastoral Support and Wellbeing:

- To embed a whole-school trauma-informed approach for behaviour support to enhance student wellbeing and engagement.

Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing:

- *To promote the school's presence in the wider community.*

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

In 2024, all members of our school community - parents, staff and students - were invited to provide feedback via an externally moderated survey as part of our school improvement process. The results of the survey were positive overall, with feedback from staff, parents and students giving a high satisfaction rating in all four result areas (Catholic Ethos and Identity, Pastoral Support and Wellbeing; Leadership, Partnership and Resourcing; and Effective Teaching and Learning). We have analysed these results as a leadership team, staff and at Board and Parent Engagement Group meetings and use these to inform our annual School Development Plan and school goals. Parents, staff and students will again complete these surveys in 2026.

At MacKillop, we recognise the important contribution of parents and the members of our community in the teaching and learning process, and we are proud to have strong parent engagement through our Parent Engagement Group and our school Board, as well as in creating and strengthening partnerships within the wider community.

We have staff meetings each week and support staff meetings once a term which allow staff to have input into school policies, practices, professional development, and the general running of the school. The Leadership Team meets weekly. The student body has a voice through the Student Representative Council. The SRC meets fortnightly with the principal and interview classes for ideas on ways to make the school better as well as discussing other suggestions children might bring to them. They also have the important role of writing the articles for our annual Year 6 Magazine.