



# MacKillop Catholic Primary School Mackay

2021 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**

185

## **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 185 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 and The Arts, and there are many and varied opportunities to be involved in extra-curricular activities such as Eisteddfods, sporting events and carnivals, Rock Pop Mime, Debating and the McDonald's Maths Competition. Learning support programs and extension activities are offered to enhance the curriculum. We usually attend Mass on the first Friday of the month at St Joseph's Church (these have been on hold during covid) as well as hold fortnightly Class Masses at school with the Parish Priest presiding. Student welfare is a priority, and we employ a Counsellor as well as a Chaplain 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](http://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 predominantly a one-stream school. We offer specialist teachers in the curriculum areas of The Arts and Physical Education. 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 such as this that the children develop self-confidence as well as discipline and perseverance skills.
- Instrumental music lessons are offered by Musicorp to students during school hours for individual and/or small group tuition.
- Rock Pop Mime is a cultural event entered by Year 6 students. This provides a showcase of the creative talents of students with music, dance, drama and art.
- Students in Years 5 and 6 attend a school camp. Year 5 have 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 covid and not being able to travel to Canberra.
- 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 have the opportunity to be involved in interschool sport and zone representative sport. The main sports offered include: Rugby League, Netball, Touch Football, Cross Country, Hockey (Weekend), Athletics and Swimming. We also 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 to our Visual Arts lessons where the children's artwork is displayed.
- 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 more than 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 a number of 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 neighbouring Kindergartens with various activities and 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 team-work by asking the children to present their solution to a set problem at a regional gathering of schools. We had two teams compete in the competition in 2021. We also enter two or three teams into the McDonald's Mathematics Competition each year.
- Spiritually, students participate in a variety of class, whole school and parish prayer celebrations and Masses.
- We attend First Friday Mass at St Joseph's once a month and have fortnightly class Masses at School presided over by the Parish Priest. We also work in conjunction with the Parish, to support students and families in their preparation for the Sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and Eucharist. Due to Covid our First Friday Masses have not recommenced to date but our Class Masses are still being held.

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

ICTs are integrated into our teaching and learning. All learning spaces at MacKillop have Interactive Whiteboards and inbuilt sound systems which are used to enhance the teaching and learning process. Each classroom is also 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. Prep and Year 1 classrooms have a set of Bee Bots and resources to utilise with these. We use a variety of devices across the school - Years 1 & 2 utilise iPads; Years 3 - 6 utilise either Chromebooks or laptops. Year 6 have a laptop charging and syncing station in their classrooms which allow them a 1:1 device when required. We also have a set of probots and Edison robots for middle year classes to use. Our ratio of devices to students is at least 1:2.

The school has access to educationally approved/secure Diocesan Links and Portals that provide safe access to educationally approved platforms for learning. We also have a focus that all students in Years 1- 6 are engaged in formal touch typing sessions each week in an effort to prepare students for NAPLAN online. Each class has a Google Classroom page.

## 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 being 'buddied' with an upper year level class. 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.

We utilise the 'Making Jesus Real (MJR) Program' at MacKillop and formally acknowledge MJR moments at assemblies with our MJR awards. Each fortnight students participate in MJR Family Groupings. The children are organised into groups with other family members including siblings and cousins. The groups run fortnightly and focus on a different MJR message each time e.g. - 'Greet, Treat, Speak', 'God Moments' etc.

Our School Counsellor works three days a fortnight 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. In 2021, we also had a School Chaplain at MacKillop 3 days a fortnight which focuses on Student Wellbeing. Our Chaplain supports our MJR Family Groups and also runs the 'Seasons for Growth' program.

## Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

At MacKillop we use a proactive approach to tackle bullying. We have a number of 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. We also send home an electronic version of the Guidelines for parents in the first couple of weeks of school.

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 a number of 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 on an annual basis. Our school behaviour management plan and bullying policies are updated regularly and can be found on our school website.

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 3 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

- 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.
- 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.
- 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, 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.
- Guest speakers and workshops are conducted for parents including a variety of parent-initiated topics to encourage parent engagement.

## Reducing the school's environmental footprint

There are a number of ways we aim to reduce our environmental footprint at MacKillop. We ask 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; as well as emailing newsletters and school fee accounts. 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 will similarly continue to be a

focus in 2022 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 185 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 a number of 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 to name just a few. English is the predominant first language spoken by most students.

### Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2021 was 95.08%.

### 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 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.

## Staffing Information

### Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	16.00	16.00	0.00
Full-time equivalents	13.93	8.79	0.00

### Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	6.25%
Bachelor Degree	93.75%
Diploma	
Certificate	

### Major Professional Development Initiatives

In 2021, 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: Data and Formative Assessment with Guest Speaker Dr Selena Fisk, Grammar workshop with Professor Beryl Exley, Leading

Maths Project Team workshop on Problem Solving, Staff Wellbeing – Be You Surveys, Annual Training in Student Protection, Code of Conduct and WH&S.

The topics for our Religion Inservice day in 2021 were presented by Derek Worden and included: Introduction to the new Religious Education Curriculum, Catholic Social Teachings and Spiritual Formation of Staff. We also had our annual Bishop’s In-service Day. Other Professional Development opportunities included: NCCD Training and Within-school and Across School Moderation, Berry Street Training, Leading Maths Project.

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 \$17,500.

## Average Staff Attendance and Retention

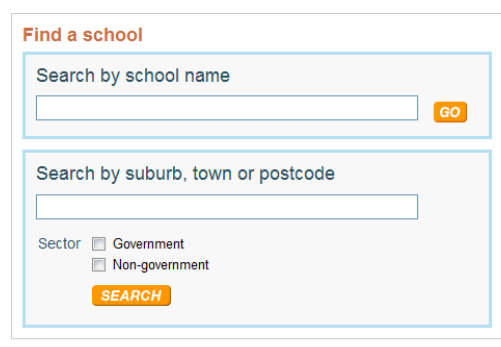
The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 91.44%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 91.080%.

## School Income

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

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



The screenshot shows a search interface titled "Find a school". It contains two search boxes: "Search by school name" with a "GO" button, and "Search by suburb, town or postcode" with a "SEARCH" button. Below the second search box, there are two checkboxes for "Sector": "Government" and "Non-government".

## National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results

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

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

## Key Student Outcomes and Value Added

At MacKillop, we believe that student learning is underpinned by high quality teaching and leadership. Data is used to drive quality teaching practices. Our school uses NAPLAN data, in conjunction with school-based assessment data (formative, summative and diagnostic), in order to make informed decisions about the learning needs of individual students and cohorts of students and to identify areas of need within the school to assist with strategic planning, resourcing and for the provision of relevant and targeted professional development.

In 2021, 64 students in Years 3 and 5 sat the NAPLAN test. Results in Year 5 continue to remain strong with NAPLAN analysis graphs indicating significant growth in the areas of Reading, Language Conventions and Numeracy with increased numbers of students now operating in the top two bands.

In 2020/2021, one of MacKillop's strategic goals was to improve student outcomes in the area of Grammar within writing. Year 5 NAPLAN results from 2019 indicated that only 10% of students were operating at Band 8 in Grammar and Punctuation; compared to 2021 data which indicated an increase with 17% of students working at Band 8 and 23% of students working at Band 7. In 2021 no students were operating in the bottom band, compared with 6% in 2019. The continued focus in the area of Grammar through the use of a whole school Grammar Overview, mentor texts, ongoing Professional Development with leading researchers and a whole school writing data wall with a Grammar focus has seen steady and continued improvement in this area. This saw 95% of Year 5 MacKillop students achieving above the National Minimum Standard in Grammar and Punctuation.

Similarly, in the area of Reading, Year 5 showed significant growth with 3% in the top two bands in 2019 and 25% in the top two bands in 2021. This saw 90% of Year 5 MacKillop students achieving above the National Minimum Standard in Reading. Comparatively, 90% of Year 5 MacKillop students were above the National Minimum Standard in Writing and 97.2% were above in the area of Numeracy.

Whilst Year 3 NAPLAN results fluctuated in 2021, with trend analysis graphs showing a decline in each area; it should be noted that some areas continued to meet National Minimum Standards. 100% of Year 3 students achieving above the National Minimum Standard in the area of writing, with no students in the lowest band and a growth of 48% of students in the middle band as opposed to only 28% of students in the middle band in 2019. Similarly, in the area of Reading, no students were recorded in the lowest band, which was a shift forward from the 2019 data. Upon careful analysis of these results, Reading will become a whole school focus in 2023, with particular emphasis placed on reading in the early years (P-3). PAT-R data collected from the cohort in 2020 and again in 2021 indicated a consistent trend with 2021 NAPLAN results.

## **Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps**

### **Strategic progress in 2021**

#### **Catholic Identity and Ethos**

- *Enhance the school's Catholic identity through a visible expression of our Catholic tradition, Mary MacKillop's spirit of faith and service, and MacKillop's school values.*

Staff participated in PD with Derek Worden (CEDR) on Scripture and prayer within the Catholic tradition, Catholic Social teachings and the pedagogy and practices around the new RE Curriculum. Prep – Year 2 teachers took part in additional PD on the new RE curriculum for their particular year level, via Diocesan meetings.

#### **Effective Teaching and Learning**

- *To continue to develop and enhance students' writing skills through consistent teaching practices based on research.*

Teachers undertook PD with Beryl Exley on the teaching of grammar, leading to the implementation of the whole school grammar and punctuation overview. The school writing data wall was set up to reflect the conventions strand of the Writing Traits (the whole school approach to writing). A pedagogical coaching model was utilised to support teachers in the teaching of grammar. Interschool moderation was undertaken in the area of writing to assist teachers with assessment practices.

- *To enhance all students' deep learning and growth in Mathematics.*

The MacKillop Leading Maths team led the teachers in PD outlining the whole school problem-solving approach. A peer coaching model was adopted to support teachers in the implementation of the multi-step problem solving approach.

#### **Pastoral Support and Wellbeing**

- *To collaboratively develop a school wellbeing Model to support the holistic development of all students.*

The 'Be You' surveys were completed by the school. A well-being team was established and personnel from the 'Be You' organisation met with the team to assist with the 'unpacking' of the findings and to upskill the team in the use of



the 'Be You' resources. The school counsellor/chaplain regularly provides information to parents in the school newsletter regarding the well-being of children. Two staff members undertook training in the 'Berry Street Trauma Aware Practices' program and began to implement relevant strategies.

### **Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing**

- *To enable and develop staff professional growth and accountability for student learning.*

Staff attended PD with Selena Fisk on using and analysing data and formative assessment. Teachers focused on using data to inform teaching in their PLT groups. The school continues to have regular conversations and upskilling around accountability for student learning.

## **Strategic Priorities for 2022**

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, P&F and Board Meetings. Parents are given the opportunity to feedback and suggestions are welcomed and considered. The school priorities are set for a period of three years. These priorities guide the annual goals over this period of time. Regular monitoring of these goals take place in a variety of ways – observations, data gathering, discussions, PLCs, 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 ESCI report and Catholic Education Office initiatives.

Our strategic goals for 2022 are:

### **Catholic Identity and Ethos:**

- *To deepen student's understanding of prayer.*

### **Effective Teaching and Learning:**

- *To improve grammar and spelling within writing.*

### **Pastoral Support and Wellbeing:**

- *To develop a culture of well-being within the school community – students, staff and parents.*

### **Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing:**

- *To use data to reflect on, plan for and improve the learning outcomes of students.*

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

In 2020, 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 overwhelmingly positive, with feedback from staff, parents and students giving a very 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 P&F meetings and use these to inform our annual School Development Plan and school goals. Our external validation also occurred in 2020. During 2022, our school community will again be asked to complete the satisfaction surveys to provide us with updated data.

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 and Friends Association 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 fortnightly which allow staff to have input into school policies, practices, PD and general running of the school. The Leadership Team meets weekly. The SRC meets fortnightly with the Principal and also interview classes for ideas on ways to make the school better as well as discussing other suggestions children might bring to them.