



MacKillop Catholic Primary School Mackay

2023 Annual School Report



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

MacKillop Catholic Primary School, Mackay

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

Principal

Allison Blakey

Address

20 Nadarmi Drive
Andergrove QLD 4740

Total enrolments

163

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 163 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 as of 2024 STEAM. There are also many and varied opportunities to be involved in extra-curricular activities such as Eisteddfod, sporting events and carnivals, Rock Pop Mime, Opti-MINDS and Mackay Primary Schools Mathematics Competition. Learning support programs and extension activities are offered to enhance the curriculum.

We usually attend 2-3 Masses a year at St Joseph's Church as well as hold fortnightly Class Masses at school with the Parish Priest presiding. Student welfare is a priority, and we employ a Counsellor 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.
- 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 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 will attend 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 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.
- 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 60% 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 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 had one team compete in the competition in 2023.
- 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. 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 – Prep, Years 1 & 2 utilise iPads; and Years 3 - 6 utilise Chromebooks. We have a ratio of 1:1 devices for students from Years 1 – 6. We have a set of Pro-Bots for Years 3 to 6 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. 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.

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.

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. 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 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 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 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

- 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 will be reviewing the role of the P&F Association to have a heavier focus on Parent Engagement holding a Parent Engagement session each term with guest speakers.
- 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.
- 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, 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 continued to be a focus in 2023 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 163 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 2023 was 91.85%.

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. Semester absentees are printed on student report cards.

Staffing Information

Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	13.00	16.00	1.00
Full-time equivalents	12.37	9.34	0.53

Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	8%
Bachelor Degree	85%
Diploma	8%
Certificate	

Major Professional Development Initiatives

In 2023, 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: Responsive teaching and Formative assessment with Guest Speaker, Bronwyn Rylie-Jones, Berry Street Training – Body and Relationship Modules over two days with personnel from Berry Street and Trauma- Informed Practices PD led by Erin Sheldrick – supporting the establishment of Welcome Circles and Ready to Learn Scales in classrooms.

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 2023 presented by Michael Fitzpatrick was 'Prayer and Spirituality'. 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 \$24,300.

Average Staff Attendance and Retention

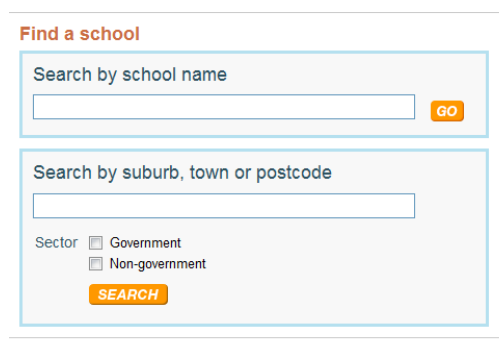
The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 90.19%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 93.33%.

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 radio buttons 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.

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. MacKillop's inclusion of the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) for students with disability, ensures these students receive relevant individual adjustments highlighted on their personalised learning plans, to guarantee necessary supports are in place for students to achieve success. Making informed decisions about the learning needs of individual students and cohorts of students, is essential. Therefore,

along with NAPLAN data, our school uses formative, summative and diagnostic school-based assessment data. This practice helps us to identify areas of need within the school to assist with strategic planning, resourcing and for the provision of relevant and targeted professional development. Scheduled collegial conversations, for purposes such as professional learning, moderation, and planning, provide opportunities for teachers to engage with colleagues both within and outside their school community. In 2023, one of MacKillop's strategic goals was to improve student progress and achievement in reading.

In 2023, 43 students in Years 3 and 5 sat the NAPLAN test. The NAPLAN measurement scale was reset in 2023, resulting in NAPLAN results not being comparable to previous results. Using the new proficiency levels, our Year 3 2023 NAPLAN results indicated that 45% of students were at Strong or Exceeding in Grammar and Punctuation. Year 5 2023 NAPLAN results specified that 52% of students were at Strong or Exceeding in Grammar and Punctuation. Year 3 2023 NAPLAN Numeracy results advised 55% of students were at Strong, whilst Year 5 2023 NAPLAN results indicated 65% of students were at Strong or Exceeding. 2023 NAPLAN Reading results reported 55% of Year 3 students achieved Strong or Exceeding, with 70% of Year 5 students at Strong or Exceeding. 70% of our Year 3 students were at Strong or Exceeding in 2023 NAPLAN Writing, with 39% of Year 5 students at Strong or Exceeding.

Data received from NAPLAN, PAT testing and Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) continues to provide an opportunity to monitor student progress, with one of the 2024 strategic goals being set to improve student progress and achievement in reading through the use of a range of data.

Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

Strategic progress in 2023

Catholic Identity and Ethos

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

In 2023 we continued our focus on the Prayer Renewal Project through staff meetings and with guest speaker Derek Worden from the CEO office. APRE attended 'Creating an Intentional Process for Retreats' workshop and exposed teachers to a variety of meditations to use with their classes. These were also modelled for teachers by Catherine Simmonds from CEO. We revisited our Agreed Shared Practice for Prayer. We also had Prayer as a focus for our Classroom Walkthroughs each term and the APRE included information about prayer in the newsletter.

Effective Teaching and Learning

- *To improve student progress and achievement in reading.*

Teachers undertook various PD sessions with Sandra Comben from CEO and APC including DRA - focusing on administration and interpretation of results and effective reading instruction, and a session on guided reading, shared reading and modelled reading practices. One of our walkthrough visits each term focused on reading. Support was provided to early career teachers through mentoring time to implement effective reading strategies. APC and Principal held discussions with teachers in planning meetings to discuss DRA data and implementation in the classroom. APC and Principal also completed PAT Fundamental Course via ACER. 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. APC supported teachers with administering DRA for their 3 focus students to analyse their data and develop strategies to address students' needs. Reading was our focus for Monitoring, Learning and Growth sessions with other schools.

Pastoral Support and Wellbeing

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

All teachers and teacher assistants attended Berry Street Training in the January Pupil Free Days completing the first 2 domains – Body and Relationships. Welcome Circles and Ready to Learn Scales were implemented in all classrooms. 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 and read to learn scales. 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. A Resilience Project Staff PD Session with guest speaker – Martin Heppell was held. Ready to Learn Plans were trialled by the Leadership team for some individual students.

Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing

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

School TV was introduced 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 etc. We continued providing class newsletters for parents each term. We reviewed our Parent/Teacher interview processes and introduced Parent/Teacher/Student Interviews in early Term One to engage parents and students and discuss student goals for the year. We commenced reviewing the structure of the P&F Association to move towards a Parent Forum model with our first Parent Forum being held early Term Two on Trauma-informed practices with Erin Sheldrick. During Catholic Education Week we held open classrooms where parents were able to visit the classroom and experience a Welcome Circle as well as complete activities with their child/ren. Information was included in the newsletter around Parent Engagement and the importance of it.

Strategic Priorities for 2024

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 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 2024 are:

Catholic Identity and Ethos:

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

Effective Teaching and Learning:

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

Pastoral Support and Wellbeing:

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

Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing:

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

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

In 2022, 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. Parents, staff and students will again complete these surveys in 2024.

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, 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 also interview classes for ideas on ways to make the school better as well as discussing other suggestions children might bring to them.