



# St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School Mackay

2022 Annual School Report



Catholic Education  
Diocese of Rockhampton

# **St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School, Mackay**

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

## **Principal**

Olivia Rostirolla

## **Address**

Corner of Bridge Road and Mackenzie Street  
West Mackay Qld 4740

## **Total enrolments**

569

## **Year levels offered**

Prep – Year 6

## **Type of School:**

Co-educational

## School Overview

St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School is a three-stream, co-educational, Prep to Year Six school adjacent to St Francis Xavier Church in West Mackay. Kindergarten facilities provide a pre-prep program and the strong links between school and Kindergarten ensure successful transitions for our youngest learners. Additionally, Outside School Hours and Vacation Care is available for families of enrolled students. The school was established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1935 and their traditions are embedded in our mission to learn, love, live the Gospel, witness our faith and celebrate life. As a spirit-filled Catholic community, it is acknowledged that a child's education begins at home. As partners in a child's growth and development, members of the school community strive to nurture a learning experience that will prepare them for a full life beyond school. Teachers and students are challenged to serve with humility, act with integrity and pursue excellence in all that they do. Parents are encouraged to continue to engage in their child's learning by being active participants within the school community and building connections with other families and all staff members. St. Francis offers a comprehensive curriculum with specific emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy.

We have an experienced teaching staff, supported by the Principal, Assistants to the Principal in Religion, Curriculum and Administration, a Learning Support teacher and a strong team of support personnel. An extensive building program has resulted in state of the art learning areas with flexible environments for students and staff. Excellent infrastructure ensures that technology integrates seamlessly across the curriculum and is integral to all aspects of learning at St Francis Xavier. The students are also offered specialist lessons in the Arts and Health and Physical Education, and there are many and varied opportunities provided for participation in extra-curricular activities such as Dance Spectacular, Reef Guardian, Making Jesus Real and Cultural clubs as well as sporting events. Student welfare is a priority. The school maintains good behaviour and discipline through their Behaviour Mentoring and Well-being Program (BMW), and a Counsellor is available to provide support for student wellbeing.

More information on our school can be accessed from [myschool.edu.au](http://myschool.edu.au)

## Curriculum Offerings

### Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

St Francis Xavier School is a three-stream Catholic Primary School providing quality education based on Gospel values from Prep to Year 6. As a school founded by the Sisters of Mercy, their values guide all that we do and all that we are.

| Mercy Values   | SFX Virtues | SFX Vision                    | SFX Mission       |
|----------------|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Community      | Love        | Spirit filled faith community | Celebrate life    |
| Spirituality   | Faith       | Nurture the Catholic faith    | Witness our faith |
| Social Justice | Mercy       | Fullness of life              | Live the Gospel   |
| Service        | Excellence  | Pursue excellence in learning | Learn             |

Classes are reconfigured each year to ensure that they are very similar in terms of gender, ability and behaviour. We are committed to the education of the whole child and each student is challenged to reach their full potential in spiritual, academic, cultural, physical, social and emotional areas.

### Extra Curricula Activities

Extra Curricula Activities St Francis Xavier Catholic School promote excellence in teaching and learning. Classrooms are vibrant learning areas, and an exciting curriculum is provided that challenges students to reach their full potential.

**Spirituality:** We embrace the Making Jesus Real way of living, which encourages us to recognise the 'God moments' in our lives and helps us to deepen our relationship with God. Our students participate regularly in school-based masses and prayer celebrations which are meaningful, joyful and reverent. The Mercy charism and values of Faith, Mercy, Excellence and Love are given high priority and we ensure the children and wider community are aware of the founders of our school and the rich legacy they have left us. Each class is rostered for the preparation of school prayer assembly and whole school prayer celebrations e.g., Mothers' and Fathers' Day masses, St Francis' Feast Day.

**Literacy:** The school affords students many and varied opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge in literacy through such events as School based Book Week activities, Premier's Reading Challenge and National Simultaneous Storytime. Our school supports readers by providing them with opportunities such as Natta with Nanna and Read to Rover, for extra practice with their reading and fluency skills. Each year children attend Whitsunday Voices where they are exposed to a variety of well-known authors who speak about and perform their work.

**The Arts:** Our school participates actively in our local Eisteddfod in Verse Speaking and enters a choir in every section so that most students in our school have the opportunity to take part in this experience. Lessons are offered in Keyboard, Woodwind and Strings during school time and these lessons are provided by an external company called MusicCorp. A specialist Arts teacher is employed to ensure the music component of the Arts Curriculum is taught to all levels. The Arts in all its forms is an integral part of the curriculum. Students are able to enter the Annual School Art Competition which is judged by guest artists from the local community. Artwork is proudly added to the gallery in the school's reception area. Rock Pop Mime is offered in the upper school to those who are interested in participating. Children are afforded the opportunity to participate as a singing choir through lunch time practices.

**Sport:** This is well supported in our school, as well as between schools and in local town sporting competitions. Rugby League, Touch Football, Netball, Futsal and athletics are among the sports in which we enter teams to participate in the local schools' competitions.

**Student health** is an important consideration at our school and a 'brain break' takes place in the first session of the day. Healthy snacks are encouraged. Students and the wider community are encouraged to participate in the Walk Safely to School initiative which promotes both the safety and health of students. All participants are provided with a healthy breakfast at the conclusion of the walk.

Our school offers excellent programs in both **Before & After School Care and Vacation Care** to support families.

St Francis Xavier has an active Student Council guided by dedicated and enthusiastic teachers. Our Student Council exists to be of service to others. House Spirit is fostered through the promotion of kind acts, good manners, participation in community events etc. and recognised through the earning of house points. The House Spirit trophy is awarded at the end of the year to the team with the most accumulated points.

Students in our Senior classes are encouraged to participate in the English and Maths ICAS competitions. We took two teams to the Schools Mathematics competition where problem solving tasks were the focus. The children of these classes are involved in a number of Parish activities such as visits to St Francis of Assisi Aged Care Home. Students' learning is enriched through opportunities such as Optiminds (our school competed in the State Finals) and the Early Learning Program offered by Mercy College (high school).

Lunch time activities are offered to children wishing to add variety to their lunch time choices. Activities such as Lego, STEM/Robotics, Art and story reading in the library are on offer. Our children with special learning needs are offered the option of attending an after-school homework program once a week, to assist in their learning. Book Swap, which occurs one week per term, has been introduced to promote reading. Children are encouraged to bring along books that they no longer read and swap for a new book. At the end of the year our librarian identifies those children from each class who have borrowed the most throughout the year and recognizes their efforts with a trophy.

Our school proudly supports the local tradition of marching in the city's ANZAC Day March each year and is always represented by a large number of students with great support from the staff and parent body.

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

At St Francis Xavier School, we believe Technology and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) play a key role in developing successful learners who are innovative, enterprising and able to make discerning and ethical decisions. As Technology continues to evolve, our challenge is to develop learners who can adapt to and critically examine influences on ideas, opportunities and actions in everyday life. We also believe, students need to be armed with the skills to efficiently implement the use of technological devices to enhance employability at the conclusion of their time at school. To achieve this, the school provides a mobile laptop trolley that classes are able to access.

Our Years 4 - 6 students participate in a 1:1 iPad program. Preps to Year 2 have access to iPads to accommodate group work. A class set of iPads is available to each Year 3 class enabling smooth transition to the 1:1 program. Every classroom has an Interactive Whiteboard and teachers also have laptops and iPad access. SeeSaw (Prep to Year 1) and Google Classroom (Year 2 – Year 6) are learning platforms that we use to enhance student learning. These learning platforms also allow classroom teachers to create partnerships between school and home. Parents are able to view what their child is learning and have conversations at home. These platforms were utilised to great effect when our school went to online learning in Term 2 of 2020. Robotics and STEM are offered as a lunch time activity as well as being utilised during Digital Technology lessons in class time. Our learners are provided with learning environments that help develop their curiosity and critical thinking skills.

## **Social Climate**

### **Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture**

As a Catholic school we believe that the teaching of Religion is of utmost importance. We enjoy a positive relationship with parish and strongly support the Sacramental development of students and other school/parish social functions. A number of our school staff, including the Leadership Team, are involved in the ministries of the church and attend special events and masses organised by the various parish committees.

St Francis Xavier School employs a School Counsellor for four days each week to support students and families. She also offers parenting tips as well as parent workshops. The school Counsellor works very closely with the Leadership team and teachers in regard to behaviour management and well-being. They work collaboratively to promote the positive mental health of our students.

Our Behaviour Management and Well-Being Program is not a set of rules. It is a positive attitude, building resilience, making positive choices and ensuring all students have an opportunity to learn. Our school promotes the anti-bullying message and strongly supports National Day Against Bullying and Violence which is held in March each year. Children participate in activities and make a commitment to not tolerate bullying. We advocate to children to 'be an up-stander not a by-stander'.

St Francis Xavier School is an inclusive school. All enrolments are individually considered as to how St Francis Xavier is able to support the child's development. The welfare of all families in the school is important. Awareness is raised and fundraising occurs to support those in our community who have special needs. E.g., raising funds for families in need, adopt-a-family, Street Swags, ANZAC Care packages, St Vincent de Paul Christmas appeal. We also hold a Christmas morning tea for the senior citizens of our Parish community.

### **Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies**

ICTs are an integral part of student learning at St Francis Xavier; therefore, the school has a duty of care towards all to provide cyber safety and anti-bullying strategies and personal development opportunities for both students and staff. The school also participates in and fully supports the National Day Against Bullying & Violence each year. Day for Daniel is an annual event and supports the Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum which is implemented in all classes. 2022 saw a visit from Bruce and Denise Morcombe where their message of Recognise, React and Report was reinforced.

Our school has an ICT Code of Conduct that sets clear guidelines for the use of IT. Our Year 2 and 3 classes participate in Safety Circus which is initiated by the Mackay Police. All year levels from Years 2 to 6 are involved in cyber safety and digital footprint talks with our local police officers. Diocesan and school-based policies give guidance when handling these issues. We use Facebook to advertise appropriate anti-bullying books parents may like to purchase and information they can use.

### **Strategies for involving parents in their child's education**

St Francis Xavier School has an active P&F Association which offers support to the school particularly in regard to funding and community building. Our School has a Board which provides very strong support to our community in terms of maintaining policies as well as the integrity and special religious character of St Francis Xavier. Following Parent Information sessions for each year level in February, our school offers interviews for parents at the end of Term One and Term Three and written Reports at the end of Terms Two and Four each year.

St Francis Xavier School has an open-door policy, where parents are welcomed and encouraged to be actively engaged in the school community in a wide variety of ways, depending on their time, talents and interests. Our Catholic Education Week open afternoon, School Camps, Sporting Teams, Sports Days, Tuckshop, Discos and Classroom Helpers are but a few of the ways parents support our school through working with the children and financially assisting us.

SeeSaw and Google Classroom platforms allow our parents to have access into what their children are learning or focusing on for specific subjects. Regular articles in the school newsletter focusing on specific topics e.g., spelling, writing, Mathematics allow our parent community to gain further insight into what is happening in each year level. Information sessions are also included in our P & F meetings and Board meetings.

## Reducing the school's environmental footprint

Classrooms have environmental paper bins that are then emptied into Council recycling bins. Students engage with this topic in various year levels as a part of the curriculum. Our classes are encouraged to turn off lights and fans at each lunch break. It is also encouraged that air conditioners are not used during Term 2 and Term 3.

We are a Reef Guardian School, with a teacher implementing and leading awareness initiatives across the school to educate students on becoming stewards of the earth. Under the Reef Guardian Program, students across various years continue to educate our students about the 10-cent recycling bin to be used during our lunch breaks. Year 5 students take on the leadership role of monitoring these bins and ensuring the students are placing the correct items into the yellow bins.

Each year our Prep classes plant a vegetable garden without the use of chemicals. The produce is then given to the tuckshop. The Reef Guardian leaders introduced 'Mindful Mondays' whereby all families were educated on how to reduce rubbish by packing lunches that didn't require packaging. Each year level also collects food scraps from morning tea and these scraps are added to the compost bins as well as some scraps are given to our chickens.

The school's OSHC program embraces the reduction of the school's footprint through practices such as a worm farm, a compost bin and natural gardening. The educators also inform children of healthy foods and good environmental practices.

## Characteristics of the Student Body

Families attending St Francis Xavier School come from a variety of backgrounds. Some are second and third generation attendees at the school. Families with children attending St Francis Xavier come from diverse backgrounds. Over the last 5 or so years our school has been blessed in welcoming a large number of families whose backgrounds are of a multicultural nature. English is the first language of the majority of students at St Francis Xavier. In recent years, due to an influx of overseas medical professionals and being located near the Mackay Base Hospital, our school has enjoyed an increased enrolment of children from various cultures and provision is made for those whose English is a second language. We have a large number of our families who are dependent upon the mining industry. These families experience work commitments of long hours, shift work or being away for extended periods on mining sites. Most students from St Francis Xavier continue their secondary schooling at Catholic schools in Mackay.

### Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2022 was 90.74%.

### Management of non-attendance

A text is sent to all parents for unexplained absences. Those parents who do not respond receive a phone call. The school is also bound by Student Protection legislation and may need to follow-up student absences in line with these legislative requirements.

## Staffing Information

### Workforce Composition

| Workforce Composition | Teaching Staff | Non-Teaching Staff | Indigenous Staff |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Headcounts            | 41.00          | 41.00              | 1.00             |
| Full-time equivalents | 33.20          | 24.49              | 1.00             |

### Qualifications of all teachers

| Qualification – highest level of attainment | Percentage of staff with this Qualification |
|---|---|
| Doctoral / Post-doctoral                    |   |

|                 |        |
|-----------------|--------|
| Masters         | 5.71%  |
| Bachelor Degree | 88.57% |
| Diploma         |        |
| Certificate     |        |

## Major Professional Development Initiatives

- Bishop's Inservice Day
- Mandatory Inductions (WHS, Code of Conduct, ICT Code of Practice)
- Student Protection Training – Mara O'Reilly
- Disability Discrimination Act & Disability Standards – Lesleigh Hicks
- Literacy Blocks and Reading– Sandra Comben
- Religion Curriculum and Christian Meditation – Derek Worden
- Science and Creation – Kristin Honeyball
- Leading Mathematics Team Project – team of 3 teachers and APC
- Improving Spelling through Inquiry based learning – Sandra Comben
- Trauma Informed Practices – Erin Sheldrick
- Berry Street Training (attended in Rockhampton with key staff members)
- NCCD Portal and Requirements – Brendan Clews
- Reconciliation Action Plan for SFX – Karlie Tatchell
- v9 Australian Curriculum Walk Through – Sandra Comben

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 \$64,600.

## 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 88.46%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 94.87%.

## School Income

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

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

**Find a school**

Search by school name

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Sector  Government  
 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

The data gained from 2021 NAPLAN assisted the school to discuss short and long term curriculum goals. Upon reflection, the school continued reviewing its English program to develop consistency across the year levels. We continued to implement CEO initiatives that provided a range of good teaching practices and structures to enhance reading across the school.

The continuation of Chris Topfer’s Spelling Model and Analysis across the whole school promoted consistency in this area. Students continue to be added to the Literacy Intervention Program. A Data Wall continues to be used to monitor children’s progress and to inform teachers’ planning. This data is used to inform guided reading practices and address students’ individual reading needs which are derived from individual reading goals.

Each year level is encouraged to meet regularly to both plan and moderate student learning. Student progress is monitored across various aspects of Literacy (oral language, spelling, reading). NAPLAN results showed great improvement across the school.

Our children who have diagnoses, learning difficulties or physical disabilities are supported through the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD). These children are assisted in their ability to achieve successively through adjustments teachers make to their programming.

## Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

### Strategic progress in 2022

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. <b>Catholic Identity</b></p>    | <p>1. <b>Effective Teaching and Learning</b><br/>(NSIT Domains 2,5,6,7,8)</p>                |
| <p><b>PRIORITY</b></p> <p>1.1 To embed and align Catholic Social Teaching and the Mercy charism throughout the Curriculum and the Teaching and Learning Framework.</p>             | <p><b>GOAL</b></p> <p>Through dialogue, create opportunities for students to have a deeper understanding of why/how social justice and Catholic tradition are interconnected.</p> |
| <p>1. <b>Pastoral Support and Wellbeing</b><br/>(NSIT Domain 3)</p>                             | <p>1. <b>Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing</b> (NSIT Domains 1,4,9)</p>                |
| <p><b>PRIORITY</b></p> <p>3.1 Based on the Diocesan Wellbeing Framework implement a student wellbeing program that focuses on each child being the best version of themselves.</p> | <p><b>GOAL</b></p> <p>To enhance student wellbeing through a greater understanding of how trauma impacts students’ lives.</p>   |
| <p><b>PRIORITY</b></p> <p>4.1 To enhance and develop parent and community partnerships to improve student learning.</p>  | <p><b>GOAL</b></p> <p>To gain awareness of the importance of sustainability practices.</p>  |

**1.1 Target:** No target set – Dialogue conversations were begun

**Progress:**

- Pupil Free Day was spent focussing on the new curriculum, importance of dialogue and adjustments to RE lessons)
- Prayer table expectations were explored with staff.
- The dialogue triangle was displayed in the staffroom and referred to during Religion PD.
- A staff meeting was held to explain social justice and classroom tasks that linked to the school goal.
- A Professional Learning Team (PLT) meeting was held to view and analyse data collected from student responses based around social justice tasks.

**2.1 Target:** By the end of 2022 reduce the lowest band by 4% in Year 3 and Year 5 NAPLAN Spelling results.

**Progress:**

- Presented the spelling goal and the why (rationale) at a staff meeting.
- Think Tank with Consultant around PLT processes.
- Engaged Consultant to present at a staff meeting and started to plant the seed for our Shared Agreed Practices for Spelling.
- Consultant attended first PLT meetings.
- Staff meetings - teachers shared spelling strategies they are using in the classroom
- Consultant visited classrooms (how are teachers talking about a repertoire of spelling strategies)
- Spelling Agreed Practices created as a staff.

**2.2 Target:** By the end of October 2022 each year level (Years 3-6) will have progressed at least by (6-7) scale points as measured by the median score (Progress). Less than 5 students are below baseline data by the end of the year.

**Progress:**

- Looked and analysed the reading data each class/year level in the first PLT meeting (set key questions to direct their attention - what's working well? what surprises you? what do we need to focus on?)
- Staff meeting – teachers brought data to share with colleagues (from PLT meeting).
- Visited the 'why' based around the school goal and target.
- Professional readings during PLT meetings.
- Consultant visited in Term Two to develop comprehension strategies for reading.
- Created Shared Agreed Practices for Spelling with staff.

**3.1 Target:** By the end of 2022 reduce pastoral care referrals from Semester 1 to Semester 2 by 5%.

**Progress:**

- Engaged with Diocesan Student Wellbeing Coordinator to explain the why behind the trauma informed practice during the Pupil Free Days. Olivia presented data.
- Assistant Principal introduced 'Welcome Circles' to the teaching staff and teachers followed through with implementing it in each classroom.
- A yearly audit was set to identify specific topics to be addressed based around the topic area.
- Education around Trauma Informed Practices for the Board and P&F.
- Regular articles were added to the weekly newsletter.

**4.1 Target:** No target set – inventory of what the school currently does with a view to building upon practices

**Progress:**

- Principal from another region was contacted about sustainability processes at his school.
- Assembly presentation by Reef Guardian Team (why are we recycling cans etc.)
- Created a visual diagram so students can see what difference/change they are making with recycling (thermometer).
- Introduced 'nude' food days to the school (wheelie bin cut out to show students across a week, how much rubbish they have used etc.)
- class captains were responsible for lights/fans being turned off (created a visual).

## Strategic Priorities for 2023

The school's strategic priorities and goals are relayed to the parent body in a variety of ways – newsletter, Facebook, sign off on emails, displayed in office area. They are also shared at a Board level. 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 and PAT results (Priority 2.1), the ESCI report (Priority 1.1) and Catholic Education Office initiatives (Priority 3.1 & 4.1).

### St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School



### Strategic Priorities for 2023

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <b>1. Catholic Identity</b>                                  |   | <b>2. Effective Teaching and Learning</b><br>(NSIT Domains 2,5,6,7,8)      |   |
| PRIORITY  | GOAL  | PRIORITY  | GOAL  |
| 1.1 To embed and align Catholic Social Teaching and the Mercy charism throughout the curriculum and the Teaching and Learning Framework.      | To continue developing student awareness of Catholic Social Teachings and how they relate them to the opportunities provided by the school. | 2.1 To create a culture of data informed practices where every student is engaged and learning successfully in their own ways.                                | To improve student learning outcomes in writing.<br><br>To strengthen student learning outcomes in Mathematics. |
| <b>3. Pastoral Support and Wellbeing</b><br>(NSIT Domain 3)  |   | <b>4. Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing</b><br>(NSIT Domains 1,4,9)  |   |
| PRIORITY  | GOAL  | PRIORITY  | GOAL  |
| 3.1 To implement a student wellbeing program that focuses on each child being the best version of themselves.                                 | To strengthen student ability to regulate their emotions.   | 4.1 To enhance and develop parent and community partnerships to improve student learning.   | To engage parents in the ability to understand and apply strategies to regulate their children's emotions.      |

## Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

For the school to continue to grow and meet the needs of the community we constantly seek feedback on school processes, procedures and events. P&F meetings are one way in which the parent body can make recommendations or commendations regarding the school. The student body has a voice through the Student Council. The Student Council meets regularly to discuss matters and lead school initiatives. The school utilises Satisfaction Surveys to help guide school priorities.

We also create Google forms for parents asking for input into policies and Curriculum matters. Staff members are given the opportunity to bring matters of importance to the attention of all in staff meetings via Productive Chatter. One dedicated staff meeting per term is conducted as an open forum to enable teachers the liberty to raise questions regarding school in general.