



# St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School Mackay

2020 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**

554

## **Year levels offered**

Prep to 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 Physical Education, and there are many and varied opportunities provided for participation in extra-curricular activities from eisteddfods to sporting carnivals. Student welfare is a priority. The school maintains good behaviour and discipline through a program of responsible thinking, 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.

<b>Mercy Values</b>	<b>SFX Virtues</b>	<b>SFX Vision</b>	<b>SFX Mission</b>
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

St Francis Xavier Catholic School promotes 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. 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 the students many and varied opportunities to extend their skills and knowledge in literacy through such events as Whitsunday Voices, School based Book Week activities, & Premier's Reading

Challenge. Eisteddfod Participation: 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.

The Arts: Lessons are offered in Keyboard, Woodwind and Strings during school time and these lessons are provided by an external company called Music Corp. A specialist Music 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. Art work is proudly added to the gallery in the school's reception area. Lunch time activities include an Art session where children are able to participate. 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 and athletics are among the sports in which we enter teams to participate in the local schools' competitions.

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.

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. 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 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. We introduced our Read to Rover program in 2016. This is specifically for those children who struggle with reading confidence. They are placed on a roster to read to our pre-selected dogs and their owners. 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. Towards the end of 2020 we introduced the initiative of 'Natter to Nana', for those children who need support with their reading as well as providing a listening ear for children who are a little anxious and perhaps do not have a 'grandma' figure in their lives. Many of our parent supported activities were postponed due to the COVID pandemic.

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

At St Francis Xavier School, we believe Technology and 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 whole 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 and Science based lessons in the classroom. 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 three 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. Our school has an ICT Code of Conduct that sets clear guidelines for the use of IT. Our Adopt-a-Cop speaks regularly to the students with regard to Cyber Safety and their Digital Footprint. Our Year 3 classes participate in Safety Circus which is initiated by the Mackay police. 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 not be used during Term 2 and Term 3. We are also a Reef Guardian School, with a group of teachers 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 year levels introduced 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 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 2020 was 96.42%.

### **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	35.00	37.00	1.00
Full-time equivalents	30.00	22.93	1.00

### **Qualifications of all teachers**

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	2.86%
Bachelor Degree	91.43%
Diploma	5.71%
Certificate	

### **Major Professional Development Initiatives**

- Bishop's Inservice Day
- Making Jesus Real (MJR) (Pupil Free Day)
- Mandatory Inductions (WHS, Code of Conduct, Child Protection, ICT Code of Practice) (Pupil Free Day)
- Writing (Pupil Free Day)
- Spelling and Word Study Twilight Meeting

- Mathematics: Delve for Twelve (Year Level Meetings and Staff Meeting)
- DRA PD (Staff Meeting)
- Oral Language (Staff Meeting and P-2 Year Level Meeting)
- Professional Learning Plans (Staff Meeting)
- BE You (September Pupil Free Day)
- School Priorities, Goals and Targets (September Pupil Free Day)
- NCCD Training and Moderation – small team sent to training
- Student Protection Training – Term 3 (Student Protection Contacts)

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 \$ 80,000.

### Average Staff Attendance and Retention

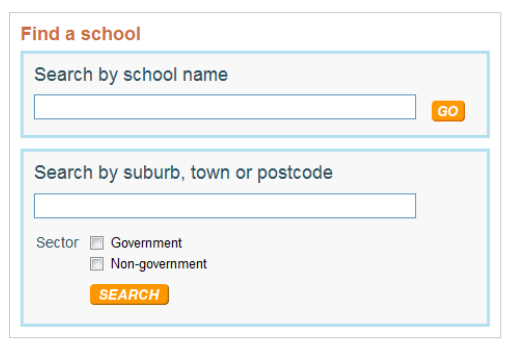
The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 90.01 %.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 90.74 %

## 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

In 2020, NAPLAN did not proceed as a result of the disruptions caused by COVID-19. Previous NAPLAN results 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

NAPLAN did not take place due to COVID 19.

# Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

## Strategic progress in 2020

<b>Catholic Identity and Ethos</b> (ECSIP) 	<b>Effective Teaching and Learning</b> (NSIT Domains 2,5,6,7,8) 
<p><b>1.1</b> 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> To educate our school community on who the founders of our school are and what values they have imparted.</p>	<p><b>2.1</b> That our school has a culture of data informed practice where every student is engaged and learning successfully in their own ways.</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> To embed 6 + 1 Writing Traits to improve student writing.</p> <p>To plan and deliver deep learning opportunities in Mathematics enabling students to become proficient in problem solving strategies and terminology.</p>
<b>Pastoral Support and Wellbeing</b> (NSIT Domain 3) 	<b>Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing</b> (NSIT Domains 1,4,9) 
<p><b>3.1</b> 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> To identify and enhance the wellbeing of students through the introduction of the BE YOU program (which is under the umbrella of the Diocesan Wellbeing Framework) to the school community.</p>	<p><b>4.1</b> To enhance and develop parent and community partnerships to improve student learning.</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> To educate parents, teachers and students on our school priorities and annual goals.</p>

- Developing the school Teaching and Learning Framework.**  
 The process of continuing to develop the writing of the T & L Framework was led by the APC and Curriculum Review Committee. Aspects of the Framework (Learner Dispositions, Subject Areas and Mindset Priorities) were introduced to the staff and their input was given to assist in developing the document. Leadership also collaborated on developing certain aspects as well as making necessary decisions for the process to move forward.
- Transitioning 2021 Prep Cohort through a series of visits to the school.**  
 2020 saw the continuation of 4 transition sessions for the 2021 Prep cohort. This replaced our usual practice of one orientation session. The extra times have continued to provide and benefit not only the children, where familiarity gave added confidence, but also the parents who attended 3 sessions on preparing their child for the beginning of their school life. These sessions were presented by the school counsellor and were well received.
- Create Learner Dispositions that are linked with the School Teaching and Learning Framework**  
 At St Francis Xavier, we want our students to own their learning, to develop qualities in order for them to be successful learners and to ensure that they establish transferable skills and competencies that will enable them to face their changing future with confidence. These qualities are known as **Learner Dispositions** – the language of learning and refer to the way in which learners engage in and relate to the learning process.
- The **Delve for Twelve** process in Mathematics has been implemented in curriculum planning to allow for students to delve deeper into Mathematical topics to gain a better understanding of what they are learning rather than just touching on the surface of the topic.

2020 was a difficult year to work consistently on our school goals. COVID played a big part in this. Visitors were unable to enter the school grounds and therefore, guest speakers who were invited to present the initial professional development for some of our goals were unable to attend.

We experienced some success in the following 2020 goals:







- 1.1 The school purchased Catherine McAuley story books and these were read to the students along with completing Catherine McAuley activities during Catholic Education Week. The school's APRE hired an advertising company to commence planning to make a film of the history of the Sisters of Mercy at our school.
- 1.2 Pre COVID shutdown, CEO personnel John Campbell, presented a workshop to staff on Delve for Twelve. He also worked with each year level to look at Mathematics planning. While he was unable to return to our school for follow up meetings, teachers were tasked to continue with the strategies that they were exposed to in the initial meetings.
- 1.4 This was our most successful goal. Information regarding our priorities and goals were disseminated in the following ways.
- Weekly Newsletters
  - Board and P & F meetings
  - Included as part of our signoff in emails
  - Displayed in the office

We believe that this goal was completed successfully and will provide a way forward with for all new priorities and goals.

## Strategic Priorities for 2021

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 results (Priority 2.1), the ESCI report (Priority 1.1) and Catholic Education Office initiatives (Priority 3.1 & 4.1).

Catholic Identity and Ethos	 <b>Effective Teaching and Learning</b> (NSIT Domains 2,5,6,7,8) 
<p><b>1.1</b> 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> To educate our school community on who the founders of our school are and what values they have imparted.</p>	<p><b>2.1</b> That our school has a culture of data informed practice where every student is engaged and learning successfully in their own ways.</p> <p><b>Goal/s:</b> To embed 6 + 1 Writing Traits to improve student writing.</p> <p>To plan and deliver deep learning opportunities in Mathematics enabling students to become proficient in problem solving strategies and terminology.</p>
<b>Pastoral Support and Wellbeing</b> (NSIT Domain 3) 	<b>Leadership, Partnerships and Resourcing</b> (NSIT Domains 1,4,9) 
<p><b>3.1</b> 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> To identify and enhance the wellbeing of students through the BE YOU program (which is under the umbrella of the Diocesan Wellbeing Framework) to the school community.</p>	<p><b>4.1</b> To enhance and develop parent and community partnerships to improve student learning.</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> To inform our parent body about our spelling practices and changes to spelling homework.</p>

## 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 process, 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 meet regularly to discuss matters and lead school initiatives. The school has developed a Community Feedback form which allows all members of the community an opportunity to make recommendations and commendations on school events and processes. Staff members are given the opportunity to bring matters of importance to the attention of all in staff meetings and via the Feedback process and Productive Chatter. At least 2 staff meeting per term are devoted to teacher feedback and actions taken by leadership due to this feedback.