

# Annual School Report 2021 School Year

St Xavier's Primary School, Gunnedah



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Principal  
Jennifer Honner

## About this report

St Xavier's Primary School is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The report also outlines to the school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school Annual Improvement Plan.

The report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the CSO. This report, approved by the CSO, monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NESA requirements for Registration.

This report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. It is available on both school and CSO websites by 30 June 2022 following its submission to NESA.

The contents of this report may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums, including the School Advisory Council meetings and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6742 1136 or by visiting the school's [website](#).



## **1.0 Messages**

### **1.1 Principal's Message**

There were many people who assisted in the development of the school as a Catholic learning community. In particular, special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St Xavier's Primary School is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

St Xavier's Primary School is a Catholic professional learning community which has a universal and unconditional positive regard for the children attending the school and a high regard for the collective capacity of the staff team to increase the faith, learning and well-being outcomes for students.

St Xavier's has explicit and clear targets for improvement. Shared beliefs and understandings have created a common language, particularly around numeracy and literacy. Every child can learn, given the right time and the right support. Students in K-2 are targeted to give them the best start possible. The classrooms are fine examples of the co-teaching models which cultivate an authentic collaborative culture.

The Growing Strong Minds framework has been implemented throughout the school and teaches valuable social emotional skills. This framework, along with the Living Well, Learning Well framework, is a cultural shift, where well-being underpins all aspects of the school. Learning and well-being go hand in hand at St Xavier's.

The school has a proud history of sporting achievement and participation with a high degree of representation in athletics, swimming, rugby league, rugby union, netball and many other sports at local, regional and state levels. St Xavier's plays an integral role in the community through participation in, and promotion of, community organisations and annual events. St Xavier's is heavily represented in local cultural celebrations with the Eisteddfod and Massed Choir being highlights of the school calendar.

Jennifer Honner  
Principal

### **1.2 A Parent Message**

The School Advisory Council meets once a term with the Annual General Meeting taking place in November. The Council consists of the chairperson, parish priest, Principal, Assistant Principal, P&F representative and parents. The Council is responsible for reviewing the budget set by the Principal each year, overseeing changes in policies and the continuing maintenance of the school. The combined St. Mary's College and St. Xavier's P&F Association meets on the third Tuesday of each month. A combination of parents from both schools attends these meetings. The school gets a great deal of support from parents for fund-raising and social activities. During 2021, a few events were held during periods when COVID-19 was not as prevalent. Both schools received a large donation from the P&F. This money is going towards a chilled bubbler for the new sports court.

Lisa Davis  
Chairperson  
School Advisory Council

## **2.0 This Catholic School**

### **2.1 The School Community**



St Xavier's Primary School is located in Gunnedah and is part of the St Joseph's Parish which serves the communities of Mullaley, Boggabri, Carroll and Curlewis, from which the school families are drawn. Last year the school celebrated 143 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest, Father Abmar, is involved in the life of the school.

## 2.2 Catholic Life and Religious Education

St Xavier's Primary School follows the Armidale Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student text *To Know, Worship and Love*, as authorised by the Bishop of Armidale, Michael Kennedy.

Whilst it is customary to attend regular stage masses for primary and liturgies for infants children in the church, these celebrations were halted during COVID-19. In addition, the tradition of inviting the parish priest to visit a grade each week was also put on hold. The Opening School Mass was celebrated in the large open hall where all leaders for 2021 were inducted and received their badges.

Student Faith Formation one day retreat programs were run for students in Years 2, 3 and 6. Staff met for prayer on a weekly basis. The school ran a Lenten Program for staff, who attended on a voluntary basis.

Students in Year 6 in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Armidale undertake the Diocesan Religious Education (RE) Test annually. The test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions.

Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education.

Our School's average result (as a mark out of 30)	
Year 6	23

## 2.3 School Enrolment

St Xavier's Primary School caters for children from Years K to 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

	Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	TOTAL 2021	TOTAL 2020
<b>Male</b>	20	34	23	25	34	29	18	183	193
<b>Female</b>	29	27	20	34	26	23	32	191	189
<b>Totals</b>	49	61	43	59	60	52	50	374	382

## 2.4 Student Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is important that they attend school regularly. Whilst it is the parents' legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care monitor attendance each day. The Class Roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each week by the Principal or their delegate. The college uses the attendance coding system adopted in all NSW schools. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by staff. Parents are requested to provide a satisfactory explanation for an absence by means such as a written note, telephone call, SMS message or email to the school, preferably on the first day of absence and certainly within seven



days. The Principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations, the Principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases, students and their parents meet with the Principal to discuss the leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2021 is shown in the following table.

	Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All Years
<b>Average Student Attendance Rates</b>	92.0%	92.0%	93.0%	93.0%	92.0%	93.0%	92.0%	92.4%

### **Managing Student non-attendance**

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The school, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.
- monitoring engagement of individual students in their learning and identifying strategies to enhance engagement.
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance.
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance.
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented.
- intervention strategies for students with unsatisfactory attendance may include academic case management, social case management, referral to counselling and parent/carer involvement.
- the Director of Catholic Schools or designated Catholic Schools Office Armidale officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom previous strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

When the Catholic Schools Office Armidale is notified of a student for whom chronic non attendance is an issue and previous strategies have failed, the Principal and the System Performance Leader will convene a meeting with the family, the student, and other agencies if required, to develop a Return to School Plan.

## **2.5 Staff Profile and Teacher Standards**

<b>Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile</b>	<b>Number of Teachers</b>
1. Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Provisional or Conditional level.	4



Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile	Number of Teachers
2. Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Proficient level.	26
3. Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Highly Accomplished level.	0
4. Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Lead level.	0
5. Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.	24
6. Number of staff identifying as Indigenous employed at the school.	0
7. Total number of non-teaching staff employed at the school.	5

## 2.6 Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. We want every student to understand and appreciate that they are part of both the school and the local community. The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

- The diocese has developed a framework called Living Well, Learning Well. This framework is based on three beliefs: that children are safe, respected, valued and cared for and that they are learners. All intervention and support strategies are aligned with these beliefs.
- Growing Strong Minds is a framework that is based on character strengths and the development of these strengths in the students.
- Positive education has the best outcomes when it is implemented as a whole school approach incorporating explicit and implicit teachings. The implications of this are that the well-being of the whole school community, including teachers, ancillary staff, parents and students, is encouraged to thrive.
- The Taking Responsibility Programme (TRP) is about helping students to make quality choices. When students are able to take responsibility for their behaviour there are a number of positive spin-offs for both students and school. These can include:
  - a positive school and classroom environment
  - friendly, respectful relationships with others
  - the ability for students to think before acting
  - a safe environment
  - the ability to self-regulate behaviour
- Involvement in the programme can mean:
  - follow-up and follow-through of behaviour issues
  - clear guidelines and boundaries
  - targeted problem-solving; students look at the why and how of their behaviour and actions and are shown strategies to help them take responsibility and make sensible, thoughtful choices
  - an individual approach as opposed to "one size fits all" approach

## 2.7 Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the



School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

### **Parent Satisfaction**

This parent satisfaction survey was undertaken in October. Invitations containing a link to the on line survey instrument were sent to all parents. The survey remained open for 14 days. Parents who had not completed the survey were sent a reminder three days before the survey closed. Of the 311 parents invited, 142 completed the survey (46% completion rate is considered very good).

Parents were asked to express their satisfaction in response to a number of statements. Their responses were scored as follows:

Strongly Agree 3, Agree 2, Disagree 1, Strongly Disagree 0

Out of the 28 responses the school received 24 Strongly Agree and four Agree responses.

### **Student Satisfaction**

The student satisfaction survey was undertaken in October. Of the 161 students surveyed, 113 completed the survey (70% completion rate is considered excellent).

Students were asked to express their satisfaction in response to a number of statements. Their responses were scored as follows:

Strongly Agree 3, Agree 2, Disagree 1, Strongly Disagree 0

Out of the 22 responses made by the students, 21 were Strongly Agree and one was Agree.

### **Staff Satisfaction**

The staff satisfaction survey was undertaken in September. Invitations containing a link to the online survey instrument were sent to all staff. The survey remained open for 14 days. Staff who had not completed the survey were sent a reminder three days before the survey closed.

Staff were asked to express their satisfaction in response to a number of statements. Their responses were scored as follows:

Strongly Agree 3, Agree 2, Disagree 1, Strongly Disagree 0

Out of the 46 responses received there were 42 Strongly Agree and four Agree responses.

## **3.0 Teaching and Learning**

### **3.1 School Curriculum**

The school provides an educational program based on and taught in accordance with the NESA syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. In addition, the school implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office Armidale.

Religious Education in Catholic schools is a mandatory KLA included in the curriculum for students in each year group. St Xavier's Primary School is committed to providing a quality education that meets the needs of all students.

St Xavier's Primary School has explicit and clear targets for improvement. Shared beliefs and understandings have created a common language particularly around Maths and English. The school timetable exposes children to the allocated times set down for each Key Learning Area. Opportunities for differentiation exist in every learning sequence.



Teachers worked collaboratively throughout the year to co-plan, co-teach, co-assess, co-report and reflect on the teaching and learning. The school uses data to inform all of its practice. Data includes results from SENA (Numeracy), PM Reading Benchmarks, NAPLAN, PAT Testing, Year 6 state wide Religious Education Test, student attendance and A-E Reporting.

Students have the opportunity to be part of the St Xavier's Brass Band, and dance group. Children participate in the Gunnedah Eisteddfod and there are numerous opportunities to play a variety of sports.

## **3.2 Student Performance in National Testing Programs**

### **3.2.1 NAPLAN**

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 61 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 56 students.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data and space and geometry.

In both Year 3 and Year 5 there are six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages.

At St Xavier's Primary School, school and student performance are closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office information sessions on NAPLAN and Data Analysis.

The following data indicates the percentage of St Xavier's Primary School students in each band compared to the State percentage.





Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy												
Percentage of students in Bands 1 to 6												
BAND	6		5		4		3		2		1	
	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School
<b>Reading</b>	21.5	12.3	22.0	22.8	19.1	19.3	12.8	12.3	7.8	7.0	2.6	5.3
<b>Writing</b>	20.2	19.3	37.0	35.1	23.0	26.3	9.0	8.8	4.3	7.0	1.9	3.5
<b>Spelling</b>	23.1	5.4	23.4	30.4	20.2	28.6	13.0	12.5	6.5	10.7	4.6	5.4
<b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>	22.3	12.5	24.1	23.2	19.4	28.6	10.4	7.1	6.4	7.1	4.4	5.4
<b>Numeracy</b>	13.6	7.0	22.1	19.3	27.4	35.1	18.5	22.8	9.8	8.8	2.7	0.0

Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy												
Percentage of students in Bands 3 to 8												
BAND	8		7		6		5		4		3	
	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School
<b>Reading</b>	15.5	21.2	24.7	23.1	27.2	23.1	18.3	17.3	7.5	9.6	3.3	3.8
<b>Writing</b>	7.5	7.7	17.0	13.5	32.6	15.4	26.9	38.5	9.7	11.5	3.2	9.6
<b>Spelling</b>	15.1	15.1	27.5	30.2	24.4	20.8	17.2	15.1	8.2	9.4	3.8	9.4
<b>Grammar and Punctuation</b>	12.9	15.1	20.6	13.2	27.1	20.8	19.7	22.6	9.2	13.2	4.5	5.7
<b>Numeracy</b>	10.2	3.8	20.9	30.2	28.8	28.3	23.6	22.6	10.0	11.3	3.1	3.8



### 3.3 Teacher Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Schools Office Armidale. The school takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development.

All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes.

Whole staff development day professional learning activities in 2021 were:

Staff Professional Learning Activity	Date	Presenter
Living Well Learning Well	28/01/2021	Jason Hanrahan
Foundations of CPLC	27/01/2021	Jen Honner
Compliance	29/01/2021	Jen Honner
Co Teaching in Flexible Learning Spaces	29/01/2021	Jen Honner

### 4.0 School Policies

#### 4.1 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Armidale adheres to the policy as endorsed by the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' of Students in the Catholic Systemic Schools of the Diocese of Armidale. The Catholic Schools Office Armidale monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements. Children from families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church may be considered eligible for enrolment. A pastoral approach is adopted for parents experiencing genuine difficulty with the payment of fees.

This school does not have any enrolment policies or support documents in addition to the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' for schools in the Diocese of Armidale. This policy is available on the school's [website](#) and the Armidale Catholic Schools Office [website](#).

#### 4.2 Pastoral Care Policy

Jesus Christ and his teachings are the basis of all that occurs at St Xavier's Primary School. Christ's teachings, therefore, should relate to how staff develop student self-discipline. The school community believes in a holistic approach to individual development. Such an approach aims to develop the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, aesthetic, moral and spiritual dimensions of a child. Staff aim to bring this about in the school by promoting self-worth and by encouraging each individual to answer to one's self for one's own actions.

All people attending St Xavier's Primary School have the right to be treated:

- justly
- respectfully
- fairly

*No changes were made to the 'Pastoral Care Policy' this year.*

*The full text of the school's 'Pastoral Care Policy' may be accessed on the school's [website](#) or at the administration office.*

#### 4.3 Student Discipline Policy



Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. The school does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by school persons and non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the school.

*No changes were made to the 'Student Discipline Policy' this year.*

*The full text of the school's 'Student Discipline Policy' may be accessed on the school's [website](#) or at the administration office.*

#### **4.4 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy**

The Catholic Schools Office, Armidale has established a 'Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy' which is implemented by the school and all systemic schools in the Diocese of Armidale. It provides a framework for school communities to work together to prevent and address issues of student bullying, in order to build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each person. The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) monitors the implementation of this policy.

*No changes were made to the 'Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy' this year.*

*The full text of the school's 'Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy' may be accessed on the school's [website](#), the administration office or on the CSO website.*

#### **4.5 Complaints Handling Policy and Guide**

The Diocese of Armidale has established a 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' which is implemented by this school. The rationale for this policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of the contemporary world. The Catholic Schools Office monitors the implementation of these policies.

*No changes were made to the 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' this year.*

*The full text of the school's 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' may be accessed on the school's [website](#) or the administration office.*

#### **5.0 School Review and Improvement**

Each year, the school develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the school's Strategic Improvement Plan and informed by the Catholic Schools Office Annual Improvement Plan. The school engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the System Performance Leader.



Key Goals Achieved and Implemented in 2021	Key Goals for 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the Living Well, Learning Well Framework.</li> <li>• Identified and addressed the gaps between aspirational and actual, in the application of the Foundations of a Catholic Professional Learning Community.</li> <li>• Deepened understanding of the models of co-teaching.</li> <li>• Provided professional learning to support the daily work to keep it tight, action oriented and evidence based.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the school-wide understanding of the Catholic faith, identity and community.</li> <li>• Continue to embed Living Well, Learning Well Framework.</li> <li>• Develop a stronger parish/ school team.</li> <li>• Learn to implement K-2 syllabus in Mathematics and English.</li> <li>• Implementation of CSO Maths Improvement Initiative across K-6.</li> <li>• Develop consistent K-6 assessment practices.</li> <li>• Further develop K-6 pedagogical practices in writing.</li> <li>• Develop Induction procedure.</li> <li>• Increase opportunities for Learning Walks for all staff.</li> <li>• Consistent K-6 assessment practices.</li> <li>• Ongoing teacher density in Infants.</li> <li>• Build teacher understanding of the co-teaching cycle.</li> </ul>

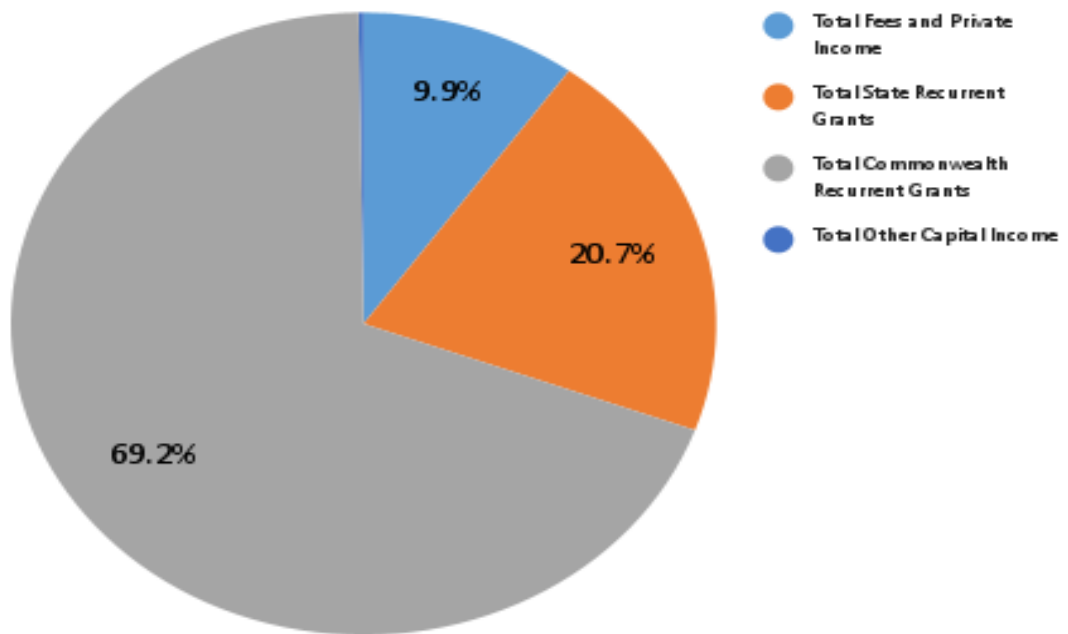
## 6.0 Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools, K-10 schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2021 is presented below:



### 2021 Income - St Xavier's Primary School, Gunnedah



### 2021 Expenditure - St Xavier's Primary School, Gunnedah

