

2024

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT



St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School

59 Seaview Street, BALGOWLAH 2093

Principal: Ms Louise O'Brien

Web: www.scbdbb.catholic.edu.au

About this report

St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB), the proprietor, with Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW) as the approved authority for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the Education Act 1990 (NSW).

The Annual School Report (the 'Report') demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies and CSBB. Additionally, the Report complements and is supplementary to other forms of regular communication to the School community regarding initiatives, activities and programs which support the learning and wellbeing of its students.

The Report provides parents and the wider community with fair, reliable and objective information about educational and financial performance measures as well as School and system policies. This information includes summary contextual data, an overview of student performance in state and national assessments, a description of the achievement of priorities in the previous year and areas for improvement. Detailed information about the School's improvement journey is documented at local school level and is developed, implemented and evaluated in consultation with key stakeholders.

Further information about the contents of this Report may be obtained by contacting the School directly or by visiting the School's website. Information can also be obtained from the [My School website](#).

Message from key groups in our community

Principal's Message

St Cecilia's Primary School, Balgowlah, provides a contemporary and nurturing learning environment to cater for the diverse learning needs of our students. We place a high value on encouraging every student to achieve their personal best. At St Cecilia's priority is given to student wellbeing and developing in students a lifelong love of learning. We focus on academic achievement through engagement in contemporary pedagogical practices. Quality learning experiences are provided to motivate and challenge students to reach their potential. Each individual student is supported, and their achievements tracked as they move along the learning continuum. Students are encouraged to contribute to our school community as faith filled, respectful, responsible members of the school and wider community.

St Cecilia's is a community where staff, students, parents and parish work towards supporting the academic, social, physical, emotional and creative development of each child. Our school's motto is "In all things love" and we pursue excellence to be the best we can be. We are proud of our students and praise their progress across a variety of domains with positive feedback and regularly celebrate their many achievements.

Parent Body Message

The P&F had a remarkable year, successfully carrying out numerous activities and events to engage and build our community. We began the year with a well-attended 'Welcome Party' in February, where parents, staff and clergy gathered to socialise and meet new families and staff members.

Our social justice and spirituality team organised hampers for St Vincent de Paul and other initiatives to support those in need. The Gift cook off was supported by parents who volunteered to cook and provide food for families in need in our local parish community. The sponsorship team collaborated with the events team to support our fundraising efforts, culminating in a highly successful 'Art Show and Auction' fundraiser in October.

The school's sustainability and environment leaders made valuable suggestions and encouraged the community to integrate sustainability into school activities. Families participated in Cleanup Australia Day, Earth Hour and Walk to School days.

The clubs and services team promoted various school events throughout the year. The garden club worked with students to plant new native seedlings, and the Millie Smith preloved uniform shop was open each week to provide parents with the opportunity to purchase uniforms.

Throughout the year, the P&F executive committee and teams met regularly to support the school's many endeavours. It was a very successful year, with all members working together to support the school. We are grateful for the support of the school Principal and staff in strengthening our close-knit community.

Student Body Message

Our experience as school captains throughout 2024 has significantly developed our leadership skills as we worked to support our school community. All Year 6 leaders, Sports, Liturgy/Social Justice, Library/ICT, and Environment captains have grown in our roles and the responsibilities and opportunities provided.

We thank all the staff for their guidance and encouragement of all the children in our school. We deeply appreciate the care and support given to each one of us every day. The staff's generosity with their time and their positive feedback have been invaluable.

We have thrived on the opportunities to represent our school in various activities, including sporting events, the surf education program, debating and public speaking, environment and sustainability activities, the Catholic Schools Mission Mass, the Science Fair and our social justice outreach initiatives. Leading the peer support groups with students from Kinder to Year 5 in Term 4 was a particularly rewarding experience that we eagerly anticipated each week.

As we complete our Primary School days, we express our gratitude to our parents, the staff, and the students for their unwavering support. We feel privileged to have been leaders at St Cecilia's School in 2024.

School Features

St Cecilia's Primary School Balgowlah is a Catholic systemic co-educational school founded by the Good Samaritan Sisters. The school caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 6 and is situated on the lower Northern Beaches of Sydney with an enrolment of 248 students. St Cecilia's Balgowlah and St Kieran's Manly Vale, form the Catholic Community of North Harbour, under the pastoral care of the Augustinian priests.

The learning environment at St Cecilia's supports the implementation of contemporary educational practices. Teachers plan and program to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Our large learning spaces cater for students to learn in flexible ability groups for Mathematics and English across the grade, providing challenge for our high potential and gifted learners and support for children with learning needs. This facilitates the learning needs of all students. The Kindergarten classrooms support a smooth transition to school where students are nurtured and feel part of our close-knit community.

Students in Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 participate in interschool sporting Gala days each term. These include AFL, Soccer, Cricket, Rugby League, Eagle Tag, Basketball and Tennis. Our tennis teams (comprised of Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 students) had great success and both teams won the Todd Woodbridge Cup in our region and competed in the final.

Sporting events such as our school and regional swimming carnival, cross country and athletics were also held, with several students successfully making selection through to the State Championships.

Many extra-curricular activities are offered to students' including tennis, mindfulness/well-being sessions, chess, drama, coding and band (instruction in playing musical instruments). Opportunities to represent the school in debating, public speaking and sporting events were provided for the students to showcase their talents and skills in community competitions.

Our Year 5 & 6 students engaged in many different team building activities when they attended their leadership camp at Narrabeen.

The P&F association held many successful social and fundraising events including our Welcome Party in February and the Gala Fundraiser in September. All events were well attended as parents looked forward to socialising with other families in the school.

The school advisory committee met each term to discuss school and parish initiatives.

All classrooms and learning areas had new carpet laid and the administration area was painted.

Student Profile

Student Enrolment

Students attending the School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2024. Additional information can be found on the [My School website](#).

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
152	94	9	246

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The [Enrolment Principles](#) temporarily supersede The Enrolment Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools (2013) and are being followed by the School for enrolments for 2024. As inclusive and evangelising communities, we welcome every family who would like a Catholic education for their children. Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB) strives to respond to the needs of all students, within the constraints of our available resources. We believe all students should have access to our schools which offer educational opportunities that nurture the Catholic faith, expand life choices, cater for the disadvantaged, and challenge all students to reach their full potential. Our schools are explicitly evangelical, catechetical and address (with the support of our parishes and agencies), the faith formation of our school communities. Copies of these principles and other policies in this Report may be obtained from the [CSBB website](#) or by contacting CSBB.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for the School in 2024 was 91.90%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group						
Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
93.70	92.70	92.10	93.00	91.10	90.20	88.80

Managing Student Non-Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is of paramount importance that they attend school regularly. While it is the parents' legal responsibility under the NSW Education Act (1990) to ensure that their children attend school regularly, our staff as part of their duty of care, monitor all absences and work in partnership with parents to support and promote the regular attendance of students. In doing so, the School, under the leadership of the principal:

- provides a caring environment which fosters a sense of wellbeing and belonging in students
- maintains accurate records of student attendance
- implements policies and procedures to monitor student attendance and to address non-attendance issues as and when they arise
- communicates to parents and students, the School's expectations with regard to student attendance and the consequences of not meeting these expectations
- recognises and rewards excellent and improved student attendance.

School attendance records also contain information regarding student absences including reasons for absence and documentation to substantiate reasons for absences. Teachers are required to monitor non-attendance diligently on a student by student basis and to bring to the attention of the Principal immediately any unexplained absences, non-attendance of a chronic nature, or reasons for non-attendance that cause concern. Matters of concern are referred to the Principal, CSBB and the relevant Department of Education officer where appropriate.

Where a student is not able to attend school for a prolonged period of time due to a medical condition or illness, the School in collaboration with parents, provides resources to contribute to the student's continuum of learning where possible. CSBB monitors each School's compliance with student attendance and management of non-attendance as part of the system's Quality Assurance and Compliance processes. The School's attendance monitoring procedures are based on the Procedures for the Management of Student Attendance in Catholic Schools Broken Bay.

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2024:

Total number of staff	20
Number of full time teaching staff	12
Number of part time teaching staff	8
Number of non-teaching staff	3

Total number of teaching staff by NESA category

All teachers employed by the School are qualified to teach in NSW. Additionally, all teachers at this School who are responsible for delivering the curriculum are accredited with NESA and hold a Working with Children Check.

Teachers at this School are either accredited as conditional, provisional, proficient or highly accomplished as defined by the NSW Teacher Accreditation Act 2004. Accreditation at the levels of Highly Accomplished and Lead teacher are voluntary. The number of teachers within the Catholic Schools Broken Bay in our 45 schools at these levels is as follows:

- Highly Accomplished: 9 teachers
- Proficient: 1322 teachers
- Provisional: 132 teachers
- Conditional: 67 teacher

Additionally, there are approximately 60 teachers who are currently actively engaged in the submission process at the higher levels of accreditation. Teacher status at individual schools can be sourced directly from the School.

Catholic Identity and Mission

As a Catholic community, the School shares in the mission of the local Church. The [Diocesan Mission Statement](#) is our statement of shared common purpose: "The Diocese of Broken Bay exists to evangelise, to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, gathered as friends in the Lord and sent out to be missionary disciples."

In partnership with parents as the first faith educators of their children and the local parish community, the School seeks to provide authentic, professional Catholic Education, inspiring hearts and minds to know Christ, to love learning, to use their talents to be the very best they can be. Our vision, purpose and all we do is founded on faith in Jesus Christ, and informed by Christian values including faith, joy, witness, compassion, and courage.

The School's Religious Education (RE) program is based on the [Catholic Schools Broken Bay Religious Education Curriculum](#) and aims to provide students with meaningful, engaging and challenging learning experiences that explores the rich diversity of the Catholic faith and ways in which we live it. A new Religious Education Curriculum has been developed to further enhance the learning experience for all. This was implemented into Early Stage 1, Stage 1, Stage 3, Stage 4 and Stage 5 classrooms incrementally from 2022 with the final stage being implemented in 2025. These programs include formal Religious Education as well as retreats, spirituality days and social justice opportunities in which students are invited to serve others, especially the poor and those who are marginalised.

Faith formation opportunities are provided for students, staff, parents and caregivers. Students regularly celebrate Mass and pray together. Students are invited to participate in age appropriate sacramental and Youth Ministry activities aimed at living out their mission as disciples of Jesus.

At St Cecilia's we are inspired by our motto 'In all things love' and focus on our school's core values of hope, respect, service, justice and celebration. We celebrate our faith by nurturing the religious and spiritual dimensions of the school through our school liturgies and Masses.

We commenced our year with our Opening School Mass, 'Ceremony of Light', during which we welcomed new students, families and staff and presented our Year 6 students with their leadership badges. All families are invited to our 'Families Come Gather' Masses held each Term, providing a social opportunity for families to gather afterwards for morning tea held in the school grounds. In Term 1 we held our 'Families Come Gather' mass on Saturday evenings, and this was a success with many families joining the celebration. All family Masses were well attended and helped to build relationships with the parish.

Godly Play was introduced into the Year 2 classrooms, as a tool to engage the children in their religious education. The children have a choice in the way they respond to the gospel

reading presented by the teacher. Each classroom was set up with a 'Godly Play' display space and a working party of staff and parents assisted in the production of the resources required for Godly Play. Professional learning was also undertaken by our Year 2 teachers.

In the lead up to Easter, each class presented a part of the Easter story, beginning with Palm Sunday, the followed by the Last Supper and Jesus' arrest, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection. Special days and significant events were celebrated with whole school liturgies, these included Mother's Day, grandparents and special friends' morning, Father's Day, St Cecilia's feast day, our Year 6 Graduation Mass, and ANZAC and Remembrance Day reflections. These liturgies were well attended by parents, grandparents and family members from the school community.

Our parish is administered by the Augustinian priests. Fr Michael is our parish priest and members of our school advisory board attended Parish Council meetings throughout the year. Fr John regularly visited the school to connect with the staff and speak with the children in the classrooms.

The sacraments of Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation were celebrated in the Parish. The parish sacramental coordinator liaised with the school and families to establish the family program for the sacraments. Bishop Anthony Randazzo visited St Cecilia's to confirm our Year 3 students in August.

Fr John celebrated our Thanksgiving liturgy, when we thanked all those who have helped and supported the school, and we farewelled those leaving our school with a special blessing. Fr John celebrated our final school celebration, the Graduation Mass for our Year 6 students and their families.

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

The School provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses for primary education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology (S&T), Human Society and its Environment (HSIE), Creative Arts (CA) and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE). In addition to this, the School implements the Diocesan Religious Education syllabus. Staff members are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning in all facets of the curriculum.

At St Cecilia's a culture of learning and improvement has been embedded to enhance the educational outcomes for all students. Collaborative coaching has transformed our professional learning and provided each classroom teacher with weekly opportunities to discuss essential learning outcomes, student achievement and progress, along the learning continuum with the leadership team.

We focus on student success and offer a wide range of learning opportunities. At St Cecilia's we leverage data to tailor curriculum areas for students, ensuring flexible grouping in Mathematics and English to offer diverse learning opportunities. Our evidence informed practices are designed to enhance outcomes for every student. Contemporary learning environments foster innovative teaching and learning experiences. The learning opportunities for our students are further enriched through:

- * whole school analysis of a variety of assessment data (including pre and post-tests)
- * individual learning needs and providing differentiated, inquiry-based learning.
- * analysis of assessment data to indicate growth in reading, writing and Mathematics.
- * analysis of standardised testing data e.g. PAT Maths and Pat Reading and COGAT, indicating quantitative, verbal and nonverbal abilities.

Professional development for teachers emphasises deep knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, alongside evidence-based effective pedagogical practices. Our curriculum programs are designed with differentiation and modifications to support a wide range of learning needs. Collaborative learning and feedback to ensure that learning opportunities are targeted, specific and meaningful.

We employ specialist teachers in Physical Education, Music, Dance, Diverse Learning Needs, and Technology (coding). Our teachers foster a collaborative culture of continuous improvement in teaching and learning. The four key stages of our continuous improvement cycle—analyse, plan, act, and review—are foundational to implementing effective programs that challenge students in their learning.

The use of various digital technologies has enhanced student learning. In Term 3, our Science & Technology curriculum incorporated STEM activities, culminating in a Science/STEM expo that showcased students' learning throughout the term. Parents visited the classrooms and were amazed by the creativity and achievements of the students.

Students also participated in the precinct Science Fair at St Paul's College, showcasing science investigations with other local Catholic primary schools.

Assessment and reporting of student achievement was reviewed, and the semester report was revised to align with the Mathematics and English syllabus.

Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

NAPLAN

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across Australia participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The purpose of NAPLAN is to provide information to parents and teachers about the achievements of students in literacy and numeracy. The test provides a measure of the student's performance against established standards and against other students in Australia. Each year the results are analysed by the school to inform teaching with a view to improving student performance.

NAPLAN results are reported against proficiency standards with 4 levels of achievement to give teachers, parents and carers clearer information on how students are performing:

- Exceeding: The student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- Strong: The student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- Developing: The student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- Needs additional support: The student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

The percentage of student achieving at Exceeding and Strong proficiency standards in NAPLAN at St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School for 2024 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	81%	54%
	Reading	89%	66%
	Writing	100%	77%
	Spelling	89%	61%
	Numeracy	92%	63%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	91%	65%
	Reading	95%	71%
	Writing	91%	67%
	Spelling	86%	68%
	Numeracy	73%	68%

Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies, guidelines and procedures are informed by the [Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing Policy](#). This policy is underpinned by the guiding principles from the National Safe Schools Framework (2013) (NSSF) that represent fundamental beliefs about safe, supportive and respectful school communities. These guiding principles emphasise the importance of student safety and wellbeing as a prerequisite for effective learning in all Catholic school settings. The Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Framework for Learning for the Diocese of Broken Bay Schools System (the Framework') utilises the NSSF ensuring that diocesan systemic schools meet the objectives of the NSSF at the same time as meeting the diocesan vision for pastoral care and wellbeing. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the CSBB website or by contacting CSBB. The policy was revised in 2019 to align with the [Australian Wellbeing Framework \(2018\)](#) for implementation in 2020.

Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy

The School's policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour are aligned to the [Behaviour Support Policy](#). Policies operate within a context that all members of the school community share responsibility to foster, encourage and promote positive behaviour and respectful relationships. The policy aims to promote a safe and supportive learning environment to maximise teaching and learning time for all students. It supports the development of students' pro-social behaviour based on respectful relationships and clear behavioural expectations. The dignity and responsibility of each person is promoted at all times along with positive student behaviours while ensuring the respect for the rights of all students and staff. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the CSBB website or by contacting CSBB. There were no significant changes made to this policy in 2024.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The School's Anti-Bullying guidelines and procedures are based on and informed by the [Prevention and Management of Student Bullying Policy](#) and is aligned to the Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools and other related wellbeing policies and guidelines. All students, their families and employees within Catholic education have a right to a learning and work environment that is free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. Anti-Bullying policies support school communities to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying. Further

information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSBB website](#) or by contacting CSBB. There were no changes made to this policy in 2024.

Complaints Handling Policy

The School follows the [Complaints Management and Resolution Policy](#). A distinctive feature of this policy is to ensure that complaints are addressed in a timely and confidential manner at the lowest appropriate management level in order to prevent minor problems or concerns from escalating. The expectation is that complaints will be brought forward and resolved in a respectful manner, recognising the dignity of each person concerned in the process. The policy recognises that a number of more minor or simple matters can be resolved without recourse to the formal complaint handling process but rather, quickly and simply, by discussion between the appropriate people. Further information about this and other related policies may be obtained from the [CSBB website](#) or by contacting CSBB. There were changes made to this policy in 2024 to reflect new system processes.

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

Parent satisfaction

Overall, parents report feeling welcome at the school and believe their child is in a safe learning environment. The school operates within a positive behaviour learning framework, ensuring children feel supported. Parents' satisfaction with the school overall was strong.

Throughout the year, parents provided positive feedback on several initiatives, such as:

The school musical: 'A resounding success showcasing our students.'

Grandparents' morning: 'Thank you for making it such a special morning for us and our grandchildren at the school.'

The Science expo: 'What a great learning experience for the children.'

The school disco: 'What a great community event.'

Parent feedback was sought following the revision of the Student Semester report. Overall, parents found the report to be useful and written in easily understood language.

Student satisfaction

Students had numerous opportunities to engage in their learning and enjoy various activities. Year 5 and 6 students attended a fantastic leadership camp at Narrabeen.

Highlights for all students included coding sessions in Terms 2 and 3, dance lessons, and the school disco.

The STEM/Science expo in Term 3 involved all students from Kindergarten to Year 6, who enjoyed showcasing their learning to their parents. The Science showcase at St Paul's provided an opportunity for students from Year 2 to 6 to present to peers from local Catholic schools, with enthusiastic participation from all.

Students also participated in weekly music lessons, physical education sessions, and sports afternoons at Balgowlah Oval. The 'Good Sam' fun days at the end of each term, where children wore a colour and brought money to support charities like Mary Mac's Place, were named as highlights by the students.

Walk to school days scheduled each term were well supported by students.

Teacher satisfaction

Collaborative coaching continued in 2024, and all teachers have expressed their gratitude for this initiative. It offers opportunities to discuss individual and group learning, analyse data, and track student achievement. Additionally, it provides valuable time for teachers to meet and plan for student learning.

The dedicated time for report writing is another positive aspect, allowing teachers to engage in discussions focused on learning with their grade-level colleagues.

Mathematics differentiation opportunities were also recognised as an important support for student learning in Mathematics."

Financial Statement

Consistent with the NESAs requirements, financial income and expenditure for the School in 2024 is shown below. More detailed financial data is available on the My School website.

Recurrent and Capital Income 2024	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$2,001,673
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$249,548
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$1,350,467
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$20,936
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$175
Total Income	\$3,622,802

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$89,971
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$3,518,801
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,159,159
Total Expenditure	\$4,767,932

Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.

END OF 2024 REPORT