

2024

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT



St Gerard's Catholic Primary School

543 North Rocks Road, CARLINGFORD 2118

Principal: Mrs Barbara Yee

Web: www.sgcdbb.catholic.edu.au

About this report

St Gerard'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

Significant improvement in learning achievements for all students continues to be the focus in 2024. Since the introduction of Collaborative Coaching in 2022, St Gerard's has observed consistent improvement in student achievement in Mathematics. In 2024, we adjusted the focus to explore achievement data in Spelling. The review of data recognised that work needed to be undertaken across the school in terms of teaching practice. This process was undertaken with the guidance of Linda Bendikson. This also aligned with the focus on strategies of meeting the needs of students who speak languages other than English.

2024 has also seen the renewal and commitment to the St Gerard's Positive Behaviour for Learning Framework. Extensive analysis of data over recent years was reviewed, parent and student input were included as well as best practice evidence and research. The formation of a new and simplified matrix was based on the current context of the school and the most recently identified areas of need. Teaching lessons were redesigned with an emphasis on regular school wide explicit teaching of the new rules. Outstanding Pastoral Care continues to be a major strength of the school.

Parent Body Message

St Gerard's School is very fortunate to be blessed with our school Principal and the team for another tremendous year. We have a vibrant community of parents and staff under the guidance of our principal who are all very caring and supportive of the children in our community.

The P&F acknowledges the staff including the school leaders, who are dedicated to the continuous improvement of the school. The quality of connection and communication between the school and the parents from the St Gerard's staff is indicative of their time and energy. Their professional approach when interacting with the parent community is evident, through their partnerships with parents.

The dedication from the P&F committee members and their teams is greatly appreciated and ensures, every year, school and parents events run smoothly. Thank you to these parents, for the significant effort and impact the P&F have made on the school community. We are proud of the way you have represented the parent community to the school, as an example to our children, with a constantly constructive and forward-thinking approach. The culture of the community continues its great momentum.

Student Body Message

Throughout our seven years at school, we have made thousands of memories. I remember how scared we were on the first day, it didn't take us long to settle in and make friends. Some more recent memories we have is our Year 6 camp, which was certainly a highlight. We had fun in in our cabins and on the lake whilst kayaking. When we went to Canberra, we had a great time at Questacon. The past seven years have been an incredible and enjoyable journey.

We would like to thank our teachers for putting up with us and for giving us a great education. Thank you to our Principal and our Assistant Principal for all that you do and for making our school a happy place. We also thank our Parish Priest for teaching us about God's love by willingly coming into our class to preach about God's work and creations. We thank our classmates. Without all of you our time at school and whole life in general wouldn't be the same. Thank you all for being encouraging, kind and supportive. Last but certainly not least, we give a massive thanks to our parents for supporting us in everything we do. We thank you for enrolling us into St Gerard's and for shaping us into the bright kids we are today.

School Features

St Gerard's Catholic Primary School Carlingford is a Catholic systemic co-educational school. The school caters for boys and girls from Kindergarten to Year 6. As part of the Parish of Epping and Carlingford, the School regularly joins the Parish community to celebrate key events in the liturgical life of the Catholic Church. The school was founded in 1964, 60 years ago this year, and built mainly by community volunteers who constructed a red brick building to provide three classrooms for the first students enrolled. The growth of the school was rapid. By 1975 enrolments reached 511 and the students were taught by Sisters of Mercy and lay teachers. In 2024, the school has fourteen classes across Kindergarten to Year 6. The demographics of the school population has continued to change, particularly with the rapid increase of enrolled students who identify as being from a background where English is a Second Language/Dialect.

St Gerard's provides a well-balanced, comprehensive and engaging curriculum, where English and Mathematics are given priority time each day. Each classroom is well equipped to meet the needs of contemporary learners. A variety of programs are available to support student interests and learning needs. Students are provided with the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities; choir, chess, band, Maths Olympiad (St 3), STEAM (Science Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics Integrated Learning), public speaking, Music, and representative sports. This year identified students were invited to join two different enrichment groups. A Stage 2 Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills group and a Young Creative Writers group. In addition, additional resources have been allocated to the school to support EAL/D students. Professional Learning has enabled teachers to develop robust programs to cater for these students. The use of the ESL progressions to assess students emerging Literacy and English fluency has enabled teachers to track and monitor students' progress. A focus on classroom teaching and learning practices has enabled teachers to design and deliver teaching programs that meet the needs of these learners.

All classrooms are air conditioned and support a range of technology. All rooms have interactive white boards and students have access to laptops, Chromebooks and iPad technology. The infants' playground has a substantial shade area, new play equipment, a vegetable patch and attractive gardens. The senior students have a separate play area with shaded areas and access to a large council oval at the rear of the school site. Stage 3 students have the opportunity to utilise the school basketball court, participating in a colour house basketball competition.

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
135	145	108	280

* 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
94.30	89.80	91.40	92.60	92.30	91.50	89.90

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	23
Number of full time teaching staff	13
Number of part time teaching staff	10
Number of non-teaching staff	4

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.

In 2024, our goal in Catholic Mission was to continue our commitment to quality Religious Education and accompanying students, parents and staff to know and love Christ. We also dedicated ourselves to continuing our worship and liturgical celebrations as a school faith community. We continue to provide opportunities for students to engage with the new Religious Education curriculum founded on the person of Jesus Christ. This year, Stage 3 students engaged in the new pedagogy of Scripture storytelling and coming to know Christ better through the praxis approach aligned with the Emmaus Story. They would encounter Jesus in the storytelling, which facilitates the opportunity for personal reflection and faith development. Students were able to enter a relationship with Jesus in a meaningful way after hearing the stories of his life and being immersed in the liturgical life of the church.

In 2024, we continued our worship celebrations with parents and families through whole school Masses and liturgies including Mother's Day and Father's Day. We accompany parents on their journey being the first teachers of the faith for their children. Traditionally, our

students prepare worship celebrations for families, and they are invited to celebrate with Class Liturgies and Masses in our parish church. We celebrated our second Grandparents Mass with great joy and success in 2024 and invited families into open classrooms where special gifts were created and presented to all visitors.

2024 was a significant year for us as we celebrated our 60th anniversary of St Gerard's School. On November 7th we held a beautiful Mass of thanksgiving to celebrate this important milestone in the history of St Gerard's school. Rev Fr David Ranson celebrated Mass for us, with many invited guests, including past principals and the Sisters of Mercy, in attendance.

Our Staff Spirituality Day in 2024 focused on Pope Francis' encyclical on ecology and climate; "Laudate Si". As a staff, we explored these writings through meditation and prayer. We reflected on their implications for us as Catholic educators of our young people as the future generation of caretakers of our planet. It was a spiritually challenging and fulfilling day for the staff community.

Our Catholic mission to support those in need in our local and global community was evident in our social justice initiatives in 2024. Our Vinnies Christmas hampers and donations to Caritas through Project Compassion raised awareness of our call to be the face of Christ to others. Guided by our Catholic values and our Mercy traditions, St Gerard's students and staff continue to live out their mission to grow in wisdom and faith as a collaborative and pastoral community.

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.

In 2024 we maintained our focus on student achievement and ensuring we sustained our relentless focus on learning for all students and staff. Teachers engaged in professional learning focusing on the Science of Learning. We explored how students learn best and what teaching has the most impact on student development and growth. This led to us engaging more deeply in explicit instruction and utilising this in classrooms to maximise learning gains for students.

During Collaborative Coaching, we analysed our data and noted the positive gains that have been achieved in Mathematics over the last few years. During Term 3 and 4, we shifted our focus to Spelling. Teachers worked collaboratively to set learning goals, plan and track student progress in spelling. Spelling benchmarks were created for students and, teachers met weekly to adjust their teaching in direct response to the data collected from students.

Collaborative Coaching was again complimented by our discussions with Linda Bendikson as we aligned our spelling focus with the cycle of quick wins and ensured all teachers were committed to teaching spelling with explicit instruction at least three times per week. The data collected during this time has already shown learning gains for students.

In 2024, staff engaged in professional learning communities with neighbouring CSBB schools focusing on assessment and the common grade scale. This work was facilitated by Jennifer Pledger from NESA. We also worked with Professor Jim Toglonini of CEMA and USYD on modern assessment and the image of the learner. These professional learning opportunities were well received by staff and enabled consistent moderation of work samples and alignment to the common grade scale.

Curriculum reform was at the forefront of all professional learning and teaching in 2024. Staff in Years 3-6 implemented the new English and Mathematics Syllabus and their efforts with professional learning and unpacking of these documents in 2023 meant that the transition was smooth and well received. Teachers in Stage 3 have also implemented the new Religious Education Syllabus which saw students engage in rich Storytelling and explore

their faith in new and meaningful ways. Students were provided with opportunities to express their understanding of the Catholic faith.

In 2024, we engaged in professional learning around Dyslexia, ADHD, Autism and Social Emotional Learning run by CSBB leaders. Our learner diversity teachers were in classes supporting students from K-6 with a targeted focus on English and Mathematics to support students with their learning goals and learning gains. In addition, our leader of learning for Gifted and High Potential students continued to support students with project-based learning and genius hour programs.

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 Gerard'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	64%	54%
	Reading	83%	66%
	Writing	97%	77%
	Spelling	83%	61%
	Numeracy	81%	63%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2024		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	86%	65%
	Reading	86%	71%
	Writing	96%	67%
	Spelling	79%	68%
	Numeracy	86%	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

Once again in 2024, parent participation at St Gerard's remains high, as evidence of parents' enthusiasm and support for our school. School occasions, including sporting events were well supported by the parent community. Parents voice is heard through the active participation in the Parents & Friends, Class Parent Network, the School Advisory Team (SAT) and the Parish Pastoral Council. Parents are invited to attend and participate in a range of Liturgical events at St Gerard's. In addition, parents support a range of school activities like sports carnivals, school excursions and other celebrations across the year. Grandparent's Day, Mother's Day and Father's Day are features on the school calendar. Parents participated enthusiastically in the 60th anniversary celebrations of the school in November this year. Parents continue to attend Friday weekly assemblies in steady numbers. Open Days across the school year are very well patronised by parents and grandparents alike. Parent volunteers ensure the efficient operation of the school uniform shop and the school canteen. Parents fully endorse the Volunteers Declarations and the Safeguarding expectations of the Diocese.

Student satisfaction

Students at St Gerard's are motivated, enthusiastic and participate fully in all learning experiences as well as a range of extracurricular activities, including language classes, band, chess and choir. Learning in the classroom is supported by well-considered behaviour management programs that elicit student and parent voice. Student learning achievement is rigorously monitored and student's diverse learning needs are supported. Students are also supported by full access to counselling and wellbeing support provided by Catholic Schools Broken Bay as required. Students in the senior years have the opportunity to join leadership groups in Liturgy, Technology, Justice & Action and Sustainability. These groups are comprised of students from Years Five and Six and rotate annually. Students respond with enthusiasm to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) learning experiences. Students also participate in a range of formal leadership opportunities, especially in Year Six. There is a high level of take-up of academic challenges by students such as Mathematics Problem-Solving groups and the Gifted Writers program.

Teacher satisfaction

Teacher retention at St Gerard's remain high and the teaching staff include those who have many years teaching experience, mid-range teachers who are established in their careers, as well as early career teachers. In 2024, teachers willingly took on mentoring roles for the five early career teachers on staff. The mentoring experience has proven to be beneficial for the experienced teachers as well as for the mentored early career teachers. There is a well-developed ethos of collaboration among the teaching staff which has been enhanced by the Collaborative Coaching opportunity made available to schools through Catholic Schools Broken Bay. Teachers have been receptive to the opportunities of collaborative coaching, from analysis of student achievement data to the design of teaching strategies to meet the identified needs of students they are teaching, particularly in Mathematics and Spelling. St Gerard's teachers are dedicated to improving student learning outcomes, through goal setting as well as ensuring that the students are welcomed, belong, cared for and valued participants in the learning journeys.

Financial Statement

Consistent with the NESA 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	\$2,716,304
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$650,261
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$1,338,826
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$8,026
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$199
Total Income	\$4,713,618

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2024	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$514,760
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$3,974,658
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,243,818
Total Expenditure	\$5,733,237

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