



# 2023

## ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT



### St Thomas' Catholic Primary School

2 Horsley Avenue, WILLOUGHBY 2068

Principal: Mrs Enrica Bova

Web: [www.stwddb.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stwddb.catholic.edu.au)

## About this report

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St Thomas' Catholic Primary School (the 'School') is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB). CSBB as the 'approved authority' for the diocesan registration system formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act (1990), is responsible for monitoring the compliance of member schools in the manner that has been approved by the Minister of Education.

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 be also be obtained from the [My School website](#).

## Message from key groups in our community

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### Principal's Message

St Thomas Catholic Primary School is a faith filled community of parents, staff, students and parish founded on Jesus Christ, His life, teachings and values. The school is committed to the development of each child spiritually, academically, emotionally, physically and socially.

The school continues to provide a contemporary, challenging and engaging curriculum, supported by quality teaching and learning experiences. Teachers design programs that allow students to work collaboratively, creatively and engage in critical and diverse thinking. These programs support the students in achieving their full potential.

The strong partnership that exists between parish, parents, carers, staff and students is worthy of praise, it has enabled St Thomas Catholic Primary School to have a very successful year.

### Parent Body Message

Parents and carers are valued and work in partnership with the Principal and staff in the education of their children. The Gospel values are alive at St Thomas Catholic Primary School and our children receive a strong education that is founded in our shared faith. We have a wonderful nurturing environment where our children are happy and safe.

St Thomas' Parent Engagement Network not only raises funds for our school but is active in planning events and activities for the children and community at large. The 2023 St Thomas Art & Craft Show was a successful community event again this year.

This year was a highly successful year for our school by way of parent and carer involvement in the school. Support and attendance at our many events were record high and extremely pleasing. These events included Trivia Night raising money for Transplant Australia, Mother's Day and Father's Day Breakfast and Mass, Grandparents Day Morning Tea & Mass, Open Classrooms and End of Year Awards and Performance.

### Student Body Message

On behalf of St Thomas Catholic Primary School we would sincerely like to thank the staff for the great work they have done throughout this year.

We are extremely grateful for the countless opportunities the school has provided this year: Academic Achievement, Year 6 Leadership, Buddy Program, Athletics and Swimming Carnivals, Cross Country, Gala Days, Public Speaking Competition and many more.

The yearly Art and Craft Show is such an exciting, eventful time to meet up with friends and people who have left the school.

The student voice assemblies provide all students a voice. These assemblies enable the voice of all students in making our school an even better place. It feels special because we can all be involved.

We also liked designing posters for charitable causes to raise awareness and encourage donations for them.

We love our school because we get to know God better, make friends, have fun and celebrate our learning with our community.

## School Features

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St Thomas Catholic Primary School is a Catholic systemic co-educational school with the Diocese of Broken Bay. St Thomas Catholic Primary School is embedded within the Catholic Parish of the Lower North Shore under the spiritual pastoral care of our parish priest. The school caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

St Thomas Catholic Primary School opened in 1928 and was staffed and administered by the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart until 1979. Since that time the school has been run by lay principals and staff. St Thomas has offered catholic education in the local community for 94 years.

St Thomas Catholic Primary School offers rich learning programs from Kindergarten to Year 6. Class teachers work collaboratively with specialist teachers and parents to support each child in his or her development in terms of ability and needs. The focus in the early years is on building foundations in literacy and numeracy within a caring and consistent social and learning environment. Teaching and learning programs are outcomes-based, providing learning experiences that cater for individual needs.

The integration of technology enhances learning and students have access to a variety of digital devices. Students at St Thomas Catholic Primary School have varied opportunities to showcase their academic, creative and sporting talent at school events, before invited guests, at local venues, at combined school carnivals and various competitions. Physical activity is varied with students having the opportunity to develop skills in dance, athletics, mindfulness and gymnastics.

# Student Profile

## Student Enrolment

Students attending the School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2023. Additional information can be found on the [My School website](#).

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
176	188	87	364

\* 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 2023 was 92.43%. 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
93.60	92.80	93.50	91.80	91.30	91.60	92.40

## 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 Improvement processes. The School's attendance monitoring procedures are based on the Procedures for the Management of Student Attendance in the Broken Bay Diocesan Schools System.

## Staffing Profile

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### Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2023:

Total number of staff	23
Number of full time teaching staff	17
Number of part time teaching staff	6
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 44 schools at these levels is as follows:

- Highly Accomplished: 9 teachers
- Proficient: 1322 teachers
- Provisional: 131 teachers
- Conditional: 68 teachers

Additionally, there are approximately 35 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.

### Professional Learning

The ongoing professional learning (PL) of each staff member is highly valued. PL can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences and a range of programs provided by CSBB. The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking staff PL. Individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing PL, which includes evaluating NESA Accredited professional



development (PD) and logging Elective PD via their NESAs account. All teachers have been involved in PL opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes. The following provides specific information relating to the focus of three of these staff development days.

### **Summary of professional learning at this school**

Staff Development Day Term 1

Creating an awareness and understanding of St Thomas' school charism, aligned with the values of Mary MacKillop

Staff Development Day Term 2

Catholic Schools Broken Bay System; Faith Formation and Wellbeing

Staff Development Days Term 4

The Science of Learning, Dyslexia Modules, Curriculum Reform

## Catholic Identity and Mission

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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 [Broken Bay K-12 Religious Education Curriculum](#) and aims to provide students with meaningful, engaging and challenging learning experiences that explore the rich diversity of the Catholic faith and ways in which we live it. A new Religious Education Curriculum is being developed to further enhance the learning experience for all. This was implemented into all Kindergarten and Year 1 as well as Years 7-10 classrooms in 2022/2023 and will continue to grow over the coming years. 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 missionary activities aimed at living out their mission as disciples of Jesus.

St Thomas Catholic Primary School strives to be a genuine Catholic community of students, parents and teachers, working in partnership with the Catholic Parish of Lower North Shore learning to love Jesus and live by His values in the tradition of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart. The St Thomas Catholic Primary School community embraces the values of the Diocese of Broken Bay.

The Religious Education program together with regular celebrations of prayer, Sacraments and liturgy, seeks to strengthen the faith of students and encourages and motivates them to respond to the needs of others and be active participants in the life of the Church. Outreach to the wider community was achieved by staff and students. Families donated to Caritas' Project Compassion along with other social justice initiatives.

The teachers at St Thomas Catholic Primary School encourage students to engage with their faith and foster an environment of trust and hope, to facilitate the growth of faith grounded in

the person of Jesus Christ. Opportunities for faith formation for staff, focus on the charism of Saint Mary MacKillop of the Cross.

At St Thomas Catholic Primary School we believe that students learn best when the curriculum is relevant and challenging. The nurturing of faith and religious knowledge permeates all aspects of the school day.

The St Thomas Catholic Primary School community, in partnership with the Catholic Parish of the Lower North Shore Sacramental Coordinator prepared Year 3 and Year 4 students for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation. Preparation for the Sacraments involved attendance of weekly Mass, student/family preparation workshops. These days were facilitated by the Parish Sacramental Coordinator and parents.

## Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

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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 Thomas Catholic Primary School we believe that students learn best when the curriculum is relevant and challenging. Teaching programs motivate and cater for the diverse needs of all students. We encourage students to strive for individual excellence and to achieve their personal best.

The staff is committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning, in all facets of the school curriculum. Particular features of the school curriculum initiatives include:

- Staff from each stage working collaboratively with specialist staff to develop, refine and deliver class programs to enhance the learning skills of all students
- Kindergarten to Year 2 implemented NESA K-2 English and Mathematics Syllabus documents
- Identified groups from Kindergarten to Year 6 supported by specialist teachers and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)
- K-6 Japanese language program facilitated by a specialist language teacher (Term 1 & Term 2)
- K-6 music program facilitated by a specialist music teacher
- Use of contemporary technology to enhance teaching and learning
- All students participated in dance, athletics, sport skills and gymnastics
- Creative play and movement encouraged on the playground with the use of play equipment
- Students from Years 1 to 6 participated in NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) 'Write On' competition.
- Students from Years 4,5 and 6 participated in Maths Olympiad
- The provision of parent workshops on new K-2 English syllabus, helping students read at home
- K-6 Positive Behaviour for Learning established in all classes
- Apple Education and Digital Enablement partnership established for students in Year 4 for students to individually use iPads to enhance learning

# 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.

From 2023, 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 Thomas’ Catholic Primary School for 2023 is reported in the table below.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 3	Grammar and Punctuation	75%	54%
	Reading	85%	67%
	Writing	100%	76%
	Spelling	85%	61%
	Numeracy	88%	65%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2023		Percentage of students in the top 2 proficiency standards	
		School	Australia
Year 5	Grammar and Punctuation	75%	64%
	Reading	89%	74%
	Writing	89%	66%
	Spelling	75%	69%
	Numeracy	82%	68%

## Pastoral Care and Student Wellbeing

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### Pastoral Care Policy

The School's pastoral care and student wellbeing policies guidelines and procedures are informed by the [Pastoral Care Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#). 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 for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#). 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 2023.

### Anti-Bullying Policy

The School's Anti-Bullying guidelines and procedures are based on and informed by the [Anti-Bullying Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#) 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 2023.

### **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 2023 to reflect new system processes.

### **Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility**

The school has a positive education philosophy encouraging students to act with respect and responsibility towards others in their immediate and wider community. Respectful and responsible behaviour is acknowledged through class and school awards. The school Positive Behaviour for Learning expectations; We are courteous, responsible learners are used to promote respect and responsibility in a variety of domains.

A significant aspect of promoting rights and responsibility is the awareness of those who do not have the same opportunity. By raising awareness, we engage students in programs to support others where possible and appropriate.

During the year, staff and students participated in ceremonies acknowledging the importance of significant cultural events such as ANZAC, Remembrance Day, RUOK Day, Safer Internet Day and National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC). These types of events promote respect and responsibility in students by learning about bravery, courage, sacrifice and resilience. School and community events such as these nurture acceptance and tolerance.



## School Improvement

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Strategic planning ensures a common purpose and agreed values are established. In Broken Bay systemic schools, this common purpose and agreed values along with goals, targets and key improvement strategies have been captured in the Towards 2025 Strategic Plan.

### Key Improvements Achieved

Priority Improvements Achieved 2023:

The school's engagement in learning aligned to the Diocese of Broken Bay strategic vision focussed on Collaborative Coaching.

All stakeholders build a deeper understanding of the school's vision for learning values and charism.

### Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

The following key improvements are planned for 2024:

Developing and promoting the opportunities for the school community to grow in faith with the introduction of Parent Engagement Coordinator.

Developing a knowledge and understanding of the new NSW K-6 English and Mathematics syllabus.

## Community Satisfaction

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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

The Principal and staff have formally and informally received parent feedback through surveys, parent forums and conversations on their satisfaction.

Parents value the great care and support their children receive at school and they also stated that the school provides a safe learning environment. They commented on the school's focus on faith and value the way the school joins in praying together every Monday morning, Whole School Masses and Assemblies.

The parents also expressed positive comments in appreciation of the way in which student learning is a priority and is celebrated especially with the End of Year Academic and Mary MacKillop Awards. The community spirit is thriving at the school, and they have appreciated the many opportunities they have had to be involved in the life of the school this year.

### Student satisfaction

Student feedback has been gathered through class meetings conducted by members of the Student Leadership team and student surveys.

Results from feedback indicated a high level of satisfaction for the well organised teaching programs and with feedback that helps them learn.

The students also expressed that they were encouraged at all times to achieve their personal best.

In 2023 all Year 6 students became student leaders, they formed Value Teams representing the values of Compassion, Citizenship, Collaboration, Hope, Justice and Stewardship. They were the first to experience a new tradition in the school. They felt they had an equal opportunity to be a leader, no-one had power over another. They worked together to help achieve goals and to build a great school community.

Students expressed a positive sense of belonging and feel well supported at the school. They expressed satisfaction in having a student voice and having opportunities to make their school the best it can be.

They acknowledged that there are high expectations for all students to succeed.

### **Teacher satisfaction**

Teacher feedback has been gathered through discussions at professional learning sessions and the use of other anecdotal evidence.

Teachers indicated that they are well supported by the leadership team to create a safe, supportive learning environment and were provided with guidance for monitoring student progress.

They also stated that data is effectively used to inform and improve teaching practice. Teachers expressed confidence in using assessment to help them understand where students are having difficulty and to inform their teaching and learning programs. Teachers expressed a commitment to continuing professional learning and collaboration with colleagues to further enhance student outcomes.

Teachers described the school as collaborative, they felt they are provided with planned learning opportunities through Collaborative Coaching where they work in partnership with their colleagues.

# Financial Statement

Consistent with the NESAs requirements, financial income and expenditure for the School in 2023 is shown below. More detailed financial data is available on the My School website.

Recurrent and Capital Income 2023	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants <sup>1</sup>	\$2,852,780
Government Capital Grants <sup>2</sup>	\$1,352,218
State Recurrent Grants <sup>3</sup>	\$757,863
Fees and Private Income <sup>4</sup>	\$1,834,781
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$0
Other Capital Income <sup>5</sup>	\$2,320
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$6,799,964</b>

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2023	
Capital Expenditure <sup>6</sup>	\$2,183,237
Salaries and Related Expenses <sup>7</sup>	\$3,683,963
Non-Salary Expenses <sup>8</sup>	\$1,518,831
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$5,202,795</b>

### 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 2023 REPORT