



2020

ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT



St Agatha's Catholic Primary School

7 Trebor Road, PENNANT HILLS 2120

Principal: Mr Michael Hopkinson

Web: www.saphdbb.catholic.edu.au

About this report

St Agatha's 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 in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) which 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

Principal's Message

As the new Principal of St Agatha's Pennant Hills, I am proud to present this Annual Report for 2020. As I commenced in the role in July, I can only take responsibility for that period of time. 2020 provided both opportunities and challenges for the school due to the global pandemic. Both during and after the home-based learning, St Agatha's rose to the challenge of ensuring that students felt safe, their wellbeing was monitored and enhanced and that the academic standards were challenging. Since the change in leadership in July, the school has flourished with vision, energy and a new found sense of vibrancy.

St Agatha's is a boutique sized school nestled in amongst the leafy Hills District of Sydney. The school proudly builds upon the the Benedictine charism through the pioneering and founding work of the Good Samaritan Sisters.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the students, teachers, administration staff, students and parents for the contribution made to the learning within and beyond our school community.

All staff deliver quality Catholic education aimed at improving student outcomes. The Annual Report is a formal opportunity to recognise the many way in which contemporary education is delivered and enhanced to ensure optimal growth for every student. I thank everyone who contributed information to this report.

Parent Body Message

The Parent body of St Agatha's comprised the Parents & Friends (P&F) body until COVID-19 arrived and the P & F was disbanded. With no events able to be organised and no parents allowed on site, the purpose for gathering became redundant.

The School Advisory Council (SAC) meets nine time per year. Its purpose is to advise the Principal in number of matters that impact upon the efficient running of the school. Membership comprises four parents, staff representatives and the Principal.

Student Body Message

St Agatha's School usually has a Student Representative Council (SRC). Due to a variety of circumstances, the SRC did not run in 2020. The students are very proud to have leadership roles in the school and to have input on ideas that may improve the school environment or facilities. Student voice is highly valued in decision making at St Agatha's.

School Features

St Agatha's is a Kindergarten to Year 6 school and is part of the wider Pennant Hills Catholic Church community. Its main drawing areas for enrolments come from Pennant Hills, West Pennant Hills, Cherrybrook, Beecroft, Thornleigh, Westleigh and Dural.

The school was founded by the Good Samaritan Sisters in 1954 and operated from the Thornleigh site. The inspirational work undertaken by the Sisters at that time remains evident in activities and directions of the school today. The school provides a dedicated teacher-librarian, music and physical education teacher for weekly skills-based lessons.

The school offers a range of curricular and co-curricula activities aimed at ensuring that students are engaged in their learning and that they strive to be their very best. Ensuring that students are engaged learners, receiving optimal opportunities to learn, balanced with their social and emotional wellbeing remains our highest priority. These experiences include (but not limited to) school band, garden club, chess, robotics/coding, drama.

The school is committed to:

- Being an authentic and unapologetically Catholic community where the Gospel values are promoted and modelled
- Ensuring that excellence in learning and teaching is achieved
- Offering a haven where wellbeing and student safety are paramount
- Ensuring access to a bright, vibrant space to learn and play

The school competes in many school-based, Diocesan and community activities and events. These include but not limited to: Public Speaking, Debating, Sporting representation, Religious activities including fundraising for missions and social just activities, Gifted and Talented pathways, Premier's Reading Challenge and Bishop's Art Prize.

The school has its own onsite School Counsellor and a Speech Therapist operates out of the school one day per week.

An onsite OOSH operates daily throughout the term and in vacation periods catering solely for St Agatha's students. Students are engaged in a variety of activities and breakfast and afternoon tea are provided school term and lunch in the holiday period.

Student Profile

Student Enrolment

Students attending the School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2020. Additional information can be found on the [My School website](#).

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
141	124	104	265

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The School follows the [Enrolment Policy for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#). The policy encourages the local Catholic community, under the leadership of the parish priest and principal, to look upon the time of enrolment as a potential occasion for ongoing evangelisation. The policy calls upon parents to examine their present faith commitments, to develop their role as prime educators of their children in faith and to immerse themselves in the communal, liturgical, ministerial and service dimensions of the parish. Copies of this policy 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 2020 was 95.60%. 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
96.22	96.47	95.13	95.66	94.61	95.59	95.54

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 School Review and Development (SRD) 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 (password required).

Staffing Profile

Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2020:

Total number of staff	28
Number of full time teaching staff	11
Number of part time teaching staff	10
Number of non-teaching staff	7

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. Effective from October 2007, the minimum qualification for a teacher in a systemic school in the Diocese of Broken Bay is a four year teaching degree.

Teachers at this School are either accredited as conditional, provisional or proficient 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 Diocesan Schools System (systemic schools) at these levels is as follows:

- Proficient: 1294 teachers
- Provisional: 105 teachers
- Conditional: 1 teacher

Additionally, there are approximately 25 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. All teachers have been involved in PL opportunities during

the year related to improving student outcomes. The following table provides specific information relating to the focus of three of these staff development days.

Summary of professional learning at this school

The main Staff Development Day in 2020 was a Diocesan wide day to announce the launch of the 'Towards 2025' strategy. This day was held at the end of Term 2. Bishop Anthony Randazzo and Diocesan Director of Schools, (Danny Casey), led the staff through a range of activities and priorities that underpin this new initiative.

Twilight Staff Development sessions were held to update all staff on Child Protection matters, Anaphylaxis training and CPR.

Ongoing Professional Learning in all Keys Learning Areas takes place at the weekly staff meetings. These meetings are aimed at addressing the needs of staff in alignment with the annual School Improvement Plan.

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 educate and form young people in the Catholic faith. The School provides 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.

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 explores the rich diversity of the Catholic faith and ways in which we live it.

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.

This mission of St Agatha's Catholic Primary School is to bring about the word of God through actions. We are unapologetically a Catholic school and this is represented in many ways both physically and visually as well as in action.

Daily prayer, authentic religious education lessons and modelling of Gospel values underpins the work of all that is done in the school. Catholic Identity is seen as something of which all staff, parents and students see of great value and the driving force behind a lot of what is done in the school.

The school has established the 'Yarramundi' room where the stories of Jesus are shared and told. This prayer space has become the home of Godly Play which enables students to have a deeper understanding of Gospel stories.

The school has very close connections with the Parish of St Agatha's with the Church being located on site. Class Masses are held regularly both in the Church and at school. Many opportunities are used to enable Liturgies to also take place for special events. The school works closely and cooperatively with the Parish on the sacramental programs.

This year the school introduced The Angelus at midday each day. We also created a beautiful sacred space with a Marian shrine out the front of the school, where students, parents and parishioners can gather to pray.

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.

The unpacking of the curriculum is enhanced through the many resources that the school continues to purchase ensuring students have access to the best materials that allow them to learn.

In the area of literacy we used the Macquarie University suite of programs including Initialit, Multilit, Minilit and Macqlit. These programs are conducted either as whole class or small group activities. Spelling Mastery has been introduced in parts of the school as well. This suite of resources scaffolds the learning for students to ensure that they become successful and confident learners.

Students in Stage 3 participate in Project Based Learning (PBL). Students work in groups with a focus on the ACARA General Capabilities of collaboration, communication and cooperation - skills needed for high school and beyond.

The RE syllabus is a major focus of learning through all of the many strands ensuring that theological and liturgical concepts are understood by the students. Using the RE syllabus to create winning entries for the Bishop's Art Prize.

Each of the Key Learning Area (KLAs) have a Scope & Sequence that is taken from the curriculum documents and ordered in a way that ensure coverage of concepts in deep and meaningful ways.

In KLAs other than English and Mathematics, teachers look for creative ways in which the outcomes can be blended together. Often with the use of a range of digital technologies, students can learn many concepts simultaneously.

Student Performance in Tests and Examinations

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists the School's planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

Due to the impact of Covid-19 this year, the Education Ministers agreed that NAPLAN would not proceed in 2020. This decision was taken to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education, including potential online and remote learning.

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 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 changes made to this policy in 2020.

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 2020.

Complaints Handling Policy

The School follows the [Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures for Diocesan Systemic Schools](#). 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 no changes made to this policy in 2020.

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

At St Agatha's we promote respect and responsibility through the Positive Behaviours for Learning program (PBL). PBL brings together our whole-school community to contribute to developing a positive, safe and supportive learning culture. The framework assists us to improve social, emotional, behavioural and academic outcomes for children and young people.

With PBL teachers and students have more time to focus on relationships and classroom instruction. Students and staff benefit from:

- reduced problem behaviour
- increased time focused on instruction
- improved social-emotional wellbeing
- positive and respectful relationships among students and staff
- support for teachers to teach, model and respond effectively to student need
- a predictable learning environment where staff and students know what is expected to deliver effective practices that can be sustained over time

The PBL framework supports us to identify and successfully implement evidenced-based whole-school practices that enhance learning outcomes for our students at St Agatha's.

This is achieved by using the framework to strengthen systems within the school such as, structures, and processes that underpin ongoing school improvement and the effectiveness of all school members. For example, the school strengthens its use of school-wide data to identify patterns of problem behaviour, monitor student progress, reflect on teaching effectiveness and inform decisions that strengthen the learning environment.

School Improvement

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 are documented in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). This SIP is a three year planning document and is used to record the School's progress in working towards priorities for improvement in three domains: Mission, Pastoral Care, Learning and Teaching. School improvement planning is supported systemically by the Diocesan Leading Learning initiative. This initiative is research based and has been developed in partnership with the University of Auckland. Building on Leading Learning in the Learning and Teaching domain, the Diocesan Learning Principles guide improvement strategies toward high quality contemporary learning.

Key Improvements Achieved

in 2020, there were greater difficulties achieving key improvements due to home-based learning and the Covid restrictions that meant the cancellation of the majority of professional learning that was planned.

The main areas that have been covered in other areas of this report include:

Macquarie University Programs - especially introduction of Initialit

Project Based Learning for Stage 3 students

Positive Behaviours for Learning - ensuring student responsibility

Technology based programs during Library lessons to create entries for the Bishop's Art Prize

Priority Key Improvements for Next Year

New readers for Kindergarten

New furniture for Kinder/Year 1

Outdoor seating for students

New blinds for Administration block and school hall

Purchase of 3D A/R visualisers to assist implementing STEM across K-6

New Bibles for Kinder to Year 2

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

The Tell Them From Me (TTFM) survey is conducted annually. In 2020 there were responses from 91 of our 187 families which represents just over a 50% response rate.

The main areas of satisfaction noted from parents was:

Parents speaking easily with the principal 7.7/10

Parents feeling welcome at the school 7.6/10

Parents encouraging their child to do well at school 7.9/10

Students being encouraged to do their best 6.9/10

Students are clear on behavioural expectations 8.7/10

St Agatha's school is a Safe and supportive environment 8.6/10

Staff ensuring all students are included 6.8/10

Student satisfaction

The following information is based upon student feedback from students in Years 4-6.

Student participation in school sport 79%

Students with a positive sense of belonging 74%

Students with positive relationships 89%

Students that value learning outcomes 94%

Students with positive behaviours at school 93%

Students try hard to succeed in their learning 91%

Positive student teacher relations 8.0/10

Expectations for success 8.2/10

Teacher satisfaction

The following data comes from staff (teaching & non-teaching)

I work with school leaders to create a safe and orderly environment 8.3/10

I talk with other teachers about strategies that increase student engagement 8.4/10

I monitor progress of individual students 8.6/10

My assessment help me understand where students are having difficulty 8.2/10

When I present a new concept, I try to link it to previously mastered skills and knowledge 8.8/10

Students have opportunities for use of a range of technologies 8.2/10

I establish clear expectations about classroom behaviour 9.4/10

I work with parents to help solve problems interfering with their child's progress 7.7/10

Financial Statement

Consistent with the NESAs requirements, financial income and expenditure for the School in 2020 is shown below. More detailed financial data is available on the My School website. Diocesan system financial reporting can be found in the Broken Bay Diocese Annual Report.

Recurrent and Capital Income 2020	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$2,248,694
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$625,617
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$909,198
Interest Subsidy Grants	\$2,607
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$158,564
Total Income	\$3,944,680

Recurrent and Capital Expenditure 2020	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$57,683
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$2,882,986
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$1,107,261
Total Expenditure	\$4,047,930

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 2020 REPORT