

**St Bernard's School, UPPER  
MT GRAVATT**

# Annual Report 2021

**Brisbane Catholic Education is  
a faith-filled learning community  
creating a better future.**

# Contact information

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<b>Contact person</b>	Trish McMahon — Principal

## Principal's foreword

The 2021 Annual Report presents information for reporting requirements and informs the wider community of our school's operations and achievements through the year. The report includes information on the school's profile, curriculum delivery, social climate, school funding, workforce composition and student performance.

St Bernard's Catholic Primary School is situated in the inner Brisbane city suburb of Upper Mt Gravatt. Present student enrolment is 275 students. The student population includes approximately 37% of students from diverse cultural backgrounds in classes from Prep to Year 6. The school works in partnership with families and the local community to provide a stimulating environment where students learn about themselves, their world and their God.

All students are assisted to develop their talents, gifts and skills in order to become productive, contributing members of a changing world. Staff are committed to ensuring that all aspects of a child's development are incorporated into a child-focused, Christ-centred curriculum.

The school prides itself on providing a varied curriculum with opportunities for spiritual, physical, academic, cultural and social development. A strong link is nurtured and maintained with the local parish community and with the Sisters of St Joseph who commenced the school in 1955. The joy of learning is valued, and each child is welcomed as an integral member with the school community.

### School progress towards its goals in 2021

#### Catholic Identity

During 2021, staff of St Bernard's participated in 3 of the 5 modules relating to Formation for Mission. 90% of staff participated which increased confidence in their ability to verbalise the characteristics of Catholic Identity, developed a strong understanding of the Charism and Vision of the school, along with contributing to the development of a new school song.

#### Learning and Teaching

By the end of Term 2 2021, an increased percentage of Year 3 to 6 students reached their writing analysis targets. High yield strategies to target writing components, Gradual Release of Responsibility, Effective and Expected Practices and explicit feedback to students were identified and implemented. This resulted in 82% of Year 3, 85% of Year 4, 80% of Year 5 and 85% of Year 6 students reaching their success markers.

By the end of Term 2 2021, 70% of Prep, 70% of Year 1 and 60% of Year 2 students reached their PM Benchmark target. Explicit teaching of phonological awareness and comprehension strategies were implemented, clear Learning Intentions and Success Criteria were used, and data-drive and targeted intervention resources utilised.

## Diversity and Inclusion

By Term 3 2021, St Bernard's commenced the creation of a Reconciliation Action Plan. Community involvement was sought with it being a joint initiative with school and wider community members. Acknowledgement of Country occurred at each staff meeting and whole school gathering, a RAP vision was developed, and the process of selecting 14 key action items for future implementation was started.

## Our People

While an attendance rate of 85% was a stated target this level was not able to be fully achieved due to the impact of Covid-19 on students and their families. In endeavouring to achieve the stated target the school published regular reminders in the school newsletter regarding the importance of attendance, posters were visible around the school, and contact was made with parents to support improved attendance for a limited number of students.

## Organisation effectiveness

Throughout 2021, some staff members worked with support persons from Brisbane Catholic Education in developing a marketing strategy to increase the public awareness of the school. Parents of the wider community were canvassed due to the expertise of some. Digital technologies were used, and social media platforms utilised to expand exposure of the school. While the intention was to increase enrolments in the lower school limited success was achieved. Open days and school tours were implemented along with connection with kindergartens and childcare centres in surrounding areas. This did not translate into a major increase in enrolment numbers.

## **Future outlook for 2022**

### Catholic Identity

To continue the progress achieved during 2021, the school will focus on continuing the formation of staff. Liturgy and prayer in the classroom professional development will take place during the early part of the year. Prayer liturgies will be planned, authentic and focussed with the parent community invited to class prayer celebrations each term. A student formation plan involving Year 5 and 6 students utilising BCE Student Formation Team was commenced.

### Learning and Teaching

An increased percentage of students in Years Prep to Year 2 will be targeted to reach PM Benchmarks – Prep 95%, Year 1 – 95%, and Year 2 80%. The percentage of Year 3 to 6 students achieving the PAT(R) mean scale score targets for the year will be set at Year 3 – 70%, Year 4 – 70%, Year 5 – 80% and Year 6 – 80%. Students will be expected to articulate their reading goal and strategies for improvement.

### Our People

Being mindful of the impact of the world-wide pandemic, improvement in student school attendance data will be measured. Specific year levels will be targeted particularly through newsletter articles and parent nights, assemblies, school noticeboard postings, and celebration of targets met.

### Diversity and Inclusion

Staff induction into the school's Reconciliation Action Plan will commence from the beginning of the year. An improved cultural competence resulting from professional development is expected to be achieved. Student engagement and opportunities to experience Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture with the Australian Curriculum will be a focus from Term 1 planning onwards.

## Organisational Effectiveness

Resulting from the limited success of planned and targeted promotion of the school the previous year, connection and communication with local early education facilities will be continued. Term 1 will focus on 'Our Amazing Start', Term 2 will look towards Celebration of Learning times with parents, Term 3 will direct specific attention on Prep student achievement with this communicated to the wider community, with Term 4 culminating in an 'Our Amazing Journey' event. This will involve support from BCE specialist staff and the staff school marketing committee.

# Our school at a glance

## School profile

St Bernard's School is a Catholic school administered through Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane.

**Coeducational or single sex:** Coeducational

**Year levels offered in 2021:** Primary

### Student enrolments for this school:

	Total	Girls	Boys	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
2021	275	138	137	4

Student counts are based on the Census (August) enrolment collection.

The multicultural nature of the student body is a distinctive characteristic of the school with almost 40% of the student population having English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) background. For some children, English is their third language. This brings a richness of cultural diversity to the school community creating a vibrant atmosphere built on respectful relationships. Within the student and parent body Christianity is the predominant religion though there are many from differing religious backgrounds and faiths. This further adds to the richness within classes and across the school.

With a wide diversity of student academic ability, teaching is focused on student point of need and aligned with the Australian Curriculum. Student learning is further supported by teachers, the Support Teacher: Inclusive Education (ST:IE), the Primary Learning Leader (PLL), the Learning Engagement Teacher, the EAL/D teacher, part-time Speech Pathologist along with specialist support staff from Brisbane Catholic Education. Literacy extension for some students regularly occurred by the APRE.

With the school located within vicinity of two major arterial roads of the South-East Freeway and the Gateway Motorway, there are students commuting considerable distances from various locations. In addition, the area of Upper Mt Gravatt is located within a growth corridor of the city.

With almost equal numbers of male and female students throughout the school, the delivery of educational opportunities caters for various learning styles and interests. A vast majority of students transition at the end of Year 6 to Clairvaux MacKillop College which is directly adjacent to the school for high school education.

## Curriculum implementation

### Curriculum overview

St Bernard's School implements all eight learning areas of the Australian Curriculum. Teachers plan, teach, assess and report on the English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Health and Physical Education, Languages (Japanese), Technologies and the Arts. The school leadership team develops timetables that are relevant to the school context while ensuring adherence to recommended time allocations for the teaching of all areas. All teachers ensure that students, and their needs, are at

the centre of curriculum planning. In delivering the curriculum, teachers design, plan and implement all aspects of the relevant achievement standard for each learning area and/or subject provided in each year and/or band.

Teachers use the curriculum elements, such as the achievement standards, to guide teaching and learning sequences that give students opportunities to develop the three dimensions of the Australian Curriculum which are learning area disciplinary knowledge, understanding and skills, the seven general capabilities and three cross-curriculum priorities. Teachers collaboratively design unit plans for each learning area based on the achievement standards and content descriptions for the respective learning area as well as utilising student data. A yearly overview of each learning area is designed to ensure that all areas are covered each year. Year level unit plans consist of the relevant parts of the achievement standard being taught, the teaching and learning sequence and differentiation to meet the needs of students.

Teachers continually plan, monitor and review curriculum delivery at the school as students' needs are continually changing. Short-cycle planning is utilised to evaluate, modify and adapt teaching and learning sequences to the needs of the students. Monitoring student achievement is an ongoing process involving both formative and summative assessments. Teachers provide regular feedback to parents regarding student progress through informal meetings as well as formal communication opportunities, such as Parent-Teacher interviews and written reports, twice per year.

Support is given to teachers to build their knowledge and capability to ensure consistency of practice and use of high-impact strategies across the school. Teachers attend regular professional development sessions, plan collaboratively and engage in Review and Response meetings to move student learning forward. A common model of teaching and learning – Visible Learning practices, BCE's Effective and Expected practices, and High Yield strategies – is implemented across the school. Time and resources are allocated for teachers to plan and monitor the implementation of the curriculum collaboratively with the Primary Learning Leader.

High-quality education, which implements differentiation within the curriculum embraces the whole child. At St Bernard's, system supports and processes are in place to identify and support student learning. Student positive engagement for learning encompasses support across academic, behavioural, cognitive, and affective domains using three tiers of support. Each of the tiers targets all areas of education and embraces the student and their individual needs and strength. This allows the students at St Bernard's to access and engage in the curriculum and school community. Preventive and proactive practices that enhance learning are implemented to support high-quality education and curriculum engagement for all.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

Though the school is limited in physical size, it does provide many opportunities for students to participate in additional activities – some during break times and some after school. These include, but are not limited to:

- I.T. STEM Club, CSIRO STEM support, Minecraft Education club
- Music – Instrumental band, Strings (Violin and Cello) and Piano
- Choirs – Junior and Senior
- Sporting – Cross-country running, touch football, swimming, cricket, QC Netball carnival, Gala days, representation in Met. East District competitions
- Chess lessons
- Dance club
- Art club
- Dance Cart program
- Swimming lessons
- Book Fair.

## How information and communication technologies are used to assist learning

To support high-quality, integrated digital learning activities, a range of technologies is utilised. As the school has developed a rich digital environment Years 4 to 6 students are part of a 1:1 laptop program providing ubiquitous access to technology both in the classroom and outside the school. Students in Year 3 have access to a 1:1 laptop in the classroom which is the same type of device as students in the upper years. Students in Years Prep to Year 2 each have 1:1 access to classroom iPads. These devices remain at school though were loaned out to families during times when learning from home was necessitated due to the Covid-19 crisis.

With uninterrupted wireless access, students seamlessly integrate digital technologies into the curriculum continuously throughout the day. Every classroom has wireless access to interactive, touch-screen television panels which are in continual use. ICT Capabilities are integrated across all Key Learning Areas. In summary:

- 1:1 laptop program
- Digital skills incorporated into daily lessons
- Teachers use Microsoft Office365 to deliver teaching and learning activities regularly
- All year levels refer to the Technologies Curriculum to plan and implement teaching and learning programs throughout the year
- Further upskilling of Prep to Year 2 teachers carried out in the use of iPads
- BCE personnel utilised to work with Prep to Year 2 teachers to support teaching of digital skills and effective use of iPads.

## Social climate

### Overview

St Bernard's is a welcoming and supportive community with families from diverse religious, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The cultural mix of the school is reflective of the demographic of the area.

With a Positive Engagement for Learning (PB4L) approach throughout the school, students are encouraged and supported in all learning activities. A positive approach to daily activities, along with the responsibility to support others, is conveyed. Every activity is utilised as an opportunity to teach a positive approach to any given situation. This approach conveys to students that learning is life-giving and life-long.

Under the overarching umbrella of PB4L various threads are interwoven, though not limited to, positive behaviour for learning, Zones of Regulation, Circle Time, the school BERNI rules, positive growth mindset promotion, positive learning dispositions, small group and class social skills programs, BERNI Kid Program for check-in and check-out for some students. Communication between members of the school Student Support Team occurs at least fortnightly to ensure students requiring additional support occurs. This team comprises the ST:IE, Guidance Counsellor, Speech Pathologists, PLL, Principal, EAL/D Teacher, and, at times, the School Chaplain.

With a rich and diverse cultural student community the school gives emphasis to the importance of harmony and respect among all. Many activities are also planned around Harmony Day. Other important cultural days are emphasised at various times throughout the year due to the diverse cultural nature of the student community.

With the employment of a part-time Guidance Counsellor and a part-time School Chaplain (Federally funded) there is support for both students and parents. Other pastoral activities for families occur throughout the year as needed particularly during times of crisis or challenges. The School Chaplain also organises activities on specific days for some students who experience challenges during play time. A 'Starfish Room' has been developed for students to enable an alternative for the playground. This is rostered according to year levels and is supervised by a classroom teacher. Also, a Pastoral Care food bank exists for those children who are not able to bring food from home on a regular basis.

Throughout the year many additional community events are highlighted, such as, Biggest Morning Tea, Say No to Bullying Day, Under 8's Day, Day for Daniel, and NAIDOC Week, to name a few. Promotion of 'Day for Daniel' is aligned with the Health and P.E. curriculum across the school along with lessons

scheduled to support student advocacy for protection. 'Say No to Bullying' Day also is given emphasis as one way of promoting a safe school environment. Harmony Day activities are spread across a week as one way of promoting respect and the value of diverse culture within the St Bernard's community.

Cyber safety for all students is an important aspect in a digital world. To support student responsible use of digital technologies, the school sourced an external professional development agency to provide in-service opportunities for both students and parents. These in-service opportunities are provided at least twice per year and will occur for the coming years in response to evident needs.

Playground data of behaviour informs the school regarding play activities. No bullying actions are accepted and are dealt with as soon as they become evident. Parents are contacted with meetings organised to address any issue. Resources from BCE are utilised to promote a respectful perspective and are infused into all areas of the school to promote a positive social climate.

Differentiation of the curriculum by teachers occurs through refinement of curriculum planning and delivery. The ST:IE and PLL work in close collaboration with classroom teachers to ensure that classroom activities address student needs. Monitoring and review of activities occur with the classroom teacher during short-cycle planning sessions.

An active Parents and Friends Association supports the school as well as assisting with resourcing for curriculum activities and needs of students. Funds are raised through social activities and a levy. Activities, such as, Mother's and Father's Day gatherings, Welcome BBQ, Fete (every 2<sup>nd</sup> year), student discos, Biggest Morning Tea, and other events involve both the school and wide community. Other members of the wider community are highly valued when they volunteer to spend time reading with students particularly for those who need individual attention.

### Parent, student and staff satisfaction

The tables below show selected items from the Parent/Caregiver, Student and Staff BCE Listens Surveys.

#### BCE Listens Survey - Parent satisfaction

Performance measure	
Percentage of parents/carers who agree# that:	2020
This school helps my child to develop their relationship with God	98.3%
School staff demonstrate the school's Catholic Christian values	95.0%
Teachers at this school have high expectations for my child	91.7%
Staff at this school care about my child	98.4%
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns	88.5%
Teachers at this school encourage me to take an active role in my child's education	88.5%
My child feels safe at this school	91.8%
The facilities at this school support my child's educational needs	93.4%
This school looks for ways to improve	82.0%
I am happy my child is at this school	89.8%

## BCE Listens Survey - Student satisfaction

Performance measure	
Percentage of students who agree <sup>#</sup> that:	2020
My school helps me develop my relationship with God	87.6%
I enjoy learning at my school	93.3%
Teachers expect me to work to the best of my ability in all my learning	96.0%
Feedback from my teacher helps me learn	95.3%
Teachers at my school treat me fairly	91.9%
If I was unhappy about something at school I would talk to a school leader or teacher about it	67.8%
I feel safe at school	85.2%
I am happy to be at my school	89.9%

## BCE Listens Survey - Staff satisfaction

Performance measure	
Percentage of staff who agree <sup>#</sup> that:	2020
Working at this school helps me to have a deeper understanding of faith	93.9%
School staff demonstrate this school's Catholic Christian values	97.0%
This school acts on staff feedback	75.0%
This school looks for ways to improve	97.0%
I am recognised for my efforts at work	84.8%
In general students at this school respect staff members	90.9%
This school makes student protection everyone's responsibility	100.0%
I enjoy working at this school	96.8%

<sup>#</sup> 'Agree' represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement.  
DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

## Family and community engagement

Parent and community engagement in the school is encouraged at every opportunity. Processes to involve parents in their child's learning are frequently initiated by the class teacher. At the beginning of each year, all parents are invited to an evening information session. Communication by teachers with parents occurs throughout the year along with teachers forwarding a class newsletter outlining current and future activities along with curriculum aspects. Formal and informal meetings occur with parents. Where needed, a support person may accompany a parent to a meeting to facilitate language translation.

Each class has a 'Class Blog' which supports communication between the classroom and parents. This enables parents to be aware of homework requirements along with information about class and school activities.

Each class endeavours to have a volunteer parent who will assist with communication among parents of the class to support school engagement and conveying class activity information. Parents who volunteer for this support role assist communication between the classroom teachers and other parents. Involvement by parents is encouraged with classroom helping, assisting with some excursions, supporting early years motor program on most Thursday mornings, attending Under 8's Day activities, volunteering at tuckshop, participating in working bees, being a reading helper, along with many other opportunities.

Formal support team meetings with parents of students with diverse needs occur at least three times per year. Shorter, informal meetings occur at additional times when needed. With written parental



permission, liaison also takes place with outside agencies to support the learning engagement of students with diverse needs.

School newsletters are forwarded home electronically each week with some copies available from the school office for those few families without electronic access.

## School funding

### School income broken down by funding source

School income, reported by financial year accounting cycle using standardized national methodologies and broken down by funding source is available via the *My School* website.

### How to access income details

1. Click on the *My School* link <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.
2. Enter the school name or suburb of the school you wish to search.

The screenshot shows the search interface on the My School website. It features a search bar with the placeholder text "Search by school name or suburb" and a "Go" button. Below the search bar are three dropdown menus labeled "School sector", "School type", and "State". Above the search bar are two buttons: "Find a school" and "Search website".

3. Click on 'View School Profile' of the appropriate school to access the school's profile.

A rectangular button with a thin border and the text "View School Profile" centered inside.

4. Click on 'Finances' and select the appropriate year to view the school financial information.

The screenshot shows a horizontal navigation menu with several items: "School profile", "NAPLAN", "Attendance", "Finances", "VET in schools", "Senior secondary", and "Schools map". The "Finances" item is highlighted with a white underline.

Note: If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a hard copy of the school's financial information.

# Our staff profile

## Workforce composition

Description	Teaching Staff*	Non-Teaching Staff
Headcount	24	16
Full-time Equivalents	19.1	8.8

\*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

## Qualification of all teachers\*

Highest level of qualification	Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school
Doctorate	0
Masters	6
Graduate diploma etc.**	4
Bachelor degree	14
Diploma	0
Certificate	0

\*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

\*\*Graduate diploma etc. includes graduate diploma, bachelor honours degree, and graduate certificate.

## Professional development

The major professional development initiatives are as follows:

- Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Standards for Education
- Epilepsy Training
- Dyslexia Training
- First Aid and CPR
- Religious Education Modules staff formation
- Student Protection
- Workplace Health and Safety
- Positive Engagement for Learning
- Emotional Regulation in students
- Phonological development in students
- Early Career Teacher mentoring, coaching and peer support
- Language and Learning, and EA/LD learners
- SPELD – Executive functioning in students.

The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2021 was 98%.

## Staff attendance and retention

### Average staff attendance

Description	%
Staff attendance for permanent and temporary staff and school leaders	96.6%

### Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year

From the end of the previous school year, 81% of staff were retained by the school for the entire 2021.

# Performance of our students

## Key student outcomes

### Student attendance

The overall student attendance rate in 2021 for all Brisbane Catholic Education schools across years Prep-6 was 92.4%.

Description	%
The overall attendance rate* for the students at this school	92.9%
Attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at this school	91.3%

Average attendance rate per year level			
Prep attendance rate	93.5%	Year 4 attendance rate	93.1%
Year 1 attendance rate	91.9%	Year 5 attendance rate	91.3%
Year 2 attendance rate	92.4%	Year 6 attendance rate	93.1%
Year 3 attendance rate	95.4%		

\*The student attendance rate is generated by dividing the total of full-days and part-days that students attended, and comparing this to the total of all possible days for students to attend, expressed as a percentage.

### Description of how non-attendance is managed by the school

Class rolls are marked electronically by classroom teachers twice daily – in the morning 9:00 a.m. and in the afternoon by 2:30 p.m. The Principal electronically monitors daily roll marking. Parents are required to utilise the BCE Connect App to inform the school regarding a student's absence.

An SMS message is forwarded to the appropriate parent if contact has not been made with the school by 9:30 a.m. regarding a student's absence. For frequent absences (without a valid medical reason) phone contact is made with the relevant parent and a meeting organised to support more consistent school attendance by the student. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic during 2021, attendance for a small number of students was impacted due to their compromised health conditions. The school followed the medical directions required for specific students who needed to remain isolated.

The School Chaplain and school leadership team work with the applicable parent to devise strategies to improve the student's rate of attendance. The student may be involved in this process dependent on circumstances. At times the Guidance Counsellor may also provide support in this process.

For a student with a planned extended absence from school due to a family event, an application must be submitted more than one month in advance for 11 or more days by the applicable parent. Dialogue also occurs with the class teacher to ensure work is given to the student to ensure a continuation of their learning. A copy of this paperwork is kept with the student's central file in the office.

Frequent notices are placed in the school newsletter regarding the importance of full, daily attendance. Posters regarding the effect of absence from school on student progress are located in the information display cabinet in the assembly area as well as on the noticeboard in the student entry area of the school office. Promotion of the benefits of full daily attendance occurs in the weekly school newsletter, at parent meetings, and at whole school assemblies.

When necessary, the Assistant Principal – Religious Education (APRE) and the School Chaplain dialogue with parents to support daily student attendance.

## NAPLAN

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN tests are available via the [My School](#) website.

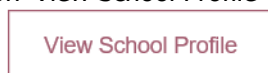
### How to access our NAPLAN results

1. Click on the *My School* link <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.
2. Enter the school name or suburb of the school you wish to search.



A screenshot of the My School search interface. It features a search bar with the placeholder text "Search by school name or suburb". To the right of the search bar are three dropdown menus labeled "School sector", "School type", and "State". A magnifying glass icon is positioned to the right of the "State" dropdown.

3. Click on 'View School Profile' of the appropriate school to access the school's profile.



4. Click on 'NAPLAN' to access the school NAPLAN information.



#### Notes:

1. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a hard copy of the school's NAPLAN results.
2. The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy ([NAPLAN](#)) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.