



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

# Annual Report 2020

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



**Brisbane  
Catholic  
Education**

teaching • challenging • transforming

# Contact information

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

## Principal's foreword

The 2020 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 Brisbane inner city suburb of Upper Mt Gravatt. Presently student enrolment is 311 students. The student population includes approximately 35% of children 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 the students will 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 their 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 founded the school in 1955. The joy of learning is valued and each child is welcomed as an integral member within the school community.

### School progress towards its goals in 2020

With students being supported to be life-long learners to meet challenges as compassionate members of the community, during 2020 the school focussed on three main goals while responding to the world-wide health challenges. Three main areas received focus – strengthening Catholic identity, implementing excellent teaching and learning, and building a sustainable future.

All staff were engaged in formation programs while ensuring that education documents were planned and developed. Contemporary Christian perspectives across all curriculum areas were embedded in addition to effective teaching occurring, monitoring of student progress occurred and teacher knowledge was enhanced. Initial steps to develop a new school song were taken. While some progress was made in this area further work will occur in the following year. Attention to the school's Charism statement will also need attention in the following year as limited progress was made.

Excellent learning and teaching practices were a priority of the school particularly in light of the specific characteristics of the school population. A goal for the year was for each student to achieve their potential through the effective implementation and embedding of literacy strategies. Short-cycle planning was implemented along with utilisation of whole-part-whole practices. Professional development sessions on reading and writing skills occurred. Review and response processes occurred along with learning walks and talks through classrooms when possible. In light of distancing restrictions these practices will again receive focus in the following year.

Data responsive English planning occurred along with student learning goals being implemented. Resourcing was allocated by a dedicated teacher to extension activities with groups of very capable students from Years 3 to 6 each week. These students thrived on the challenges presented to them enabling them to implement knowledge, skills and understandings already encountered in the classroom. Classroom teachers will be required to implement similar strategies in the following year due to limited staff resourcing.

Stewardship of both human and physical resourcing was displayed. This was carried out in a transparent, complementary and accountable manner and was informed by equity and sustainability in dialogue with staff. Regular auditing of school resources occurred with staff in conjunction Brisbane Catholic Education (BCE) personnel. Areas of need across the school were identified with priorities and timelines set for procurement within financial capability. A three to five-year plan was attempted to be developed regarding the school site with parish and BCE personnel. While initial progress commenced further steps required a review in light of enrolment numbers and demographic trends.

Much time and resourcing was directed toward support of early career teachers. With the school having employed a significant proportion of teachers who had recently commenced their teaching career much resourcing in terms of coaching, mentoring and professional development took place. In the following year many of these teachers will have completed their early career teaching status and will move from being considered graduate teachers towards a proficiency status.

Areas of particular achievement during 2020 included professional development involvement by teaching staff in whole-part-whole short-cycle planning in response to student data, strategic resourcing and use of facilities which enhanced, and celebrated, learning and teaching. Evaluation of the impact of teaching on student progress and achievement also increased.

### **Future outlook**

In 2021 St Bernard's School will look to address the following areas:

- Throughout the year there will be specific action to increase public awareness of the school. This will be through a renewed school marketing team, use of digital technology and networks to promote the school, and utilisation of outside school agencies to increase enrolments,
- By the end of Term 2 a nominated percentage of Prep to Yr 2 students will have reached their PM reading target through explicit teaching of phonological awareness and comprehension strategies, clear Learning Intention and Success Criteria use along with gradual release of responsibility, as well as data driven and targeted intervention programs,
- By the end of Term 2 the percentage of students in Year 3 to 6 to reach the writing analysis target will be achieved through utilisation of high-yield strategies targeted at identified writing components, effect and practices (GRR) consistently implemented, with explicit feedback processes occurring.
- By the end of Term 3 a Reconciliation Action Plan will have been developed and implemented through the utilisation of collective networks, with resulting actions of an acknowledgment of country consistently heard, a Reconciliation Action Plan vision developed, and a selection of 14 key action items commenced,
- By the end of the year students will have achieved an attendance rate of 85% through implementation of BCE's Attendance Matters strategy, reduction in late arrivals, focus on Prep attendance, individual attendance support plans, and community awareness.

# Our school at a glance

## School profile

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

**Coeducational or single sex:** Coeducational

**Year levels offered in 2020:** Primary

### Student enrolments for this school:

	Total	Girls	Boys	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
2020	312	153	159	6

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

The multicultural nature of the student body is distinctive with almost 40% of the student population having English as an additional Language or Dialect background. For some children it 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 body there are students of differing religious background though a predominance of students follow a Christian tradition. This further adds to the richness within classes and across the school.

With a wide diversity of student academic ability teaching is focussed on student point of need. Student learning is further supported by teachers, the Support Teacher Inclusive Education, the Primary Learning Leader, Learning Enhancement Teacher and specialist support staff from Brisbane Catholic Education.

With the school located within vicinity of two (2) major arterial roads of the South-East Freeway and the Gateway Motorway there are students commuting considerable distances. The area of Upper Mt Gravatt is located within a growth corridor of the city.

With almost equal numbers of boys and girls 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 Catholic School implements all 8 learning areas of the Australian Curriculum learning areas. Teachers plan, teach, assess and report on the English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Health and Physical Education, Languages, 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 content descriptions, 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.

As effective teaching and learning occurs where teachers have both a deep knowledge of the curriculum and the skills to use high-impact strategies support is given to teachers to build their knowledge and capability to ensure consistency of practice across the school. Teachers attend regular professional development sessions, plan collaboratively and engage in Review and Response meetings to move students learning forward. A common model of teaching and learning – Visible Learning practices, BCE's Effective and Expected practices as well as High Yield strategies – has been put in place 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 the three tiers of support. Each of the tiers targets all areas of education and embraces the student and their individual needs and strengths. 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 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, Mini-Coders club, Minecraft Education club
- Music - Instrumental band, Strings (Violin and Cello), Piano, and Guitar
- 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
- Debating club

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

To support high-quality, integrated digital learning activities a range of technologies are utilised. As the school has developed a rich digital environment, Year 4, 5 and 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 Years 1, 2 and 3 each have 1:1 access to classroom iPads. These remain at the school. Prep students also have access to iPads for class group work.

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 continually in 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 programs – Word, Forms, Sways, OneNote – 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 Yr 2 teachers carried out in the use of iPads.
- BCE personnel utilised to work with Prep to Yr 2 teachers to support teaching of digital skills and efficient use of iPads.

## Social climate

### Overview

St Bernard's School is a welcoming and supportive community with families from diverse cultural 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 encouraged and supported in all learning and teaching activities students continually experience the importance of a positive approach to daily activities along with their responsibility to also support others. Every activity is utilised as an opportunity to teach a positive approach to a situation. This approach conveys to students that learning is life-giving and life-long.

Under the over-arching umbrella of Positive Engagement for Learning various threads are interwoven, though not limited to, positive behaviour for learning, Zones of Regulation, 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 Support Teacher Inclusive Education, Guidance Counsellor, Speech Pathologists, Primary Learning Leader, Principal, EALD teacher, and, at times, the School Chaplain and classroom teacher.

With a rich, 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 times 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 much 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 Pastoral Care food bank exists for those children who are not able to bring food from home.

Throughout the year many additional community events are highlighted, such as, Biggest Morning Tea, Shave (Colour) for a Cure, Say No to Bullying, Day for Daniel, among others. Promotion of the '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 cultures.

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 which promote a Catholic perspective and are infused into all areas of learning to promote a positive social climate.

Differentiation of the curriculum by teachers occurs through refinement of curriculum planning and delivery. The Support Teacher Inclusive Education (STIE) and Primary Learning Leader (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 along as well as assisting with resourcing for curriculum activities and needs of students. Through social activities and a levy funds are raised. Activities, such as, Mothers' and Fathers' Day gatherings, Welcome BBQ, Fete (every 2<sup>nd</sup> year), student discos, Biggest Morning Teac and other events, involve both the school and wider community. Other members of the wider community are highly valued when they volunteer to spend time reading with students – particularly 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.

Percentage of parents/ carers who agree that:	2018	2020
This school helps my child to develop their relationship with God	NA	98%
School staff demonstrate the school's Catholic Christian values	NA	95%
Teachers at this school have high expectations for my child	NA	92%
Staff at this school care about my child	NA	98%
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns	NA	89%
Teachers at this school encourage me to take an active role in my child's education	NA	89%
My child feels safe at this school	NA	92%
The facilities at this school support my child's educational needs	NA	93%
This school looks for ways to improve	NA	82%
I am happy my child is at this school	NA	90%

Percentage of students who agree that:	2018	2020
My school helps me develop my relationship with God	86%	88%
I enjoy learning at my school	93%	93%
Teachers expect me to work to the best of my ability in all my learning	95%	96%
Feedback from my teacher helps me learn	95%	95%
Teachers treat students fairly at my school	84%	92%
If I was unhappy about something at school I would talk to a school leader or teacher about it	72%	68%
I feel safe at school	83%	85%
I am happy to be at my school	89%	90%

Percentage of staff who agree that:	2018	2020
Working at this school helps me to have a deeper understanding of faith	83%	94%
School staff demonstrate this school's Catholic Christian values	91%	97%
This school acts on staff feedback	52%	75%
This school looks for ways to improve	91%	97%
I am recognised for my efforts at work	59%	85%
In general, students at this school respect staff members	91%	91%
This school makes student protection everyone's responsibility	90%	100%
I enjoy working at this school	81%	97%

## **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 endeavours to have a volunteer parent who will assist with communication among parents of the class to support school engagement. 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 Thursday mornings, attending Under 8's 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. With parent 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 families without electronic access. The facility for the school newsletter to be converted into the preferred language of each family is an embedded tool.

## **Environmental footprint**

### **Reducing the school's environmental footprint**

With the school located within close proximity to the intersection of two busy roads this has necessitated a design to address the noise corridor requirements of the location. This has resulted in each classroom needing to be air-conditioned requiring significant electricity consumption. While a small PV solar installation exists investigations continue about its replacement with a much larger system which would reduce school usage. During 2020 teachers made a significant effort to not turn on their room air-conditioning for parts of the school day and to open windows to allow for natural ventilation.

With a sizeable amount of roofing rainwater is collected into two large storage tanks and is plumbed into the school toilets. This greatly reduces the school's potable water usage.

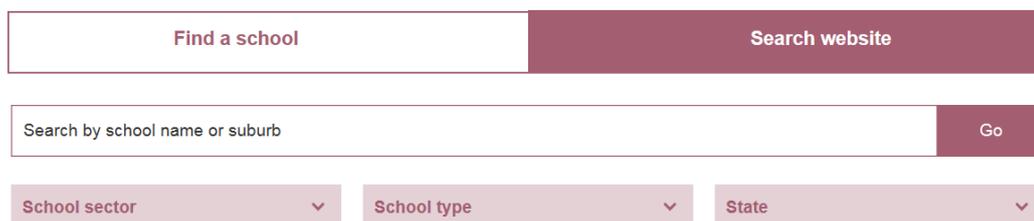
## **School funding**

### **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.



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



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



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	26	17
Full-time Equivalents	22.1	9.2

\*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	9
Graduate diploma etc.**	4
Bachelor degree	13
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:

- Early Career Teacher in-service days
- Early Career Teacher in-school mentoring
- Staff formation – Christian Perspectives

- Positive Engagement for Learning – BCE personnel workshop input
- Student Protection
- Disability Discrimination Act / Standards
- Input on student medical issues and response training
- First Aid training
- English curriculum – high yield strategies and short-cycle planning
- Workplace Health and Safety
- MultiLit phonological / language program

The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2020 was 100%.

## Staff attendance and retention

### Average staff attendance

Description	%
Staff attendance for permanent and temporary staff and school leaders	97.8%

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

From the end of the previous school year, 84% of staff was retained by the school for the entire 2020.

## Performance of our students

### Key student outcomes

#### Student attendance

The overall student attendance rate in 2020 for all Brisbane Catholic Education schools across years Prep-6 was 92.1%.

Description	%
The overall attendance rate* for the students at this school	90.8%
Attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at this school	85.1%

Average attendance rate per year level			
Prep attendance rate	90.3%	Year 4 attendance rate	89.7%
Year 1 attendance rate	89.3%	Year 5 attendance rate	91.4%
Year 2 attendance rate	92.0%	Year 6 attendance rate	92.1%
Year 3 attendance rate	90.3%		

\*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 teachers twice daily – both in the morning and afternoon. 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 pandemic during 2020 attendance for a small number of students was impacted due to their compromised health conditions. The school followed the medical directions required for these specific students as they needed to remain isolated.

The School Chaplain and 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. At time, 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 is made 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 and also 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 Assistance 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.



The screenshot shows a search bar with the text "Search by school name or suburb". To the right are three dropdown menus labeled "School sector", "School type", and "State", followed by a magnifying glass icon.

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

View School Profile

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



The screenshot shows a horizontal navigation menu with several items: "School profile", "NAPLAN" (which is highlighted with a white background and a dropdown arrow), "Attendance", "Finances", "VET in schools", "Senior secondary", and "Schools map".

### 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.