

# Annual School Report

## 2020 School Year

### St James' Primary School, Yamba



ST JAMES SCHOOL  
*Yamba*



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[moodle.yamplism.catholic.edu.au](http://moodle.yamplism.catholic.edu.au)

## About this report

St James' Primary School is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The *Annual Report to the Parish School Community* for this year provides the parish school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The *Report* also outlines to the parish school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school Improvement Plan.

The *Report* demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the Catholic Schools Office (CSO). This *Report* has been approved by the CSO which monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NESA requirements for Registration.

This *Report* complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, yearbooks and other regular communications. The *Report* must be available on the school's website by 30 June 2021 following its submission to NESA.

The contents of this *Report* may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this *Report* may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6646 3266 or by visiting the website at [moodle.yamplism.catholic.edu.au](http://moodle.yamplism.catholic.edu.au).



## 1.0 Messages

### 1.1 Principal's Message

The primary purpose of St James' Primary School is to support the members of the parish community in providing a faith formation for their children. The school fosters a commitment to the individual person and provides opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. St James' Primary School offers students a quality Catholic education based on the teaching of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community.

Our parish school continued to provide many opportunities for the students to excel in academic, cultural and sporting areas. All of these areas combined to ensure that our school's mission was lived out daily in the life of the school.

The students' achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2020. Student work was proudly displayed in classrooms, on school noticeboards and in the school office. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies. Our focus was to continue to build on the reputation that St James' Primary School has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school's academic achievements. In 2020 the school:

- Continued to embed Writing Beliefs in the curriculum with Stage 2 and 3 children entering scripts in the Long Way Home Writing Competition.
- Students from St James placed second and third with an additional seven scripts being published in an anthology.

There were many opportunities throughout the year for our school to be represented at community and cultural events. The following list provides an indication of the school's cultural program and community involvement. In 2020 the school:

- Linked online with the local aged care centre to make connections and support the residents when access was limited. A photo wall, online interviews, storytelling and card making were all incorporated in the project.
- Held a design competition to promote NAIDOC Week. The River Garden saw every child represented in the final design and the totems of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students incorporated in this representation of our school community.

Students performed well at various sporting events throughout the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights. In 2020:

- 21 students attended Zone Swimming Carnival. Four of these students attended the Diocesan Swimming Carnival. Two students qualified for the Polding Swimming Carnival but were unable to attend due to Covid-19.
- Stage 3 attended the Lower Clarence Basketball Gala Day early in Term 1.
- St James continued to offer the students the opportunity to compete at a local level. The School Cross Country and School Athletics Carnival were held in Terms 2 and 3 with all children participating.



- Term 4, 3 students attended the Diocesan Summer Sports Trials.
- A 4 week Basketball program at Raymond Laurie Sports Centre was undertaken by all students.

There were many people who assisted in the school's quest for excellence. In particular, special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St James' Primary School is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

Ann Dawson  
Principal

## 1.2 A Parent Message

In 2020 the Parish School Forum offered significant support to the school community. All decisions were made to offer access to the families and children in terms of cost support for excursions to acknowledge the efforts of the children as learners who maintained their efforts throughout the year.

The Parish School Forum also supported the introduction of a school year book. Designed by a member of the community and including items from all stages this was a celebration of the successes of the year.

The Parish School Forum supported the development of the Class Parents' team who worked to maintain family connections across the year.

Jodie Jones  
Chair  
Parish School Forum

## 2.0 This Catholic School

### 2.1 The School Community

St James' Primary School is located in Yamba and is part of the St Mary's Parish which serves the communities of James Creek, Palmers Island, Iluka, Maclean, Chatsworth Island, Mororo, Harwood, Angourie, Wooloweyah and Yamba., from which the school families are drawn.

Last year the school celebrated 23 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest Father Nicolas Maurice is involved in the life of the school.

St James' Primary School is a parish school with strong links to the parish family. The school aims to involve the children and their families in the life of the parish through activities such as:

- Offering retreats for students in Years 4-6 as part of the student discipleship supported by the Diocese of Lismore.
- Used digital technologies to introduce the Early Stage 1 students to St James Catholic Church, Yamba to begin the building of parish school links.
- Building formation across the school with a common focus with St James, the apostle as a catalyst.
- Supporting the St Vincent de Paul outreach programs through the annual Christmas Appeal.
- Regular classroom visits by Father Nicolas Maurice to enrich the Religious Education program in Stage 3.



The parish school uses the mandated Diocesan Religious Education curriculum and the resource text "To Know, Worship & Love". Catholic life and culture permeate school life with two and a half hours of religious education taught formally each week. The Diocesan Daily Prayer guidelines support the school's prayer life. The aims and direction of our parish school are guided by *The Mission of Jesus Christ Foundational Values Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore*. This Framework underpins all policy, planning, roles and processes within the parish school. Our aim is to increasingly integrate the essence of this statement into all aspects of school life. Religious Education is given priority in our school and classroom curriculum and planning.

The parish school Mission Statement highlights the nature and calling of the school.

## 2.2 School Enrolment

St James' Primary School caters for children from Years K to 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

	Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	TOTAL 2020	TOTAL 2019
<b>Male</b>	11	12	6	8	9	10	10	66	68
<b>Female</b>	15	13	12	9	13	9	7	78	72
<b>Indigenous *</b>	1	2	0	2	1	2	1	9	8
<b>EALD *</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17

\* count included in first two rows

NB: EALD refers to students who have English as an Additional Language or Dialect.

## 2.3 Student Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is important that they attend school regularly. Whilst it is the parents' legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly, staff monitor attendance each day as a part of their duty of care. The Class Roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each week by the principal or their delegate. The school uses the attendance coding system adopted in all NSW schools. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by staff. Parents are requested to provide a satisfactory explanation for an absence by means such as a written note, telephone call, SMS message or email to the school preferably on the first day of absence, and certainly within seven days. The principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations, the principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases, students and their parents meet with the principal to discuss the leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2020 is shown in the following table.

Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All Years
91.9%	92.2%	95.1%	93.1%	94.0%	89.1%	92.0%	92.3%

## 2.4 Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

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 NESAs. Effective from October 2007, the minimum qualification for a teacher in a systemic school in the Diocese of Lismore 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 Diocese at these levels is as follows: Conditional 82 teacher(s); Provisional 93 teacher(s); Proficient 946 teacher(s); Highly Accomplished 1 teacher(s); Lead 2 teacher(s). Teacher status at individual schools can be sourced directly from the School.

At this school there are 16 teacher(s) accredited with NESAs, 9 teacher(s) with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education, 1 Indigenous staff and 9 non-teaching staff.

## 2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average teacher attendance figure is 93.8%. This figure is provided to the school by the CSO.

Due to the health emergency of 2020 there were significant periods of Long Service Leave and Carers leave taken by staff. The completion of the Pacific Motorway saw several staff relocate away from the Clarence Valley in Semester Two.

## 2.6 Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. We want every student to understand and appreciate that they are part of both the school and the local community.

The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

- All learning groups develop charters of behaviour which are displayed prominently within the classrooms in line with the Pastoral Care (Leading to Wellbeing) Policy.
- Every 5 weeks the academic assembly includes the St James Award, Be Your Best Self and Making Jesus Real awards to acknowledge students who have been positive role models in our school community.
- Making Jesus Real is a cornerstone of everyday life within St James School. At Monday's assembly the language of MJR is used to offer students a positive message regarding respect and their responsibilities as learners and to be good citizens.
- Mini Vinnies continues to support our local St Vincent de Paul in the Christmas Appeal and engagement with our local Aged Care Centre. This instils in students our responsibility to support others who are less fortunate than us.

## 2.7 Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The school uses a variety of methods to gauge parental, student and teacher satisfaction with school operations. The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. Last year the following formal and informal opportunities allowed the school to test reaction to decisions, policy and school procedures.

Due to the health emergency parent satisfaction was gauged by the use of online tools and regular calls to parents across all terms. Seesaw and the introduction of an online newsletter allowed children



to share their learning and parents to be informed and involved with the school activities. Children continued to be part of the planning for learning to ensure student voice was valued.

### **3.0 Teaching and Learning**

#### **3.1 School Curriculum**

The school provides a comprehensive 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, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

As a National Partnership in Literacy and Numeracy school all staff were working towards embedding the Gradual Release of Control Model of learning to better support engagement of all learners. A particular focus of 2020 was action research into the sustainable practice of in-class identification and support for children who are High Potential Learners. This professional learning assisted staff to recognise the rigour required to increase student agency within the curriculum and to ensure that all staff were confident in the delivery of a diverse curriculum.

Programs such as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics(STEM), Standardised Test for Assessment of Reading(STAR), Macquarie Literacy Program(MacqLit) and extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) offer children the opportunity to consolidate learnings and extend their thinking.

Our continued engagement process with Sydney University in the use of Creative Arts as a vehicle for rich learning in literacy is evident in the student results.

An increase in the active use of technology, due to the health emergency, supported student engagement and offered children variety in the manner in which they demonstrated their understandings and reflected on themselves as learners. Tools such as SeeSaw and Zoom have allowed students to better share their learning beyond the classroom and helped the students to connect with their families and the school in partnership.

In 2020 St James school began a new journey in early learning. By linking the Early Learning Framework, Australian Education Data Collection information and the school context, the emphasis on deliberate age appropriate investigations in Early Stage One embraced inquiry and play based personalised learning. This shift saw eight staff trained in this pedagogy and offered the children opportunities to develop life skills through investigations and builds on other skills in literacy and numeracy.

This pedagogy is complementary to the work in co-planned,cross-curricula learning that is visible in all other stages.

The parish primary school offers a strong co-curricular program including student participation in:

- Process Drama in all Stages to build depth of inquiry in History and English.
- Activities which required engagement with our local community through our integrated units in Semester 1. This involved the students working with our local aged care centre, Clarence Valley Council, and local authors from Long Way Home in an online mode. With the active support of our parent community the children travelled within the Clarence Valley to engage with local markets and businesses during blended learning, to complete their online task with great success.
- Designing and building gardens onsite by all Stages focusing on sustainability.

## 3.2 Student Performance in National Testing Programs

### 3.2.1 NAPLAN

There are no NAPLAN results to report in 2020 as a result of the decision by the Australian Government for students not to participate in the NAPLAN Assessments due to the circumstances of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

## 3.3 Teacher Professional Learning

All teachers have been involved in professional learning activities during the year. These activities are designed to develop the professional skills and understandings of staff so as to improve student outcomes. Professional development can take many forms including whole-staff development days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences.

Whole staff development day professional learning activities in 2020 were:

Staff Professional Learning Activity	Date	Presenter
High Impact Mathematics	21/10/2020	Peter Sullivan
Online Learning Platforms	07/04/2020	CSO Lismore
Digital Technologies	24/11/2020	JJ Purton

Additionally, staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:

Activity	Staff numbers	Presenter
Play Based Learning	8	Walker Learning
PLC's Refresher	4	Colin Sloper

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at \$3041 per staff member. This figure has been calculated by the CSO and reflects expenditure on casual release days and professional development activities in particular categories.

## 4.0 School Policies

### 4.1 Enrolment Policy

Parish schools were established as places of educational excellence and places that transmit the faith, in the mission entrusted to the Church by our Lord Jesus Christ. They form part of a tradition of Catholic education provided by religious and lay teachers in the Diocese of Lismore for over 150 years. They also fulfil parents' rights to choose the schooling for their children which reflects their own faith, values, beliefs and hopes. Catholic schools have a particular responsibility to provide a Catholic religious education to children baptised in the Catholic faith and to support parents in honouring the commitments that they made on behalf of their children at baptism. The Catholic school is also "open to all who want to share its educational and faith goals inspired by Christian principles" (Congregatio de Institutione Catholica 2009). Most importantly, there is a special place in parish schools for those with the greatest need, especially in areas of lesser educational options or lower socio economic circumstances, and efforts should be made to encourage such enrolments, within the vision of the Bishop of Lismore for the poor. Every new enrolment at St James' Primary School requires parents to attend an enrolment interview. The interview provides an opportunity to learn more about the educational experience provided by the school, specific school procedural policies and current school expectations. The School Enrolment Policy explains the Parish enrolment guidelines. A copy of the





enrolment policy is located in the school office or it can be accessed on the school's [website](#). There have been no changes to this policy this year.

#### **4.2 Pastoral Care Policy**

The school's Pastoral Care Policy is based on the principles of justice and procedural fairness. The policy reflects the vision and mission of the Catholic Church and is characterised by safety, trust and mutual respect. To live out this policy the school has adopted various programs aimed at helping students value themselves and experience wellbeing. These include programs focussing on self-esteem, social relationships, moral development, vocational awareness, sexuality, anti-bullying, drug awareness, health and personal safety. The school's pastoral care program has been developed in consultation with staff, parents and students and is available on the school's website. There have been no changes to this policy this year.

#### **4.3 Discipline Policy**

The school does not sanction corporal punishment or allow parents to administer corporal punishment in the school.

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and ensures that school practices respect the dignity, rights and fundamental freedoms of individual students. Students are required to abide by the school rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with delegated authority. Where disciplinary action is required any penalty imposed will vary according to the nature of the breach and/or the student's prior behaviour. The policy is discussed with students, staff and parents on a regular basis. Reminders about the policy are regularly included in school newsletters. Relevant sections of the policy are also published in the student diary and it is available on the school's website. There have been no changes to this policy this year.

#### **4.4 Anti-Bullying Policy**

The school's Anti Bullying Policy fosters a cohesive approach to the issue of bullying and includes specific initiatives that are designed to promote pastoral care, wellbeing and safe school communities. This policy covers the bullying of students with disabilities. Disabled children and young people need to know they have the right to be safe from bullying, what bullying is, how to keep safe and what to do if adults do not do enough to stop the bullying. The dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching and intrinsic to our education ministry. There have been no changes to this policy this year and it is available on the school website.

#### **4.5 Complaints and Grievance Policy**

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly, and confidentiality is always maintained. There have been no changes to this policy this year and it is available on the school website.

#### **5.0 School Determined Improvement Targets**

Each year the school implements the School Improvement Plan. 2020 was a very rewarding year.

<b>Key improvements achieved this year</b>	<b>Key Improvements for 2021</b>
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<p><b>Mission of Jesus Christ</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created school community partnerships that nurture and support life formed in the Mission of Jesus Christ.</li> </ul> <p>Catechesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff provided experiences for students to encounter Jesus through Catholic Worldview permeation.</li> </ul> <p>Evangelisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff understood their role as Catholic educators to lead other to the "fullness of life".</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mission of Jesus Christ</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create school community partnerships that nurture and support life formed in the Mission of Jesus Christ. This is a continued goal focused on the Catholic Identity of the school.</li> </ul> <p>Evangelisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff develop their knowledge of our school foundations leading to understanding their role as Catholic educators to lead others to "fullness of life".</li> </ul> <p>Catechesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff develop a stronger curriculum and pedagogical understanding in religious education through involvement in the RENEW project.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Learning and Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Built a learning community that values continuous improvement, collaboration and feedback which responds to the needs of all learners, prompting intellectual rigour through a rich and inclusive curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback given to learners in Writing as a result of the focus of all PLT's using the learning progressions.</li> </ul> <p>Numeracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Whole School Beliefs statement developed.</li> <li>MAI feedback given to parents and students.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning and Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build a learning community that values continuous improvement, collaboration and feedback which responds to the needs of all learners, promoting intellectual rigour through a rich and inclusive curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>Numeracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration and feedback loops in place and documented for numeracy.</li> </ul> <p>Literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase engagement in Literacy through the deliberate implementation of the literacy block where children of all abilities are catered for through the High Potential Learners Action Research.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pastoral Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed an agreed understanding of Pastoral Care beliefs and practices ensuring that school community relationships and student wellbeing is central with the intended outcome that staff understood and promoted student wellbeing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pastoral Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the Pastoral Care Team model and processes and practices ensuring that school community relationships and student wellbeing are central with the intended outcome that student wellbeing initiatives are well documented, resourced, strategic and families and students are engaged.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultivated a school climate that values appraisal and recognition and promotes a culture of collective responsibility with the intended outcome that staff demonstrate and articulate role clarity.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultivate a school climate that values appraisal and recognition and promotes a culture of collective responsibility with the intended outcome that staff demonstrate and articulate role clarity.</li> </ul>

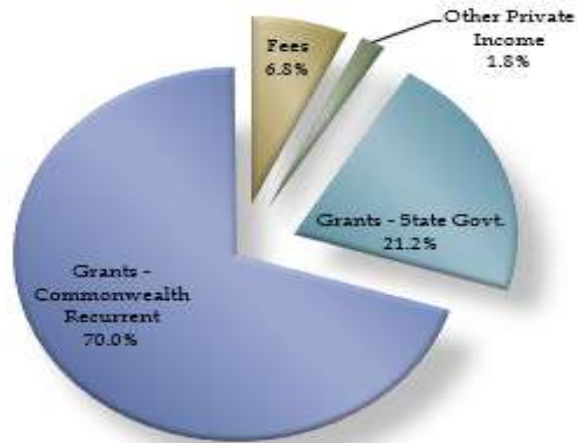
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative learning spaces function effectively with focus on student growth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative learning spaces function effectively with focus on student growth.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Family School Partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostered partnerships between family and school that are built on trust, shared responsibility and faith, with children and their learning at the centre with the intended outcome that channels of communication are known and used by all stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Family School Partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster partnerships between family and school that are built on trust, shared responsibility and faith, with children and their learning at the centre with the intended outcome that channels of communication are reviewed to ensure that they are meeting the goals assigned.</li> <li>• Class parents functioning to build a community of trust and clarity.</li> </ul>

## 6.0 Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Lismore Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2020 is presented below:

## 2020 INCOME - St James Primary School YAMBA



## 2020 EXPENSE - St James Primary School YAMBA

