

Annual School Report 2023 School Year

St Francis Xavier's Primary School, Narrabri



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Principal
Malcolm Frend

About this report

St Francis Xavier's Primary School is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Diocese of Armidale 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 provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The report outlines to the school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school Annual Improvement Plan.

The report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the CSO. This report, approved by the CSO, monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NESA requirements for Registration.

This report complements, and is supplementary to, school newsletters and other regular communications. It is available on both school and CSO websites by 30 June 2024 following its submission to NESA.

The contents of this report may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums, including the School Advisory Council meetings and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6792 1796 or by visiting the school's [website](#).



1.0 Messages

1.1 Principal's Message

There were many people who assisted in the development of the school as a Catholic learning community. In particular, special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St Francis Xavier's Primary School is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

This year has been a year of great growth for St Francis Xavier's Primary School. We have seen the student population bloom from 235 in 2022 to finish this school year with 288 students. This is a reflection on the positive and supportive culture being fostered by the staff, students and families. So much so, that in 2024 the two largest year groups will be Kinder and Year 1, and the two smallest year groups will be Year 5 and Year 6.

Underpinning this successful culture has been an unwavering focus on school improvement. The school improvement goals in the areas of academics, well-being and quality teaching instruction have provided the cornerstone of the school's strategies. This has resulted in outstanding school success in the areas of:

Learning

- 80% of students K-2 achieved end of year PM Reading Benchmark levels (up from 72% in 2022)
- 61% of all students recorded above the mean score in PAT Reading and 69% above the mean score in PAT Maths (both increased from 2022 and above the target of 60%)

Well-being

- Improvements in student LWLW surveys, specifically in the area of Safety
- Overall improvement in School Satisfaction Survey results for staff and students
- Improvement in attendance rates and levels (91% and 65%)

Quality First Teaching

- Development and embedding of the St Francis Xavier's Teaching and Learning Cycle
- Development of a Targeted Intervention program to assist students at their point of need, including through the use of movement and speech therapy activities

The school community made it a priority to connect with parents and the greater community following three years of COVID-19 interruptions. Parental support at events such as special assemblies, Mother's and Father's Day Breakfasts, feast day celebrations and open classrooms was extraordinary. The school is blessed to have such committed and supportive parents who are excited to celebrate these events with the school.

Undoubtedly, the highlight of the school year was the Dance Extravaganza in the last week of Term 3. Over 1000 people packed into the Crossing Theatre for a night of great entertainment. To have the entire student population on stage, dancing and enjoying themselves was a credit to the students and teachers. It was so impressive to see young people getting in and having a go, despite the nerves they must have been feeling.

Students continue to excel in the sporting and arts arena, with numerous sporting achievements and success at local eisteddfods. The school band continues to perform at the highest level and performed wonderfully at the St Francis Xavier's Feast Day celebration in collaboration with the parish.

It has been a great privilege to have led the St Francis Xavier's Primary School community in 2023. I am very proud to have been the principal of this wonderful school, and wish everyone all the very best in the future.

Malcolm Frend



Principal

1.2 A Parent Message

This has been another successful year at St Francis Xavier's. It is probably the first relatively "normal" year since Covid began, allowing for school activities to take place, and parent engagement and attendance at school events and extra-curricular activities.

It was a full year with many activities including swimming carnival, sport gala days, cross country runs, athletics carnival and events engaging with parents and the broader community, including Book Week, NAIDOC Week celebrations, Anzac Day and Remembrance Day commemorations, the eisteddfod and Grandparents' Day.

SFX students excelled in education, sports and the arts arenas, as demonstrated in NAPLAN results, diocese and Polding sporting events and the eisteddfod. As a parent, I appreciate the school's focus on the Living Well, Learning Well Framework to support social and emotional needs, as well as the education outcomes for students.

The Dance Extravaganza was a major highlight for parents, and it is wonderful and impressive to see all the students so involved and confident to perform in front of a large audience. We are grateful for all the efforts of the teachers and staff in the preparations and rehearsals.

I have also reflected, along with other parents, on the amazing support and encouragement that enables all the Grade 5 students to present their Leadership Speeches in front of their peers, teachers and parents. It is a credit to the school and to all the students.

Natalie Holland
Chairperson
School Advisory Committee

2.0 This Catholic School

2.1 The School Community

St Francis Xavier's Primary School is located in Narrabri and is part of the St Francis Xavier's Parish which serves the communities of Narrabri, from which the school families are drawn.

Last year the school celebrated 138 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest, Fr Pulimayayil Sabu, is involved in the life of the school.

2.2 Catholic Life and Religious Education

St Francis Xavier's Primary School follows the Armidale Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student text *To Know, Worship and Love*, as authorised by the Bishop of Armidale, Michael Kennedy.

The school's focus on forming stronger relationships with the parish has reaped benefit. This year, a feast day celebration for St Francis Xavier was shared with a Family Mass followed by a morning tea and a concert performance by the school band. Monthly family masses are strongly attended by staff, students and families, and combined activities such as Christmas parties and celebrations continue to be promoted.

Students from St Francis Xavier's completed the sacraments of first reconciliation and first Holy Communion. These sacraments were led by Judy Rily, the Religious Education Coordinator, in collaboration with the classroom teachers, catechists and the St Francis Xavier's Parish.



Students in Year 6 in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Armidale undertake the Diocesan Religious Education (RE) Test annually. The test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions.

Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education.

Our School's average result (as a mark out of 30)	
Year 6	21

2.3 School Enrolment

St Francis Xavier's 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 2023	TOTAL 2022
Male	19	20	21	23	9	17	23	132	112
Female	31	18	12	26	24	14	22	147	125
Totals	50	38	33	49	33	31	45	279	237

2.4 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, as part of their duty of care, monitor attendance each day. 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 2023 is shown in the following table.

	Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All Years
Average Student Attendance Rates	92.0%	91.0%	91.0%	89.0%	89.0%	89.0%	88.0%	89.9%

Managing Student non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The school, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.



School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.
- monitoring engagement of individual students in their learning and identifying strategies to enhance engagement.
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance.
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance.
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented.
- intervention strategies for students with unsatisfactory attendance may include academic case management, social case management, referral to counselling and parent/ carer involvement.
- the Director of Catholic Schools or designated Catholic Schools Office Armidale officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom previous strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

When the Catholic Schools Office Armidale is notified of a student for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and previous strategies have failed, the Principal and the System Performance Leader will convene a meeting with the family, the student, and other agencies if required, to develop a Return to School Plan.

2.5 Staff Profile and Teacher Standards

Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile		Number of Teachers
1.	Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Provisional or Conditional level.	3
2.	Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Proficient level.	22
3.	Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Highly Accomplished level.	0
4.	Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Lead level.	0
5.	Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.	19
6.	Number of staff identifying as Indigenous employed at the school.	0
7.	Total number of non-teaching staff employed at the school.	12



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:

- To increase student voice, the Living Well, Learning Well student representative council was established. This group met regularly and conducted class meetings to garner the opinions of the students from the school. These meetings had a theme linked with the Core Value of the Week as established through the Living Well, Learning Well framework. Each morning, teachers would use the core values to discuss the school focus for the week and illustrate ways in which students could live these values in their school life.
- The students had the chance to engage with activities suggested by the Wellbeing Group, who performed and discussed important values for young people in the areas of respect and responsibility.
- Project Compassion, St Vincent de Paul and Catholic Mission fundraising activities took place throughout the year. This included contributing to the Vinnies Winter Appeal, Catholic Mission Socktober appeal and through class contributions to Project Compassion during Lent.

2.7 Parent, Student and Teacher 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, the school used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the school from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

The parent body were asked to complete a School Satisfaction Survey in Term 3. These surveys are anonymous and ask parents to rate school performance on a four-point sliding scale.

The overall average score of these responses was 2.2. The highest responses to the parent survey included:

- I would recommend this school to others (2.6).
- The school is a safe place for my child (2.5).
- Overall, I am satisfied with the education for my child/ren (2.4).

A focus on student support in the area of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties remains a priority in response to the surveys. Parents indicated a lower score in response to the school handling behaviour well in regard to the previous year. Articulating clear improvement goals was also identified as an area of need. This is reflected in the 2024 Annual Improvement Plan.

Student Satisfaction

The student body were asked to complete a School Satisfaction Survey in Term 3. These surveys are anonymous, and ask students to rate school performance on a four-point sliding scale.

The overall average score of these responses was 2.2. The highest responses to the student survey included:

- All of my teachers encourage me to do my best (2.4).
- I am encouraged to care for others (2.3).



- My teachers care for me (2.3).

Students identify homework as being of little value to their learning by recording the lowest satisfaction score in this area. A continuing focus on the values of Living Well, Learning Well will also be needed, as students identified lower scores for being safe at school and enjoying school life than in previous survey results. This is reflected in the 2024 Annual Improvement Plan.

Staff Satisfaction

The staff were asked to complete a School Satisfaction Survey in Term 3. These surveys are anonymous, and ask staff to rate school performance on a four-point sliding scale.

The overall average score of these responses was 2.3. The highest responses to the staff survey included:

- I would recommend this school to others (2.8).
- I get a lot of satisfaction working at this school (2.6).
- The use of data to improve student learning is consistent throughout the school (2.6).
- There are clear expectations concerning effective teaching strategies used across the school (2.6).

Continuing to work on school and parish connections remains a focus following the staff satisfaction results, as is a focus on differentiation of the curriculum to extend student achievement. This is reflected in the 2024 Annual Improvement Plan.

3.0 Teaching and Learning

3.1 School Curriculum

The school provides an educational program based on and taught in accordance with the 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. In addition, the school implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office Armidale.

Religious Education in Catholic schools is a mandatory KLA included in the curriculum for students in each year group. St Francis Xavier's Primary School is committed to providing a quality education that meets the needs of all students.

A focus on embedding the new K-2 English and Mathematics Syllabus documents was a priority. These outcomes were used for reporting in Semester 1 and Semester 2, and teachers continued to work on developing knowledge of these new curricula. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 spent time developing their understanding of these new syllabus documents, in preparation for the implementation of the new curriculum in 2024.

The school remains committed to extra-curricular activities in the area of the arts. Music lessons were offered to students in Years 3 to 6, with an opportunity to join the school band provided for these students. In Term 3, the Dance Extravaganza preparations took place during CAPA lessons, providing students with an opportunity to engage in movement.



3.2 Student Performance in National Testing Programs

3.2.1 NAPLAN

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 47 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 30 students.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data and space and geometry.

Commencing in 2023, NAPLAN test results are reported using proficiency levels.

Students' results show how they performed in each of the NAPLAN assessment areas against 4 proficiency levels:

- Exceeding: The student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- Strong: The student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- Developing: The student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- Needs additional support: The student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

At St Francis Xavier's Primary School, school and student performance are closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office information sessions on NAPLAN and Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of St Francis Xavier's Primary School students in the top two levels compared to the State percentage.

Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy Percentage of Students in Levels Strong and Exceeding

Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar and Punctuation	Numeracy
68.0	83.0	66.0	49.0	64.0

Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy Percentage of Students in Levels Strong and Exceeding

Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar and Punctuation	Numeracy
60.0	57.0	57.0	57.0	54.0



4.0 School Policies

4.1 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Armidale adheres to the policy as endorsed by the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' of Students in the Catholic Systemic Schools of the Diocese of Armidale. The Catholic Schools Office Armidale monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements. Children from families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church may be considered eligible for enrolment. A pastoral approach is adopted for parents experiencing genuine difficulty with the payment of fees.

This school does not have any enrolment policies or support documents in addition to the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' for schools in the Diocese of Armidale. This policy is available on the school's [website](#) and the Armidale Catholic Schools Office [website](#).

4.2 Living Well, Learning Well - A Student Support Framework for the Diocese of Armidale

Living Well, Learning Well - A Student Support Framework for the Diocese of Armidale are policies and procedures justifying a model of student support that considers learning, wellbeing, school connection, behaviour, family-school partnerships and similar domains as inseparable and interrelated elements in the lives of children and young people and in the complex community that is the contemporary school.

The development goal of Living Well, Learning Well, and related policies was, and is, to ensure contemporary research and findings in fields of pedagogy, inclusion, behaviour support, pastoral care, bullying prevention and intervention, student voice, participation and connection to school, child and adolescent psychology, student wellbeing and staff collective efficacy are reflected in all language, policy, practice and protocols of the system and schools. It supports a whole-system ecological approach to understanding and acting on the complexity of factors that interact to shape and form the lives of children and young people.

At the heart of Living Well, Learning Well is a universal and unconditional positive regard for children and young people and a high regard for the collective capacity of a school staff team to increase learning, wellbeing and life-opportunity outcomes for children and young people. The full text of the school's Living Well, Learning Well procedures may be accessed on the school [website](#).

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. The school does not sanction the administration of corporal punishment by school staff or non-school persons, including parents, to enforce appropriate behaviour in the school.

4.3 Student Protection Policies and Procedures

The role of the Catholic school in child protection is to protect children and young people and to promote and safeguard the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people. This responsibility is shared with the whole community. Every school within the Armidale Catholic Schools Office (CSO) system of schools works within a statutory framework of cooperation with government authorities and other relevant agencies and with families in the care and protection of children and young people.

Schools have a key role to play in today's society by assisting students and families with child protection. The safety, welfare and wellbeing of students is given the highest priority in every preventative and protective action taken.

In caring for children and young people, we must act in their best interest and take all reasonable steps to ensure their protection. This involves sincere commitment to upholding children's rights to safety and their wellbeing, and taking comprehensive steps to create a child safe school organisation



and culture, with shared responsibility requiring all Armidale CSO personnel to work together within a comprehensive framework to ensure action and accountability for child safety.

St Francis Xavier's Primary School is committed to fulfilling its obligations and seeks to develop best practice to identify and address risk and harm, and to promote the wellbeing of all children and young people in Armidale CSO schools. The dignity of the human person is a central truth of the Gospel message of Jesus. In respecting the dignity of all human persons, Catholic school communities are called to ensure the welfare and safety of all of their members.

The protection of the students entrusted to our care, then, is a very serious responsibility. In taking up this responsibility along with parents, who are recognised as the primary educators and carers of their children, Catholic school communities are committed to ensuring Catholic schools have at their centre the total care of the whole student.

St Francis Xavier's Primary School follows the guideline, policies and procedures as determined by Armidale Catholic Schools Office who provides policy, procedures, forms and links to other resources relating to child protection. These resources have been developed to guide and assist staff and to inform Catholic school communities. Further details can be accessed from the school's [website](#) which includes a further [guide for parents](#).

4.4 Complaints Handling Policy and Guide

The Diocese of Armidale has established a 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' which is implemented by this school. The rationale for this policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of the contemporary world. The Catholic Schools Office monitors the implementation of these policies.

No changes were made to the 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' this year.

The full text of the school's 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' may be accessed on the school's [website](#) or the administration office.

5.0 School Review and Improvement

Each year, the school develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the school's Strategic Improvement Plan and informed by the Catholic Schools Office Annual Improvement Plan. The school engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the System Performance Leader.



Key Goals Achieved and Implemented in 2023	Key Goals for 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedded the practices of the Living Well, Learning Well framework to support the holistic development of all staff and students of St Francis Xavier's School. • Embedded the St Francis Xavier's Teaching and Learning Cycle in literacy and numeracy. • Revised and developed further understanding of the CSO Foundations Document, with a specific focus on High Impact Strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed the practices of the Living Well, Learning Well framework to support the holistic development of all staff and students of St Francis Xavier's School. • Implement and build staff capacity in supporting students identified with complex trauma, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. • Embed the St Francis Xavier's Teaching and Learning Cycle in literacy and numeracy at a Tier One classroom level. • Plan, implement and evaluate the impact of differentiation using the new English and Maths syllabus documents.

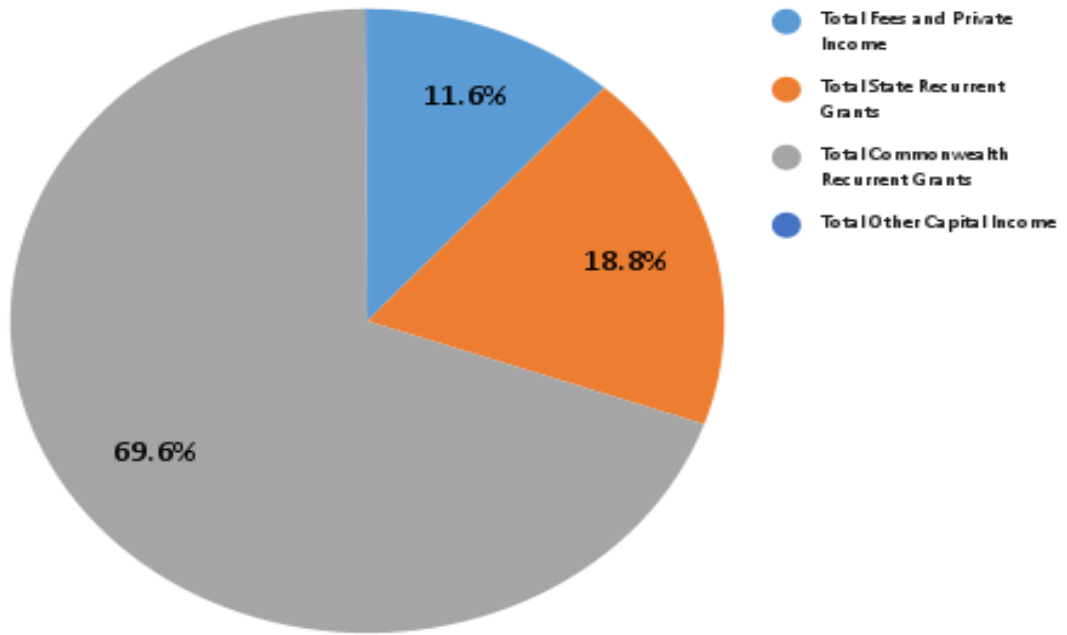
6.0 Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools, K-10 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 2023 is presented below:



2023 Income - St Francis Xavier's Primary School, Narrabri



2023 Expenditure - St Francis Xavier's Primary School, Narrabri

