

Annual School Report

2018 School Year

St Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville



11 Perry Street

Alstonville NSW 2477

Phone 02 6628 1009
www.alstplism.catholic.edu.au

About this report

St Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the 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 2019 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 6628 1009 or by visiting the website at www.alstplism.catholic.edu.au.



1.0 Messages

1.1 Principal's Message

The primary purpose of St Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville 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 Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville 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 continues 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. This is facilitated in a flexible and adaptive learning environment to meet the needs of all our students. We work hard to ensure that our school's mission is lived out daily in the life of the school.

The students' achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2018. 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 Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school's academic achievements. In 2018 the school:

- Continued to build on our STEM initiative within school with students entering many competitions to showcase their learning including the Southern Cross University Science & Engineering Challenge.
- Participated in all Chess tournaments in the local area, hosting one at our school.
- Participated in the University of NSW competitions in Maths, Spelling Writing and Computer.
- Showed above average gain for Reading in NAPLAN. We received a congratulatory letter from ACARA for this.
- Received very good results in the Year 6 Religious Education test with 3 High Distinctions, 3 Distinctions, 12 Credits and 5 Participation certificates.

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 2018 the school:

- Performed in local cultural events such as the Lismore Musical Festival and the Alstonville Show.
- Held a Gift of the Gab Public speaking competition and entered students in the Zone Public Speaking Competition.
- Celebrated a Music Rally based on the work of Jesse Manibusan involving the school and parish community.

Students performed well at various sporting events throughout the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights. In 2018:

- Students were successful to Polding level in Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics.
- Students were entered in the Rugby Sevens Competition and local AFL competitions.
- Students competed in NSW Netball competition.
- Individual students represented our school and zone in Rugby, Netball and Soccer.
- Students participated in both the Zone Gala day, featuring soccer, touch, netball and multi sports as well as the Zone Cricket Gala day.



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 Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

Therese SEYMOUR
Principal

1.2 A Parent Message

During 2018 the Parish School Forum (PSF) at St Joseph's Alstonville has worked with the staff and families within the school to encourage others to join us.

The PSF has held Mother's Day and Father's Day stalls to allow the children to buy a small gift for their parent/s. We provided a workforce for a Working Bee on the school site.

The parent connection at St Joseph's Alstonville is a strong one with great numbers of parents helping throughout the school as well as other events within school. The parents also support school for Sports days as well as the annual Family Day event. The class parent representatives have assisted class teachers to support families during times of both celebration and loss. The school representatives on Parent Assembly have encouraged involvement in parent education events and we had a large attendance at the George Otero family partnership event. The parent body have been consulted on many aspects of the school including policy development and how we distributed the funds received from the fundraising levy.

Liz Bugden
Co-ordinator
Parish School Forum

2.0 This Catholic School

2.1 The School Community

St Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville is part of the Our Lady of the Rosary Alstonville and St Patrick's Wardell Parish which serves the communities of Broadwater, Alstonville, Wardell, Uralba, Wollongbar, Alstonvale, Goonellabah and McLeans Ridges, from which the school families are drawn.

Last year the school celebrated 99 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest Fr Max Gow is involved in the life of the school.

St Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville 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:

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- Participation in social justice activities such as the Lenten Appeal through Caritas, Socktober and Winter Sleepout.
- Signing up to be altar servers and part of the choir at Mass.
- Inviting families to Parish School Masses to encourage families to participate in worship.



- Facilitating parish based Sacramental programs.
- Support for families with young children through the Jumping Joeys playgroup and Junior Joeys ready for school program.

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 2.5 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 *Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore, Foundational values for Catholic Identity and Mission*. 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 Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville 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 2018	TOTAL 2017
Male	17	19	11	22	14	14	9	106	110
Female	15	5	10	10	12	9	14	75	78
Indigenous <i>count included in first two rows</i>	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	4	7
EALD (Language background other than English) <i>count included in first two rows</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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, our 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 through Schoolworx or email to the school, preferably on the first day of absence, and certainly within seven days.

The Principal is 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 2018 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	95.0%	94.1%	93.0%	92.9%	93.7%	93.5%	93.9%	93.7%

2.4 Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile		Number of Teachers
1.	Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Provisional or Conditional level.	1
2.	Those teachers at the NESAs Teacher Accreditation Proficient level.	15
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.	16
6.	Number of staff identifying as Indigenous employed at the school.	2
7.	Total number of non-teaching staff employed at the school.	8

2.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average teacher attendance figure is 94.81%. This figure is provided to the school by the CSO.

There were no significant staffing changes last year. We had a staff member on sick leave for most of the year and two more on leave due to temporary contracts elsewhere. The three staff that replaced them were placed on temporary contracts.

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:

- Our students have developed a strong social justice ethic which leads to large numbers participating in any activities or events. In 2018 the students were big supporters of our annual Winter Sleepout. During this event the students put together care packages for people who are homeless. These are then passed on to the local St Vincent de Paul. On Winter Sleepout day we also held a silence hour for students to be sponsored sitting silently during the lunch break.
- We also decided to support the Hay Bales initiative through the Catholic Bishops Appeal by focusing on a sister school, St Joseph's Condobolin to fundraise for the families there to support them through the drought. This initiative raised \$2000 which was passed on to the school and was a great source of joy to both our community and theirs. We received a certificate from the Wilcannia-Forbes Bishop in thanks for this work.
- During 2018 the school was involved in RadioClub each week at Maranoa, a local aged care home. All the students prepared for a visit to the same place each term to meet with and talk to the elderly living there
- The school has a strong behaviour focus on being good with staff making every effort to reward behaviours seen as positive for the school community. Coupled with a Wellbeing program that individually supports students where needed, and a Seasons program, we try to support our students and families at their point of need.

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.

In 2018 we joined the Building Cultural Capacity process. During our data collection we sought information from families about their thinking around the ideal school and how we can meet these ideals. The responses from families was very positive but also gave us greater direction moving forward.

The process also sought data from staff which was gathered and displayed to promote discussion around how we could align our thinking for the ideal school.

This was further informed by our DOLSIS data from 2018 that showed continued improvement in parental satisfaction and students feeling valued and involved in school.

In addition we use the Parish School Forum meetings to ascertain the parent feeling around school and to provide feedback on ideas we may have.

As a result of parental, student and staff surveys we have two teams looking to develop further strategies around school communication and relationship building.

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.

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The school is fully immersed in flexible and adaptive learning throughout the school. The focus on growth mindset within each and every student has developed a focus in individual improvement which has been embedded in all learning areas. The school-wide focus on growth mindset assisted students with goal setting and ensuing celebrations of achievement. The students are offered many opportunities to showcase their ability in activities such as the University of Southern Cross Science and Engineering Challenge and the Family STEM Challenge. The development of a Maker Space as well as gardening opportunities and Chess Club ensures we can cater for all students' interests.

The model of flexible, innovative learning at St Joseph's Alstonville continues to develop and enhance critical and creative thinking skills amongst all staff and students. Pedagogical opportunities are developed through the professional learning team model and underpin learning opportunities for all.

Student wellbeing remains a focus this year. Enabling students to participate in a variety of activities to enrich their school experience is vital to their emotional and social development. Activities on offer include: quiet reading in the library each morning from 8:30-9:00am. This provides a quiet space for those students who do not wish to utilise the playground facilities before school. Garden club, Chess club, Radio club and a MakerSpace are all options during lunchtime. These activities are on to provide students with a place to play if they do not wish to utilise the playground facilities or prefer quieter options. Staff volunteer their time to supervise students during these activities.

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

- Local Eisteddfods, the Alstonville Show and other community based activities.
- The Southern Cross Science & Engineering Challenge to develop skills in the STEM area for our senior students.
- The Holy Week initiative by presenting the Stations of the Cross liturgy for the Parish.
- Local sports events like AFL, Rugby 7s and 10s, Cricket, Netball and Soccer gala days
- Concerts featuring our music students as well as a drama display by our after school drama students.
- Radio Club performances by students at school during lunchtimes.



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, 31 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 23 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.

In both Year 3 and Year 5 there are six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment in Year 3 and Band 8 the highest in Year 5.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages.

At St Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville, school and student performance is 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 Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville students in each band compared to the State percentage.

Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy

Percentage of students in Bands 1 to 6

BAND	6		5		4		3		2		1	
	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School
Reading	27.7	29.03	24.7	25.81	20.2	12.9	12.8	9.68	7.2	16.13	3.8	6.45
Writing	10.9	0.0	36.0	3.23	24.3	29.03	18.4	45.16	5.4	19.35	2.8	3.23
Spelling	25.8	6.45	25.0	19.35	21.0	19.35	13.7	22.58	8.0	12.9	4.4	19.35
Grammar and Punctuation	30.9	22.58	16.8	9.68	23.2	32.26	12.5	25.81	8.2	9.68	4.2	0.0
Numeracy	17.8	12.9	25.7	19.35	26.5	32.26	16.6	19.35	10.1	16.13	2.1	0.0

Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy

Percentage of students in Bands 3 to 8

BAND	8		7		6		5		4		3	
	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School
Reading	17.4	21.74	20.9	21.74	23.8	30.43	19.6	17.39	11.2	8.7	4.5	0.0
Writing	4.6	0.0	11.5	0.0	27.2	17.39	35.9	26.09	11.5	43.48	7.0	8.7
Spelling	14.6	8.7	22.7	13.04	31.1	30.43	17.7	26.09	9.3	21.74	3.6	0.0
Grammar and Punctuation	18.1	8.7	18.1	0.0	29.1	39.13	16.2	30.43	11.0	17.39	4.9	4.35
Numeracy	12.5	4.35	19.7	21.74	25.9	21.74	26.3	43.48	12.1	8.7	2.6	0.0

As can be seen from the table, the percentage of students in the top three bands for Year 5 Reading is pleasing. We can see movement in the percentage of students from the middle bands in 2016/2017 to the higher bands in 2018.

The focus on Numeracy through the Extending Mathematical Understanding (EMU) program at school has seen great improvement in results in Year 5. The motivation of students appears to be improving through their involvement in our growth mindset priority.

NAPLAN results will be further analysed to inform and guide the direction for future improvements particularly in the areas of Writing and Spelling. The percentage of students achieving minimum standards is testament to the focus on curriculum differentiation strategies implemented and developed, alongside using a growth mindset approach, especially in the areas of Reading and Numeracy.

Our identified areas of strength are:

- Year 3: Reading, Grammar and Punctuation
- Year 5: Reading, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy

Our identified areas for improvement are:

- Year 3: Writing, Spelling and Numeracy
- Year 5: Writing and Numeracy (increase in student growth from bands 4 and 5 to bands 7 and 8)

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 2018 were:

Staff Professional Learning Activity	Date	Presenter
Staff Retreat Day	13/04/2018	Libby Spash, Bishop Greg Homering
Digital Technologies	30/04/2018	Meridith Ebbs
Building Cultural Capacity SIT day	17/09/2018	School SIT team, Paul Wilson
Schools sharing day	15/10/2018	Hamish Valentine, Kriste Coster
Pastoral Care Policy	23/07/2018	Karen Evans, Cate Costello

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

Activity	Staff numbers	Presenter
EMU specialist training	5	Ann Gervasoni
CPR update	25	Craig Nolan
Staff Spirituality Training	2	CSO staff
AEDC Training online	3	AEDC
Building Cultural Capacity training	6	Peter Hart, Paul Wilson
Mats Workshop	4	Peter Sullivan
Curriculum Days	4	CSO staff
Online Digital Technologies Course (mooc)	16	Meridith Ebbs
My Compliance Training	3	Andrew Madden

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at \$7664 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 have formed 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". 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 Joseph's Primary School, Alstonville 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](#).

4.2 Pastoral Care Policy

The school has a strong emphasis on Pastoral care based on care for others and restorative practice. We have ensured this is reflected in our policy and in the way we all interact with each other. To support pastoral care, we have developed a very clear Wellbeing plan to support students and their families where required. To educate our community we ensure we provide parent education based on the school priority. The policy was developed in consultation with all staff, students and families.

4.3 Discipline Policy

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

The school has worked hard to ensure there is correlation between our pastoral care and our discipline policies. We believe in knowing each child - supporting them and carefully tracking any changes so we can support them in the best possible manner. We insist on everyone following our clearly defined rules. When discipline is required it must follow the school plan and expectations. If students reach a point where parental involvement is required this is clearly communicated, in a timely manner, by the staff involved. The school does not sanction corporal punishment or allow parents to administer corporal punishment in the school.



4.4 Anti-Bullying Policy

The school's Anti Bullying Policy fosters a cohesive approach to the issue of bullying and includes specific initiatives which 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.

4.5 Complaints and Grievance Policy

The complaints and grievance policy is explained clearly to all parents and carers at the commencement of each year. It is based on fairness and recognises parents and carers may, at times, need to raise concerns at school. These concerns are always dealt with fairly, confidentially and with concern for all involved. A copy of the policy can be accessed at the School Office or on the [school's website](#).

5.0 School Determined Improvement Targets

Each year the school implements the School Improvement Plan. 2018 was a very rewarding year.

Key improvements achieved this year	Key Improvements for 2019
<p>Catholic Identity and Mission</p> <p>In 2018 we worked to develop a greater understanding of the teaching of Religious Education through programs and Catholic Worldview to build the capacity of staff and in doing so, encouraged a sense of belonging for parents and students.</p>	<p>Catholic Identity and Mission</p> <p>In 2019 we hope to develop opportunities for meaningful participation, designed to continuously nourish and enliven our faith community on their journey.</p>
<p>Organisation and Co-Leadership</p> <p>In 2018 we worked towards building our own capacity and changing aspects of the culture through a school improvement framework. This has, in turn, led to the school improvement team supporting action teams to improve school communication and relationship building.</p>	<p>Organisation and Co-Leadership</p> <p>In 2019 we will focus on developing opportunities for meaningful participation, designed to continuously nourish and enliven our faith community on their journey. This is particularly focused in this area on the staff journey.</p>
<p>Teaching and Learning</p> <p>In 2018 we focused on strengthening student engagement in learning by developing staff pedagogical practice and growth mindset for all.</p>	<p>Teaching and Learning</p> <p>In 2019 we want to strengthen our student's engagement in their learning journey through our reflective practice and further refinement of our pedagogical practices within the flexible learning environment.</p>

Community and Relationships

In 2018 our focus was to encourage students with a growth mindset where required in order that they can develop stronger work ethic and maintain their focus on developing relationships within the school community.

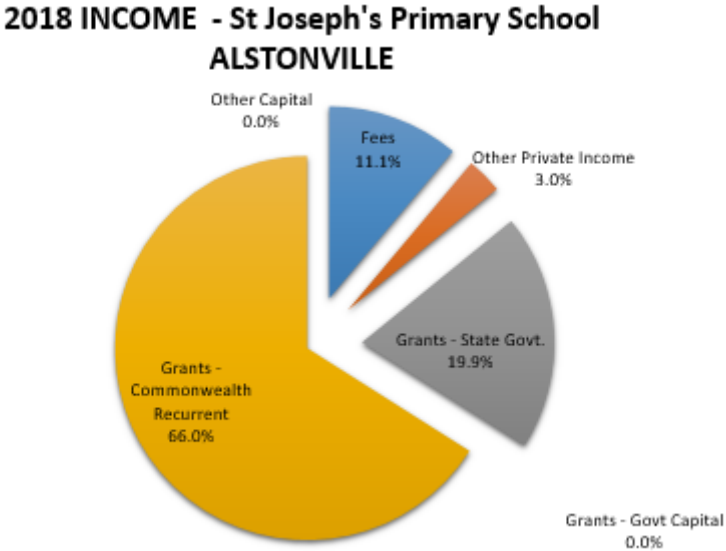
Community and Relationships

In 2019 we work towards building the capacity of our staff, students and families by developing better relationships and deeper communication as we journey together.

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 2018 is presented below:



**2018 EXPENSE - St Joseph's Primary School
ALSTONVILLE**

