The Schools Story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System: Diocesan Catholic Education Office - Rockhampton</th>
<th>School Name: St Mary’s Catholic Primary School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Based Contact Person: Principal’s Full Name:</td>
<td>Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>42 Julie Street SOUTHERN MACKAY QLD 4740</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone: 4951 1743</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fax: 4851 4793</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:smm@rok.catholic.edu.au">smm@rok.catholic.edu.au</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.smmrok.catholic.edu.au/">http://www.smmrok.catholic.edu.au/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrolments: 368</td>
<td>Year Levels Offered: P-6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Type of School: Co-Educational</td>
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Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

Our school is an exciting place to be. Parents send their children to St Mary’s for a variety of reasons. Many people comment on the caring culture that permeates all facets of our school community. I believe an obvious strength is the positive atmosphere that exists in our school. The children are loved, respected, and well taught. We offer our students a rounded education that supports personal growth based on Christian values. Parents appreciate our inner city location. Older brothers and sisters are able to attend Catholic secondary schools which are conveniently located nearby.

Extra Curricula Activities

At St Mary’s we offer a great diversity of challenging activities. Children are given opportunities to participate in a broad spectrum of activities. These include: choir; outdoor education camps; spiritual development; sport competitions; You Can Do It! programme; curriculum competitions; excursions; social activities; Opti Minds; music and physical education specialists; guest speakers and leadership opportunities. I believe that we provide an education that promotes the personal development of each child. Initiatives such as the ‘You Can Do It’ programme, The Virtues Project, Project Compassion, The Biggest Morning Tea, NADIOC week, Jump Rope for Heart, promote compassion for others, responsibility and self-respect for the whole school community.
Parents are regularly encouraged to participate in school activities and attend Monday assembly. Family socials are regularly organised as well as holistic support offered to families. The children have access to a music specialist and instrumental programme through Musicorp.
The children participate in the You Can Do It! Program. This assists children to be life-long learners and focuses upon the habits of successful learners.
Our school is part of the southern suburbs sub-districts for Mackay. We participate in the following interschool competitions: netball, cricket, hockey, soccer, rugby league and basketball.
Children can nominate themselves to be part of our Opti Minds team. This promotes higher-order thinking and team work by asking the children to solve a problem.
Jump Rope for Heart is a part of the Health and Physical Education program. It highlights the need for children to become active and eat well.
Our school has two specialist music teachers. Children have the opportunity to learn a variety of musical instruments. Children are also invited to become members of our choir.
Children participate in our school’s camp program. The Years 6 and 7 children participate in leadership camps.
During the year the children view a range of performances by the Queensland Arts Council.
Book Week is an important event in the school's calendar. Classes participate in many activities that promote literacy.
National Aboriginal and Islander Week are celebrated. We recognise the importance of multiculturalism as our society is made up of many different cultures.
The children have an opportunity to participate in the national competitions in Computing, Science, Maths and Literacy. There are also many local arts competitions.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

At St Mary’s we believe that it is essential that our students are equipped with ICT capabilities so that they can “participate in a knowledge-based economy and to be empowered within a technologically sophisticated society now and into the future. “The Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians (MCEETYA 2008) We aim to develop the students’
The nature and scope of ICT capability is not fixed, but is responsive to ongoing technological developments. Students need to use ICT with confidence, care and consideration, understanding its possibilities, limitations and impact on individuals, groups and communities.

Student should:
– Respect resources
– Use ICT equipment and resources for educational purposes under teacher supervision
– Follow teacher directions for accessing files, programs, email and internet resources
– Ask permission from your teacher before following online prompts

Respect others
– Respect the rights, beliefs and viewpoints of others
– Follow the same standards of behaviour online as you are expected to follow in real life
– Observe Copyright rules by respecting the information, ideas and artistic works of others by acknowledging the author or publisher of information from the Internet and do not claim the work or pictures as your own

Keep yourself safe online at school
– Keep your passwords and personal work secure
– Use the internet and email only under teacher supervision
– Use only school provided email accounts when communicating online

Social Climate

Based on our shared values and beliefs, all learners at St Mary’s are invited and challenged to be and become reflective, self-directed learners who are: producers, participators, investigators, communicators and problem solvers. Through modelling and living out of the values according to the Catholic ethos, religious education is the umbrella that oversees and permeates all that we do. We seek to inspire children to have Jesus Christ as their model and with the help of the Holy Spirit, be the best person they can be, as God wants them to.

In the past four years the religion programme at St Mary’s has made the progression to the new diocesan P-12 syllabus. This involved consultation with the staff and DCEO representatives in order to write a school programme that is comprehensive and teacher friendly. The religion programme encompasses the four strands as well as a defined focus on religious literacy and numeracy.

Initiatives that have been introduced in the area of curriculum over the past few years have challenged the St Mary’s staff to review and improve programmes and teaching practices. Despite the changes, our Mission Statement has remained central to our curriculum, and the following key values have been upheld:
• Care – for our environment and the wider community
• Respect – for ourselves and others
• Encouragement – to have a positive attitude towards self and others
• Peace - we are called to be people of peace who embrace the diversity of societies and environments while promoting social justice
• A sense of wonder while striving for excellence and truth
• St. Mary’s professional counsellor service has been well received. Our Child and Adolescent Counsellor visits St Mary’s each Wednesday. A high priority of our school is to ensure that we provide a caring environment for our students.
Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

The school response to bullying: At St Mary’s we use a proactive approach to tackling bullying. The “You Can Do It!” and “The Virtues Project” programmes as the base for developing a positive, cohesive and faith-filled learning environment. We have an Anti-bullying policy to which all staff, students and parents commit.

Students
- are educated to recognise bullying behaviour in themselves and others and learn how to deal with the situation in an acceptable and appropriate way
- both the victim and the perpetrator are positively and constructively supported by all members of the St Mary’s school community
- are aware of the reporting procedures for bullying which are outlined in the behaviour management programmes
- organisation of counselling are arranged at the principal’s discretion

Staff
- are educated in identifying bullying behaviour and how to deal with such behaviour
- will report all instances of bullying through the current behaviour management process.
- will remain alert for sign of distress in students during class instruction as well as during playground supervision
- will continue to have on-going in-servicing on the “You Can Do It!” and “The Virtues Project” programmes
- empower students to be a resource for countering bullying
- offer immediate support to the victim

Parents
- are provided with ongoing information about bullying through the newsletter
- are encouraged to follow the regular grievance procedures in order to address concerns
- are encouraged to watch for signs of distress in their child, which may include unwillingness to attend school, loss of personal items or regular sickness
- are encouraged to take an active interest in their child’s social life
- are encouraged to advise their child to confide in a trusted staff member
- are encouraged not to advise their child to retaliate physically or verbally
- are assisted to devise strategies to help with socialization
- are encouraged to access the resources in the parenting section of the library

Cyber bullying
Our school has implemented Diocesan policies on Acceptable Use Agreements for students and staff.

Strategies used for involving parents in their child’s education

Our parent body continues to work tirelessly to provide a wide range of valued services for the school. Since the last review they have introduced various fund raising initiatives such as the Monster Cent Sale. They have contributed significantly to the upgrading of facilities. Their contribution to the culture of the school is impressive. We have class coordinators who welcome new families and organise social activities for families and parents during the year. We have an excellent reputation in our local area and many visitors comment upon the caring environment that exists in our school.

The St Mary’s School Board is a Catholic policy-making and management structure which seeks to
work towards the achievement of the church’s educational mission. It is a policy-making team consisting of a variety of people who have an awareness of the Catholic Church’s educational mission and who together build policies that are based on the Gospel values. The policies developed give direction to the school and promote its special religious identity.

The Parents and Friends’ Association of St Mary’s is a very active group within the school community. The Association meets regularly once per month and this meeting is well attended by 12 – 15 parents on a regular basis.

The P & F are actively involved in two major fundraising events throughout the year being the Monster Cent Sale and the St Mary’s School/Parish Christmas Fair. The Monster Cent Sale has generated profit of approximately $90 000 over the past seven years. All of these funds have been donated back to the school for purchases of resources, equipment and school improvements. The St Mary’s Christmas Fair is a wonderful occasion where the school and parish combine to run a very successful social event for the community. The P & F also organises and runs, on a volunteer basis, a uniform shop which is the only provider of St Mary’s school uniforms in Mackay. This service is manned by volunteers two mornings per week and has produced substantial profit for the P & F, who then donate the money back to the school in the form of new resources/equipment.

Parents’ input and involvement in St Mary’s equity process is highly regarded. This includes parents who help assist in the implementation of the LAP programme, where parents are trained as literacy tutors, as well as working with children one on one for 30 minutes a week, on individual literacy programmes.

Parents are also actively involved throughout the school in other areas such as volunteer readers, assisting with learning support and helping in the library. The school tuckshop also benefits from the help of many volunteers four mornings per week.

### Reducing the school’s environmental footprint

We have a recycling program.
Students collect food scraps to give to the chickens.
Students collect paper and put in recycling bins.
Teachers and students use electronic media to produce work.
We have solar panels.

### Characteristics of the Student Body

St Mary's Catholic Primary School was founded by the Rockhampton Sisters of Mercy in 1924 and now caters for students from prep to year 7. We have an active school chaplain who visits the school regularly.

The school is situated in South Mackay which is an inner city suburb with a mixture of older single residences and an increasing number of multiple dwellings, catering for older residents and single parent families. Adjoining a regional Catholic year 8 to 10 college, St Mary’s is a convenient school for inner city workers with around a quarter of the school population coming from outside the traditional boundaries of the parish. Consequently the students come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and cultural groups.

The school is now experiencing an increase in enrolments after several years of decline. This trend is due to...

1. New housing development in the area, which has led to a number of families residing in the area sending their families to the school.
2. The fact that the school has become proactive in promoting itself and now has a very good reputation in the community.
3. The huge growth in the mining industry and related industries associated with the mining boom.
4. The school has spent a considerable amount of money in improving its facilities and has a very proactive P&F.

Our school has a dedicated team in the learning support program (a part-time Learning Support Teacher and three part-time learning support teacher assistants) and volunteer parents (learning assistance program – LAP) who assist ascertained students and those students with learning difficulties.

Our learning support program, LAP program, and significant ESL program are an integral part of our school, with teachers depending on these programs to assist them with both the large number of students with learning difficulties and ESL students. It should also be noted that the staff are proactive in developing the skills necessary to support the large number of students with learning difficulties and ESL needs in their classes.

### Staffing composition, including Indigenous staff

#### Workforce Composition of all teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Composition</th>
<th>Teaching Staff</th>
<th>Non-Teaching Staff</th>
<th>Indigenous Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headcounts</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time equivalents</td>
<td>20.22</td>
<td>9.54</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Qualifications of all teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification – highest level of attainment</th>
<th>Percentage of staff with this Qualification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral / Post-doctoral</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor degree</td>
<td>92%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development

**TOTAL FUNDS** expended on teacher professional development according to Australian Government Quality Teacher Program reporting requirements. $74,600

**MAJOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**

Developing professional learning communities through the creation of a feedback culture.

**Google Apps**

Our balanced curriculum caters for a variety of learning styles

All the teachers use iPads and interactive white boards.

Literacy and Mathematics continue to be a high priority.

Our thinking skills scope and sequence ensures that children are exposed to a wide range of thinking processes throughout their schooling. Graphic organisers are implemented across curriculum in all year levels. Professional development opportunities are openly offered to all staff.

The percentage of the **TEACHING STAFF INVOLVED IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

100%

**Average staff attendance**

Average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to 5 days

98.96%

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year

88.14%
School Income

(The School information below is available on the My School web site).

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, and 7 are available via the My School website at http://www.myschool.edu.au/.

Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to accept the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy before being able to access NAPLAN data.

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school's NAPLAN results.

Key Student Outcomes

Every 3 weeks each teacher will formally meet with a member of the leadership team to discuss various aspects of their teaching and learning. This year we have teachers visiting other classrooms and observing each other. We are endeavouring to create learning communities. Teachers in learning community schools provide leadership by collegially sharing ideas for improving instruction and by opening up their classrooms for all teachers to learn about effective instructional practices. Transforming a school into a learning community can have a very positive impact for students, the results include:

• decreased dropout rate and fewer classes "skipped".
• lower rates of absenteeism.
• increased learning that is distributed more equitably in the smaller high schools.
• greater academic gains in math, science, history, and reading than in traditional schools.
• smaller achievement gaps between students from different backgrounds

For staff, the following results have been observed:

• reduction of isolation of teachers.
• increased commitment to the mission and goals of the school and increased vigour in working to strengthen the mission.
• shared responsibility for the total development of students and collective responsibility for students' success.
• powerful learning that defines good teaching and classroom practice and that creates new knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learners.
• increased meaning and understanding of the content that teachers teach and the roles they
play in helping all students achieve expectations.
• higher likelihood that teachers will be well informed, professionally renewed, and inspired to inspire students.
• more satisfaction, higher morale, and lower rates of absenteeism.
• significant advances in adapting teaching to the students, accomplished more quickly than in traditional schools.
• commitment to making significant and lasting changes and higher likelihood of undertaking fundamental systemic change.

**Student Attendance**

**Average student attendance rate (%)**
92.7%

**Describe how non-attendance is managed by the school**
Parents are expected to contact the school if their child is away. Staff will talk with parents if there is a concern.

**Value Added**

**The story of distance travelled**
St Mary's Catholic Primary School has again achieved very pleasing results. Based on My School data, our school was identified as demonstrating above average NAPLAN gain compared to schools with similar students. This gain was deemed to be statistically significant and worthy of highlighting, this result indicated that we were in the top 300 schools in Australia.
We have a wonderful learning support program. This has made a significant difference to many children who require learning support.
Anecdotal and statistical data from the Years 3, 5, 7 tests support that St Mary's is succeeding in improving the academic performance of students enrolled at the school. They continue to grow and improve during their journey at St Mary's. We look forward to the challenge of maximising the learning for all students in our care.
We believe teachers make a difference and by professional development, improved teaching methods and the dedication of significant blocks of core learning time, have contributed to school improvement.

**The story of where you are going**
• The staff is working together to successfully implement the new Australian curriculum.
• The staff is embracing change and we have a professional development component at staff meetings.
• To review our assessment framework to ensure that it is consistent across all years and incorporates a variety of assessment methods and tasks to cater for different learning styles.
• It is important that assessment tasks assess the understanding of skills as well as the application and extension of taught skills to problem solving situations.
• To encourage staff to include assessment plans in the teaching programmes to ensure continuous assessment throughout the semester.
• To ensure that all classes experience a culminating activity and showcase their integrated
unit accomplishments to the school community and parents at least once during the year

• To provide time after in-services to absorb, practice and develop proficiency with the information and knowledge gained so that it can be effectively utilised in the classroom environment.

• To review the ICT programme and ensure that hands on computer time is equitable, and meets the needs of our students.

• To ensure when possible, that enrolment procedures are adhered to, making certain that the school and classrooms can cater for the needs of children seeking enrolment.

• To continue with the principles of consistency of teacher judgement.

• To continue developing and using the thinking skills scope and sequence, including Gardeners multiple intelligences and a range of strategies that promote higher order thinking to ensure that the children’s learning styles are catered for.

• To provide professional development for teachers in order to meet the diverse range of abilities in their classrooms.

• To continue reviewing our report card ensuring that it is easily understood by parents and provides positive, relevant information on the individual student.

• To support the staff by providing professional development on current initiatives.

• In collaboration with the staff and with DCEO assistance, the English and integrated studies programmes have been written and accredited.

• English and mathematics continue to be high priorities.

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**Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction**

Please find below some comments from our recent parent survey.

From the warm and friendly office staff, to the principal and those who plan the curriculum, and to the beautiful teaching staff who care for my children day in and day out - what a fabulous bunch of people - I hope you receive plenty of praise - Thank you!

I am so happy with the caring staff here at St Mary’s. The You Can Do It program is just fantastic. I am so glad we have decided to send our children here.

I feel St Mary’s offers the children a safe and happy environment. The staff and principal are always encouraging the students to do their best and encouraging a positive attitude. I think it is a wonderful school.

This is a great school, my son loves going to school & loves doing his homework and reading. I was recommended to send my children to this school and have not been disappointed. Everybody seems to be happy.

The Administration Team at St Mary’s are second to none. They are approachable, good listeners and very valued by staff. I have found my years at this school very rewarding and we feel privileged as a family to belong to this great school community!

The feeling throughout the whole school is we are one big family and everyone is treated with respect. Students are well behaved not only at school but out of school as well which I believe is a direct correlation of what they are taught at school and how they relate to one another.

As a new parent to St Mary’s school I have been extremely impressed with the school’s strong sense of community. We have been made to feel very welcome by both parents and teachers alike. The teaching staff I have been exposed to are very impressive and Michael Stewart is a principal above and beyond expectations. He takes a personal interest in all the children and has the unique ability of commanding respect from children while maintaining a positive and caring school environment. It has been very encouraging to see how much my daughter has grown in this environment - she is thoroughly enjoying school and her self-confidence grows daily. I am grateful we have had the opportunity to be part of the St Mary’s school community.
The teaching staffs are wonderful. They are ALL very approachable and professional. I really appreciate the way the principal, walks around the school, greets parents, tell children to tuck shirts in, etc. It is great to see him out and about and not stuck in an office. This is by far the best primary school in Mackay.

We are very pleased to have our children attend St. Mary’s School. It is a very caring and happy school. The school has a wonderful, positive outlook to teaching & child development.