



**St Columba's Primary  
School, WILSTON**

# **Annual Report 2021**

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

# Contact information

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<b>Contact person</b>	Andrew Oberthur — Principal

## Principal's foreword

The 2021 Annual Report presents information for reporting requirements and informs the wider community of our school's operations and achievements through the year. The report includes information on the school's profile, curriculum delivery, social climate, school funding, workforce composition and student performance.

St. Columba's Primary School is situated in the inner northern suburb of Wilson, in Brisbane. Opening enrolments in 2021 were 606 from Prep to Year 6. The school has 4 streams of Prep to Year 4: 2 streams of Year 5 and 2 streams of Year 6. Enrolments in recent years have remained on a steady increase as the inner suburbs of Brisbane continue to grow. A significant feature of the school is its strong reputation in the community as a school that provides a Christian education in the Catholic tradition, based on gospel and Benedictine values. As the school has grown and changed it has continued to build on the traditions established by the Good Samaritan Sisters. Their spirit of compassion and justice still flows through the total school community and is further strengthened by the traditions established by the parents, staff and children over one hundred years of living the school motto of "God's Glory Always". We are committed to the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, cultural and physical development of the whole person. The school has a strong focus on the pastoral care of students and their families, high quality teaching and learning, and the provision of a variety of extracurricular activities. Currently St. Columba's caters for the primary years P-6, across 24 classes. Staff comprise of classroom teachers, school officers and specialist staff. Today, St. Columba's, in strong partnership with the Good Samaritan Parish, is recognised for proudly offering a quality, inclusive Catholic Education.

### School progress towards its goals in 2021

Goal	Progress
To maintain and strengthen the school's Catholic Identity through a recontextualised world view	Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Re-commitment of the school community to the Leuven Project in 2021, by way of providing Professional Learning to staff, engaging in staff and family surveys, and using the data to inform decision making</li></ul>
To achieve our Numeracy Smart Goals and BCE Literacy targets	Exceeded for both <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Data conversations regularly held at staff meetings, and teacher planning sessions, and review and response meetings.</li><li>Data continually monitored and reviewed throughout the year</li><li>Targeted teaching implemented to support identified students in meeting or exceeding these goals</li></ul>

Goal	Progress
To create safe environments that nurture all aspects of wellbeing, including advocating for the common good through social justice and ecological action	<p>Achieved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued commitment to social justice / outreach initiatives including Mini Vinnies, CARITAS, Brisbane Care Project, and a special Warmth for Tara project</li> <li>Continued environmental awareness and action through a variety of recycling initiatives and mindful (and monitored) energy consumption throughout all aspects of school operations</li> </ul>
To develop a Vision for Learning and Teaching	<p>Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school's Primary Learning Leader has commenced leading staff through a process for developing a new vision, focussing on the school's teaching and learning directions, cultivating collaboration, securing accountability, and deepening learning in this space.</li> <li>This vision is being developed using supporting resources drawing on current, best practice research.</li> <li>The creation of this vision is ongoing and will be completed in 2022</li> </ul>
To establish a school Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) that strives to improve and strengthen the relations and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians at St Columba's and in the wider community	<p>Achieved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A RAP team was established, and the team attended relevant Professional Learning opportunities</li> <li>RAP team members used supporting resources to develop the St Columba's Reconciliation Action Plan</li> <li>The RAP will be officially launched to the community early in 2022</li> <li>A permanent Reconciliation Garden space was created and named on Harmony Day 2021</li> </ul>

### Future outlook

The explicit improvement agenda for 2022 will focus on further improvements in:

#### **Strengthening Catholic Identity:**

By the end of 2022, we will further strengthen the school's Catholic Identity through a recontextualised world view, informed by the Leuven Survey data / recommendations to realise our motto: God's Glory Always

#### **Excellent Learning and Teaching:**

By the end of 2022, we will achieve Numeracy and Literacy smart goal targets, by engaging in high yield strategies, including regular review and analysis of data, providing focussed induction for new staff, supporting staff in regular short cycle planning sessions, and by offering individualised professional learning plans to accompany teacher goal setting.

By the end of 2022, we will strengthen Writing instruction in the subject of English, so that it is explicit and differentiated, so that every student experiences growth to their full potential

#### **Wellbeing:**

By the end of 2022, we will introduce PB4L (Positive Behaviour for Learning) to enhance respectful relationships and engagement of students in their interactions and learning.

**Our People:**

By the end of 2022, we will review and re-develop a Vision for Learning and Teaching that is relevant and responsive to the needs of all in the school community, by establishing a team and working through a process of review, development and approval with the support of the School's Pastoral Board.

By the end of 2022, we will re-prioritise community engagement responsive to changing COVID safe guidelines.

**Diversity and Inclusion:**

By the end of 2022, relations and respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and all in the community of St Columba's will be improved and strengthened, following the launch of the school's new RAP (Reconciliation Action Plan) and its embedding in the community.

**Organisational Effectiveness:**

By the end of 2022, safeguarding of students and young people will be continually reviewed and monitored, through a commitment to ongoing review and monitoring of policies and procedures, including mandatory requirements and opportunities for parent engagement.

By the end of 2022, focus on making learning and teaching facilities places of welcome, innovation, and excellence in keeping with the Mparntwe Declaration's goals for young Australians will be prioritised, including the commencement of a new building project, consisting of 8 new general learning areas (GLAs), amenities, storage, retention tanks, outdoor learning spaces and covered play / eating area.

# Our school at a glance

## School profile

St Columba's Primary School is a Catholic, co-educational primary school, situated in the inner northern suburb of Wilston, administered through Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane.

**Coeducational or single sex:** Coeducational

**Year levels offered in 2021:** Primary

**Student enrolments for this school:**

Total	Girls	Boys	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
2021 606	329	277	1

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

St Columba's Primary School is situated in the inner northern suburb of Wilston. St. Columba's student body has once again remained a largely homogenous group in 2021, with the majority of our students born in Australia. Whilst only few students were born outside of Australia, they are Australian citizens by descent, having had at least one parent an Australian citizen. A small percentage of the student population identify as having English as their second language in 2021, with only 1 student in the school community identifying as First Nations people. With that said, the student body come from diverse family backgrounds, where parents are well educated, with most also having tertiary qualifications.

The student body largely remains comprised of families from the local areas of Wilston, Grange, Windsor and Gordon Park, with an increased number of enrolments from Stafford, Kedron and Newmarket also presenting. Students are often well prepared at the time of enrolment, in most cases having attended a quality pre-Prep / Kindergarten programme.

Many St. Columba's students engage in a variety of extra-curricular activities outside of school hours, including sporting and cultural pursuits, assisting them to become resilient and confident learners who are well regarded in the local community.

In 2021, St. Columba's comprised approximately 40 students with a disability verification.

Many students who have graduated from St. Columba's go on to attend reputable systemic, private, or Religious institute schools and colleges in the local and/or greater Brisbane area. An increasing trend for some boys and girls to move on to local Religious institute or private schools, is a trend that is now shared with a number of inner-city Brisbane Catholic Education schools. Enrolments for last year (2020) retained more boys in Year 5 and 6 than in previous years, requiring the need for an extra Year 5 class to be administered. Feedback from local high schools is very complementary of students who have attended St. Columba's and often indicates that our students leave St. Columba's well prepared, with very sound academic and social / emotional skills.

## Curriculum implementation

### Curriculum overview

In conjunction with the standard Learning Areas as guided by the Australian Curriculum and Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authorities, St. Columba's proudly offers the following distinctive curriculum areas:

- Religious Education, program validated in 2016 by Brisbane Catholic Education and the Archbishop of Brisbane
- LOTE (Language other than English) – Italian, delivered by a specialist teacher from Yr 2-6
- Physical Education – including a Perceptual Motor program delivered by 3 specialist teachers

- Music – program delivered by a specialist teacher
- Drama – Prep and Year 1 curriculum delivered by a specialist teacher
- Students have the opportunity to be involved in the Robotics, Coding and Engineering program – Years 4, 5, & 6
- Students have the opportunity to be involved in the Sports program which includes Tennis, Aussie Rules, Touch Football, Netball, Volleyball, Soccer, Athletics, Cross Country running and swimming. There are regular training sessions for in-season sports outside of school hours, and children from St. Columba's compete in a variety of competitions at Zone, District, and in some cases State and National level.
- Our curriculum is also complemented by an extensive network of available technologies, which includes classroom computers, banks of laptops, iPads for student use, 1:1 iPads for all students in Years 2 and 3. The current laptop program ensures that all students in Years 4, 5 & 6 have their own laptop device.
- All students are supported in accessing the Australian Curriculum, as teachers differentiate their planning, teaching and assessing, with the support of the school's Primary Learning Leader, Learning Enhancement team and School Guidance Counsellor.
- A Support team meeting is held weekly to discuss and progress the learning needs of identified students requiring additional support.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

The school offers the following extra-curricular activities:

- Drama Club (bi-annually)
- Chess Club
- Young Engineers – Coding, Robotics, Engineering
- Choirs – comprising Junior and Senior choirs, as well as instrumental music tuition
- Parish based Sacramental Program
- Speech and Drama tuition
- Tennis Tuition
- Debating
- Camps in Years 4, 5, & 6
- Interschool sporting competitions, representative sport – individual and team competitions
- Readers Cup participation
- Tournament of the Minds participation
- A variety of incursion and excursion opportunities.

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

Modern pedagogy sits at the heart of our integrated information and communication technologies at St. Columba's. We absolutely believe that a technologies program is not about the device being used, but more importantly, how it is being used to enhance the teaching and learning that is occurring. We are proud of the way staff, students and families have embraced ICT at St. Columba's. Students in Years 2, & 3 have a personalised iPad to enhance their learning, whilst our Year 4, 5 & 6 students currently have their own personalised laptop device. Students as young as our Year 1 students are using Bee Bots and Spheros to explore simple coding. Coding application Scratch and Scratch Junior are also used by students in many year levels to further enhance their coding skills. A partnership has been strengthened with Young Engineers Brisbane North, and we are hopeful of further opportunities in partnership with them in 2022 and beyond. We are very excited to see how ICT can continue to promote equity and excellence in education as we embed 21st century pedagogy in to our creative and innovative teaching and learning programs at St. Columba's. Staff are working with most year levels on Microsoft Teams and OneNote.

# Social climate

## Overview

The school's social climate continues to extend a sense of belonging to all members of the school, parish and local community. Students are encouraged to accept that their rights are accompanied by personal responsibilities, which the school explicitly names and promotes in the Behaviour Support Plan. This plan outlines a whole-school approach to establishing and maintaining a school climate that is characterised by resilience, fairness, charity and sense of belonging. The school's anti-bullying policy draws on these proactive approaches to implement our procedures. Some ways in which we have sought to develop pastoral care include; Liaising with PALS (Parents as Liaison Support) Celebrations of welcome, farewell and graduation to mark the milestones of student participation in school life, leadership opportunities within the school for Year 6 students, buddy class system which supports interactions and friendships across age groups within the school, achievement awards, celebrating birthdays, promoting self-esteem among students, regular assemblies to keep students and families informed of happenings and school and classroom prayer gatherings and celebrations. Our teachers make regular, reasonable and quality adjustments for students to ensure that equitable access to learning occurs and St. Columba's.

## Parent, student and staff satisfaction

The tables below show selected items from the Parent/Caregiver, Student and Staff BCE Listens Surveys.

### BCE Listens Survey - Parent satisfaction

Performance measure	2020
Percentage of parents/carers who agree <sup>#</sup> that:	
This school helps my child to develop their relationship with God	97.8%
School staff demonstrate the school's Catholic Christian values	99.2%
Teachers at this school have high expectations for my child	92.3%
Staff at this school care about my child	98.5%
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns	97.8%
Teachers at this school encourage me to take an active role in my child's education	92.6%
My child feels safe at this school	98.5%
The facilities at this school support my child's educational needs	94.8%
This school looks for ways to improve	96.1%
I am happy my child is at this school	93.2%

## BCE Listens Survey - Student satisfaction

Performance measure	2020
<b>Percentage of students who agree<sup>#</sup> that:</b>	
My school helps me develop my relationship with God	90.3%
I enjoy learning at my school	95.9%
Teachers expect me to work to the best of my ability in all my learning	98.5%
Feedback from my teacher helps me learn	96.4%
Teachers at my school treat me fairly	89.2%
If I was unhappy about something at school I would talk to a school leader or teacher about it	73.3%
I feel safe at school	95.9%
I am happy to be at my school	94.8%

## BCE Listens Survey - Staff satisfaction

Performance measure	2020
<b>Percentage of staff who agree<sup>#</sup> that:</b>	
Working at this school helps me to have a deeper understanding of faith	97.6%
School staff demonstrate this school's Catholic Christian values	100.0%
This school acts on staff feedback	78.9%
This school looks for ways to improve	100.0%
I am recognised for my efforts at work	85.4%
In general students at this school respect staff members	100.0%
This school makes student protection everyone's responsibility	97.6%
I enjoy working at this school	100.0%

# 'Agree' represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement.

DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

## Family and community engagement

Parent and community engagement at St. Columba's is both highly valued and viewed as a critical component of the educational team working together for the benefit of each child. Parental involvement is always welcomed and encouraged. The school continues to have an active P & F Association and School Pastoral Board, who are invited and encouraged to assist the school in collaborative decision making, providing personal expertise where relevant. We provide opportunities for mutual consultation and collaboration, especially during times of review and renewal, seeking feedback of the parent community through a variety of means. St. Columba's maintains effective communication on multi-levels, namely for the purposes of educating, informing, sharing, advising, responding, and sharing of expectations. There exists a wonderful network between the parent community, in partnership with the school, through the work of the PALS committee (Parents as Liaison Support) whereby pastoral, social and assistive administrative support is both offered and celebrated in times of need, welcome and celebration. We encourage the contribution of parents in a variety of ways, especially welcoming their presence at celebrations of both learning and faith.

## School funding

### School income broken down by funding source

School income, reported by financial year accounting cycle using standardized national methodologies and broken down by funding source is available via the [My School](http://www.myschool.edu.au/) website.

#### How to access income details

1. Click on the *My School* link <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.
2. Enter the school name or suburb of the school you wish to search.

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

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

Note: If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a hard copy of the school's financial information.

## Our staff profile

### Workforce composition

Description	Teaching Staff*	Non-Teaching Staff
Headcount	46	35
Full-time Equivalents	36.9	16.0

\*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

### Qualification of all teachers\*

Highest level of qualification	Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school
Doctorate	0
Masters	11
Graduate diploma etc.**	4
Bachelor degree	29
Diploma	2
Certificate	0

\*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

\*\*Graduate diploma etc. includes graduate diploma, bachelor honours degree, and graduate certificate.

## Professional development

A significant amount of professional development in 2021 continued to be directed towards upskilling of staff using technology as a direct result of COVID19 requirements, specifically during periods of Alternate Education Provisions (Learning at home). Considerable professional learning in the key areas of Numeracy and Literacy continued to be a focus for our particular context. Professional learning for the provision of individual needs of students, as well as NCCD requirements was also included. Teaching staff engaged with system driven and external professional learning opportunities with expert support staff through either attendance at off-site in-service days, or through a variety of on-site high yield strategies such as planning days, curriculum conversations, review and response sessions, opportunities for strengthening Catholic Identity, use of assistive technologies, as well as personalised learning meetings for individual students. With a key focus on individual monitoring of students in the areas of both Numeracy and Literacy, teachers also had considerable time to complete one on one assessments with students in their class, which included analysing data to inform future planning, targeting the needs of each of their students. Other professional learning included first aid training, and mandatory Student Protection Training, WHS requirements including Fire, Evacuation, Lockdown procedures, Bullying and Workplace Harassment training.

The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2021 was 100%.

## Staff attendance and retention

### Average staff attendance

Description	%
Staff attendance for permanent and temporary staff and school leaders	97.3%

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

From the end of the previous school year, 77% of staff was retained by the school for the entire 2021.

# Performance of our students

## Key student outcomes

### Student attendance

The overall student attendance rate in 2021 for all Brisbane Catholic Education schools across years Prep-6 was 92.4%.

Description	%
The overall attendance rate* for the students at this school	95.6%
Attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at this school	97.3%

Average attendance rate per year level			
Prep attendance rate	95.2%	Year 4 attendance rate	95.3%
Year 1 attendance rate	96.0%	Year 5 attendance rate	96.0%
Year 2 attendance rate	95.5%	Year 6 attendance rate	95.7%
Year 3 attendance rate	96.1%		

\*The student attendance rate is generated by dividing the total of full-days and part-days that students attended, and comparing this to the total of all possible days for students to attend, expressed as a percentage.

### Description of how non-attendance is managed by the school

The school manages student attendance electronically by the student administration system in accordance with the roll marking policy and procedures document. Members of the school's office administration team, monitor and check daily attendance reports that are generated by every class group. Our school continued its commitment to the parent SMS notification system throughout 2021, whereby parents receive a text message alert if their child is absent from school and the absence is unexplained. An alert is triggered at the beginning of the school day when rolls are marked. Parents are contacted until a response is received. Parents can also monitor their own child's attendance by way of the parent portal. All families are discouraged from taking extended holidays during school time, which significantly impacts the attendance (inability to attend) of students. Families are reminded that there is ample holiday time provided in the year for such holidays, and that every day at school counts.

## **NAPLAN**

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN tests are available via the [My School](#) website.

### **How to access our NAPLAN results**

5. Click on the [My School](#) link <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.
6. Enter the school name or suburb of the school you wish to search.



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

[View School Profile](#)

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



#### Notes:

1. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a hard copy of the school's NAPLAN results.
2. The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy ([NAPLAN](#)) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.