



**Aquinas College, ASHMORE**

# Annual Report 2021

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



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Catholic  
Education**

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# Contact information

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<b>Contact person</b>	Marcus Richardson — 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.

Aquinas College is the oldest co-educational Catholic College on the Gold Coast. Founded in 1901 as Star of the Sea College for girls administered by the Sisters of Mercy. In 1964 the Christian Brothers opened Aquinas College as a boys school. Both colleges amalgamated in 1991, becoming a co-educational college with the closing of Star of the Sea. Since that time, Aquinas has grown to become a dynamic and contemporary community of learners.

The College continues to undertake a variety of strategies that not only build on strong foundations in Teaching and Learning but also launch Aquinas into a new and vibrant future. In 2021 we continued to focus on our academic, pastoral and religious dimensions. These 'pillars' form the basis of our Strategic Plan 2019 – 2021 and our 2021 Action Plan.

2021 saw the completion and opening of the Thomas Aquinas Centre, the new Administration Building and classroom spaces. Construction of Stage One began late in 2019 and was completed by the end of 2020.

The College theme of 'Embracing Life' was explored and developed through assemblies, liturgies and our Pastoral Program. The theme was explored also through our social justice program and community involvement.

In addition, the College continued our involvement with the BCE initiative for Excellent Teaching and Learning and our College Leadership will endeavour to drive pedagogical change and enact our Vision for Learning.

### School progress towards its goals in 2021

2021 proved to be a challenging year with COVID 19 impacting on Teaching and Learning. The staff and students were engaged in Alternative Educational Program at different stages, but the community worked resiliently with the disruptions.

The College Leadership Team identified the following points below prior to the restrictions and were committed to maintaining a positive and productive way forward. A number of goals were undertaken during 2021.

Students responded positively with improvements in NAPLAN literacy and achieved well with ATAR and Vocational Education results.

College Strategic Priorities included:

- Strong Catholic Identity – Strengthening our capacity to lead, engage and teach with a re-contextualised Catholic world-view within a contemporary multi-charism Catholic College

- Teaching and Learning – To cultivate an inclusive College community where academic excellence is valued, and all are empowered to nurture a dynamic, challenging, rich and diverse range of learning and experiences
- Building a Sustainable Future – Strengthen processes and policies to support accountability to achieve our priorities with staff and students

The College made purposeful decisions regarding the Strategic Priorities.

- The community engaged in a survey process prioritising the Enhancing Catholic School Identity (ECSI) project. Results have been used to promote professional learning opportunities from 2021 – 2022
- The community further developed its understanding of inclusion, prioritising the inclusion of the Illuminate Academic Excellence program and professional development opportunities regarding inclusive practices and program development
- The College reinforced the teaching staff Annual Performance Development Plan to increase accountability regarding teacher goals.

The College continued to

- Enhance understanding of Recontextualisation across the College to improve student experience of and engagement in Prayer, Liturgy and Eucharist across the College.
- Strengthen relationships with the Parish, and organisations linked to our founding charisms – EREA, Mercy Partners, AMSSA, Christian Brothers
- Use Professional Learning groups to build teacher capacity with a focus on collaboration and sharing pedagogical practices that can be implemented in the classroom
- Work towards building a seamless Years 7-12 curriculum that focuses on Literacy, Numeracy and NCCD requirements.

### **Future outlook**

During 2022 the following areas were identified as a continued focus:

Catholic Identity – Review of the Vision and Mission

- Strategies for improvement
  - Engage the Head of Catholic Identity to begin renewed conversations for the Vision and Mission
  - The Leadership Team to review the Vision and Mission
  - Community consultation regarding the Vision and Mission
- Success measures
  - Facilitator engagement through Terms 1 - 4
  - Consultation Process through Terms 1 - 4
  - Drafting of Vision and Mission in Term 3
  - Promulgation of Vision and Mission in Term 4

Learning and Teaching – Explicit Improvement of Pedagogical Practices

- Strategies for improvement
  - Implement the Annual Performance Development Plan
  - Pedagogical focus through Curriculum Delivery Plan
  - Implement the BCE Model of Pedagogy
- Success measures
  - Completion of College Data Plan – Term 1
  - Unit plan alignment with pedagogy – Terms 1 - 4
  - Annual Performance Development Plan alignment with Model of Pedagogy – Term 1
  - Evidence of clear agenda in Faculty Meetings – Term 1 - 4

Our People – Annual Performance Development Plan for teachers

- Strategies for improvement
  - Build teacher pedagogical capability through the Annual Performance Development Plan
  - Adopting shared language through the Model of Pedagogy

- Success measures
  - Pedagogical goals present in Annual Performance Development Plan – Term 1
  - Pedagogical goals reflect the shared language of the Model of Pedagogy – Term 1

Organisational Effectiveness – developing a five-year financial plan

- Strategies for improvement
  - Engage Support Accountant to assist with the parameters of the five-year financial plan
  - Develop in partnership with BCEO and College Leadership Team
  - Financial Plan inclusive of enrolments and resourcing of learning and wellbeing services
- Success measures
  - Completion of five-year financial plan in 2022

Wellbeing – To create an environment that is positive for staff, students and family

- Strategies for improvement
  - Advocacy for Student Voice initiatives
  - Advocacy for Staff Voice initiatives
- Success measures
  - Improved BCE Listens survey results from staff and students in 2022
  - Forming a Staff Voice Committee grounded in Growth Mindset – Terms 1 - 4
  - Forming a Student Voice Committee grounded in growth mindset – Terms 1 – 4.

# Our school at a glance

## School profile

Aquinas College is a Catholic school administered through Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane.

**Coeducational or single sex:** Coeducational

**Year levels offered in 2021:** Secondary

### Student enrolments for this school:

	Total	Girls	Boys	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
2021	862	424	438	16

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

Aquinas College Gold Coast opened its doors in 1901, with its early foundations as Star of the Sea College for girls administered by the Sisters of Mercy. Aquinas College for boys was administered by the Christian Brothers and opened in 1964.

Today, as a coeducational College, Aquinas College operates as an integral entity of the Southport Catholic Parish within the Archdiocese of Brisbane and under the authority of Brisbane Catholic Education. Aquinas is a Year 7 to 12 College where students are mainly drawn from schools on the northern end of the Gold Coast, particularly the Catholic primary schools, Guardian Angels, St Francis Xavier, St Kevin's, Jubilee and St Brigid's. Aquinas is an inclusive college supporting and integrating over 60 students with disabilities. All students are supported through a comprehensive Pastoral Care system where they are known and nurtured.

## Curriculum implementation

### Curriculum overview

Aquinas College fosters holistic education and actively engages in living the College vision. This commences in Year 7 where students from a range of catchment primary schools transition between structures and processes of primary into the diverse and dynamic organisation of secondary school.

- Year 7s study the core subjects of Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science, History, HPE and Japanese. They are also introduced to the Arts (Visual Art, Music, Dance and Drama) and Design and Technology (Hospitality, Industrial Technology and Design and Information Communication Technology) through studying these subjects for part of the year.
- Year 8 & 9 students choose a number of electives to complement their core study subjects. 2021 continued the extension and expansion of STEM as an elective.
- Year 10 students choose from a wider number of electives.
- Students in Years 11 and 12 study six senior subjects including Study of Religion or Religion and Ethics and English or English Communication. In addition, students can complete a range of General and Applied subjects. Certificate and Diploma courses are also available to students.
- Aquinas College offers a wide range of subjects that cater for students, varying interests and abilities. Of particular note is Rugby League and Netball classes of Excellence in Years 8 - 10, that have also added an even greater variety to the Aquinas College Physical Education Program.
- The College also offered the Illuminate Academic Excellence program for the first time in Year 7.

## Extra-curricular activities

Aquinas College is committed to offering students a wide range of activities designed to enrich the curriculum and to extend the students' physical, spiritual and emotional development.

Such activities include:

- Social Justice Groups (St Vincent's De Paul, Rosies)
- Cultural Activities - Concert band, Choir, On the Edge Visual Art Show, Bi-annual Musical production, Dance Eisteddfod; Interschool Debating, Science, English and Mathematics Competitions
- Sporting activities, including competitive inter-school sport teams at Aquinas College such as Swimming, Athletics, Cross Country, Rugby League, Netball, Touch Football, AFL, Basketball, Kokoda and Human Powered Vehicle

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

Aquinas offers a variety of digital technology for staff and students to assist learning. Staff and students use Microsoft Office 365 apps with Microsoft Teams as a base Learning Management System. Teams is a digital hub that brings conversations, sharing content, personalised learning and feedback with assignments and 24/7 access to content. Students are offered support and feedback with Class Notebook and other O365 apps – Word, OneNote, PPT, Excel, OneDrive and SharePoint together in one place.

Teams promotes student voice and collaboration within classrooms. Office 365 enables staff to reach all types of learners who require a range of carefully selected tools based on their strengths and abilities. Classrooms become inclusive places where all students belong, can contribute and are empowered to achieve more - Office 365 makes that possible.

Aquinas also offers programs such as Mighty Minds for students to develop literacy and numeracy skills, Nearpod and Book Widgets for staff to enhance and redefine their teaching through interactive, inclusive, differentiated and engaging lessons. Teachers gather student data and responses and then plan and implement future pedagogy from the results.

## Social climate

### Overview

Aquinas College maintains a safe and happy learning community. The social climate of the College is a manifestation of the College Vision where Gospel values and those of each house patron are known and shared. The College is organised through a vertical pastoral care structure where students from each year level work together in a Vertical Pastoral Care (VPC) class under the guidance of their VPC teacher. This relationship should span a student's time at Aquinas. Groups of VPC classes form a House Group (Chisholm, Edmund Rice, McAuley, Romero) under the care of the Pastoral Leader who oversees the care of the students in that House. In addition to VPC, relationships are built during Pastoral care lessons where topics such as study skills, goal setting, friendships, personal development, cyber-bullying, camp preparation, career education, driver education, healthy habits, lifestyle and relationships are explored with a mentor teacher. An induction program for Year 7 students outlines necessary processes and procedures to assist in navigating the complexities and idiosyncrasies of Aquinas.

### 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	
Percentage of parents/carers who agree# that:	2020
This school helps my child to develop their relationship with God	96.4%
School staff demonstrate the school's Catholic Christian values	93.0%
Teachers at this school have high expectations for my child	90.2%
Staff at this school care about my child	92.2%
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns	91.7%
Teachers at this school encourage me to take an active role in my child's education	81.1%
My child feels safe at this school	93.3%
The facilities at this school support my child's educational needs	90.5%
This school looks for ways to improve	91.0%
I am happy my child is at this school	88.0%

## BCE Listens Survey - Student satisfaction

Performance measure	
Percentage of students who agree# that:	2020
My school helps me develop my relationship with God	64.6%
I enjoy learning at my school	80.9%
Teachers expect me to work to the best of my ability in all my learning	94.4%
Feedback from my teacher helps me learn	91.0%
Teachers at my school treat me fairly	72.0%
If I was unhappy about something at school I would talk to a school leader or teacher about it	55.3%
I feel safe at school	83.3%
I am happy to be at my school	74.6%

## BCE Listens Survey - Staff satisfaction

Performance measure	
Percentage of staff who agree# that:	2020
Working at this school helps me to have a deeper understanding of faith	79.2%
School staff demonstrate this school's Catholic Christian values	81.9%
This school acts on staff feedback	49.3%
This school looks for ways to improve	80.8%
I am recognised for my efforts at work	58.9%
In general students at this school respect staff members	76.7%
This school makes student protection everyone's responsibility	93.0%
I enjoy working at this school	93.0%

# '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

Aquinas College believes students achieve their best when family and College work in partnership. We appreciate the involvement of families:

- Supporting faith development at College and Parish through attendance and participation in such events as House Masses, Induction and Graduation Masses, Easter Liturgies and Mother's Day Liturgies
- Attending Parent/Teacher Information Evenings to discuss student progress
- Invitation to attend information evenings – Year 7, Senior Schooling and specific topics of interest
- Actively participating in the Parents and Friends Association
- Providing feedback both formally and informally about how Aquinas can become even more effective
- Keeping in contact with the College regarding changes in family circumstances
- Reading and noting information received each fortnight in the College Newsletter
- Attending the many sporting and cultural events throughout the year.

## 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* 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.

Find a school Search website

Search by school name or suburb Go

School sector School type State

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

View School Profile

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

School profile NAPLAN Attendance Finances VET in schools Senior secondary Schools map

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	87	45
Full-time Equivalents	83.0	34.7

\*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

## Qualification of all teachers\*

Highest level of qualification	Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school
Doctorate	2
Masters	24
Graduate diploma etc.**	38
Bachelor degree	23
Diploma	0
Certificate	0

\*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

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

## Professional development

The major professional development initiatives are as follows:

- Exploration of Christian Brothers/Edmund Rice Charism
- Building capacity with Office 365 applications and usage
- Increased use of TEAMS during COVID lockdown
- Implementation of PB4L programs and processes

The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2020 was 100%.

## Staff attendance and retention

### Average staff attendance

Description	%
Staff attendance for permanent and temporary staff and school leaders	94.8%

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

From the end of the previous school year, 95.6% of staff were 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 7-12 was 89.9%.

Description	%
The overall attendance rate* for the students at this school	91.8%
Attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at this school	93.7%

Average attendance rate per year level			
Year 7 attendance rate	93.5%	Year 10 attendance rate	90.7%
Year 8 attendance rate	91.0%	Year 11 attendance rate	91.2%
Year 9 attendance rate	90.3%	Year 12 attendance rate	93.5%

\*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.

### Apparent retention rate from Year 10 to Year 12

Description	%
Year 12 student enrolment as a percentage of the Year 10 (2021) student cohort	95.9%

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

Aquinas is keen to improve attendance in all areas and across all year levels. The College Leadership Team and Pastoral Leaders have undertaken specific strategies to improve attendance. In Semester One, the College provided Principal's Awards for students who have achieved 100% attendance. Parents receive attendance rates each term and all 'unexplained' absences are followed twice per term with parents. In addition, students with extremely poor attendance were monitored with close liaison with families by Pastoral Leaders and the Assistant Principal – Student Welfare. The College has actively promoted the program of "Attendance Matters" and has attendance rates as one of the annual goals. Finally, classroom recording of student absence was tightened and families were discouraged to take holidays during school time.

## 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

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.



The screenshot shows a search bar with the placeholder text "Search by school name or suburb". To the right of the search bar are three dropdown menus labeled "School sector", "School type", and "State". A magnifying glass icon is located to the right of the "State" dropdown.

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

[View School Profile](#)

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



The screenshot shows a horizontal navigation menu with several items: "School profile", "NAPLAN", "Attendance", "Finances", "VET in schools", "Senior secondary", and "Schools map". The "NAPLAN" item is highlighted with a dark background and white text, indicating it is the selected option.

#### 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.

## Year 12 outcomes

Description	2021
Number of students receiving a Senior Statement	144
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) at the end of Year 12.	136
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement.	1
Number of students who were completing/continuing a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SAT).	24
Number of students awarded one or more Vocational Educational Training (VET) qualifications (including SAT).	129
Number of students awarded a VET Certificate II or above.	107
Number of students awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD).	NA
Percentage of Year 12 students who were completing or completed a SAT or were awarded one or more of the following: QCE, IBD, VET qualification	97.9%
Number of students receiving an ATAR	74
Percentage of Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) applicants received a tertiary offer.	88%

As at April 2021. The above values exclude VISA students.

## Student destinations

### Post-school destination information

The results of the 2021 post-school destinations survey, Next Step – Student Destination Report (2021 Year 12 cohort), will be uploaded to the Brisbane Catholic Education’s website in September 2022. The report will be available at: <http://www.bne.catholic.edu.au/schools-curriculum/school-reporting/Pages/School-Annual-Reports.aspx>.

Schools with fewer than 5 responses will not have a report available on the post-school destinations of Year 12 completers for reasons of confidentiality.

### Early leavers information

The Gold Coast in general, experiences family movement into and out of the region. The majority of student movement across the school is related to family re-location. The Gold Coast is also a very well-resourced community with a variety of targeted educational institutions. The majority of students leaving in Year 10 do so to attend the trade specific college – AITC. In addition, students are also drawn to the Academy of Medical Science. We also have students in their final year move directly into work. The college staff works closely with all students and families to ensure students choose the correct path to suit their particular needs.