



**Brisbane  
Catholic  
Education**

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# ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORTING – 2016

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION, ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE

### SCHOOL PROFILE

School name St Columba's Primary School

Postal address Kedron Brook Road, WILSTON, QLD, 4051

Phone (07) 3356 9866

Email pwilston@bne.catholic.edu.au

School website www.stcolumbaswilston.qld.edu.au

Contact person Michelle Kneen

### Principal's foreword

St.Columba's Primary School is situated in the inner northern suburb of Wilston, in Brisbane. Opening enrolments in 2016 were 610 from Prep to 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. 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, quality teaching and learning, and the provision of a variety of extra-curricular activities. This year we commence planning for our school's Centenary in 2017. Currently St.Columba's caters for the primary years Prep to Year 6, across 24 classes. Staff comprise of classroom teachers, school officers and specialist staff. In 2016 we progress and commence a multi-million dollar building project, for anticipated completion in mid 2017. This, as with recent past projects has been and will continue to be part of a long-term strategy to meet enrolment demand, and to continue to develop modern, first-class educational facilities to meet the challenges of 21st century learning and teaching. Today, St.Columba's, in strong partnership with the Parish, is recognised for proudly offering a quality, inclusive Catholic Education.

### School facts

St Columba's Primary School is a Catholic school administered through Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Brisbane.

Coeducational  or Single sex

Year levels offered: Primary  Secondary  P-12

Total student enrolments: 610 Girls: 326 Boys: 284

## Characteristics of the student body

2016 continued to see the student body of St.Columba's as a predominantly homogenous group, largely consisting of students born in Australia. Although some were born overseas, the majority of students have English speaking parents. Only 11 students of the total school population have an ESL background. Students come from diverse family backgrounds who value education and the parents are well educated; most having tertiary qualifications themselves.

Overall, our student cohort primarily comprises children from families in the local areas of Wilston, Grange, Windsor and Gordon Park. Students are often well prepared at the time of enrolment, having attended a quality pre-Prep / Kindergarten programme.

Many students from St.Columba's are involved in extra-curricular activities outside school hours, including sporting and cultural pursuits, making them resilient and confident learners who are well regarded in the local community. Feedback received from local high schools often indicates that students from St.Columba's are well prepared and have sound academic and social skills.

## Social climate

The school's social climate extends a sense of belonging to all members of the community. Students are encouraged to accept that their rights are accompanied by responsibilities. Our school's Behaviour Support Plan, incorporating the "Bounce Back" Programme, outlines a whole-school approach to establishing and maintaining a school climate that is characterised by resilience, fairness, charity and a 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: 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 support 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 at school, and class prayer gatherings and celebrations.

## Curriculum - our distinctive offerings

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

- Religious Education, following a programme validated in 2016 by Brisbane Catholic Education and the Archbishop of Brisbane
- LOTE (Language other than English) - Italian
- Physical Education - The school has 2 part time Physical Education specialist teachers
- Music - The school has 2 part time Music specialist teachers
- Students have the opportunity to be involved in the Sports programme (including Tennis, Aussie Rules, T-ball, Touch Football, Volleyball, Netball, Soccer, Athletics, Swimming, and Cross Country running). There are regular training sessions offered 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 level.
- Our curriculum is also complemented by an extensive network of available technologies (classroom computers, banks of laptops, iPads available for student use, and 1:1 iPads for all students in Years 1, 2, and 3. The 1:1 Laptop programme also continues, seeing all Year 4, 5 and 6 students having a personal laptop device.

## Curriculum - our extra curricula activities

The school offers the following extra-curricular activities;

- Drama club, Chess and Science clubs
- Choirs - comprising Junior and Senior Choirs, and Instrumental Music tuition
- Parish based Sacramental programme
- Speech and Drama tuition
- Tennis tuition
- Camps in Years 4, 5 & 6 (Students in Year 6 travel to Canberra for an education excursion)
- Interschool sporting competitions, representative sport - individual and team competitions
- Readers Cup participation
- Incursion and Excursion opportunities.

## Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

We recognize the importance of feedback in relation to community satisfaction. We provide many opportunities to liaise, correspond and discuss various elements concerning school practices. From data gained through community surveys, the internal school review process, and staff goal setting, there is a high degree of satisfaction. Areas of commendation from the parent community in 2016 name the following strengths; a strong sense of social justice, use of Benedictine values, the dignity of each person is valued, and there exists a variety of school initiatives that support social action and justice (Caritas cake stall, St. Vincent de Paul hampers, and Lenten donations). Strength is also shown in student and family well being, namely through our PALS network, Bounce Back, and Buddy system. Overwhelming positive feedback for partnerships and relationships exists, naming Community spirit, strong links with Parish, welcoming of new parents, and excellent communication via newsletter and email as contributors. We have an active P & F and School Board, a culture of kindness and generosity, with clear protocols. Strategic resourcing feedback is complementary of our regular meetings and audits.

## Parent engagement

Parent 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 has an active P&F Association and School 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 and social 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 ACHIEVEMENTS

### **Achievements - progress towards goals**

2016 saw some major goals and achievements for the school community. Some key achievements included; the successful validation of our Religious Education program, and our acceptance into Brisbane Catholic Education's Catching Fire program, to enhance the spiritual formation and Catholic identity of staff. The school successfully transitioned to online reporting, utilising the parent portal, which provided efficient and safe delivery of formal written reports, also marking a sustainable practice to continue in future years, and the promotion of enhanced partnerships between home and school. 2016 saw the appointment of our first PLL (Primary Learning Leader), a system-initiated role to assist in the modelling and delivery of excellent learning and teaching, including BCE approved high yield strategies, to ultimately drive student improvement. Increased understanding and use of the Business Intelligence tool and various PD opportunities, has also allowed for the refinement of targeted teaching, particularly in the area of Numeracy. A much celebrated achievement was the St.Columba's biennial Great Fete, which successfully promoted our Centenary year. Significant building works were also commenced.

### **Future outlook**

The school has a robust and effective team of staff that set school goals, covering a number of priorities, based on a number of factors, including; system driven initiatives, government mandated policies, ongoing long-term goals, and feedback from the school community about performance and improvement. From 2017, we will plan within a new strategic framework of 3 main priority areas, namely; Strong Catholic Identity, Excellent Learning and Teaching, and Building a Sustainable Future. As a community we have looked at feedback regarding enhancing our Catholic Identity and have committed to Brisbane Catholic Education's staff formation programme "Catching Fire". We will continue to monitor the effective implementation of our recently validated RE programme through funded planning opportunities, a digital space for increased collaboration, as well as the use of a variety of high-yield strategies as recommended by BCE. The school's commitment to and engagement with improving student learning in Numeracy will continue in to 2017, with an emerging priority in Literacy. Engagement with BCE's Business Intelligence tool to analyse data and inform future planning will continue, as will the continued promotion of sustainable practices.

## STUDENT OUTCOMES

Whole school attendance rate			96.00	%
Prep attendance rate	96.00	%	Year 4 attendance rate	96.00 %
Year 1 attendance rate	96.00	%	Year 5 attendance rate	96.00 %
Year 2 attendance rate	96.00	%	Year 6 attendance rate	96.00 %
Year 3 attendance rate	96.00	%		

### Management of non-attendance

The school manages student attendance electronically by the student administration system in accordance with 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. Staff received professional training in late 2016 regarding a new parent SMS system, for commencement in 2017 (trialled late in Term 4, 2016) 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 can monitor their own child's attendance by way of the parent portal.

### NAPLAN results

Average NAPLAN results

	Year 3		Year 5	
	School	Aust.	School	Aust.
Reading	496.41	425.70	545.74	501.70
Writing	459.13	420.50	518.39	475.40
Spelling	473.20	420.10	513.21	492.90
Grammar & punctuation	524.82	436.30	565.79	505.00
Numeracy	456.65	402.20	518.96	492.90

## STAFF PROFILE

Workforce composition	Teaching staff	Non-teaching staff
Headcounts	46	35
Full-time equivalents	40.94	18.06
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	0	

Highest level of attainment	Number of teaching staff (teaching staff includes school leaders)
Doctorate	0
Masters	10
Post Graduate Diploma/ Certificate	3
Bachelor Degree	31
Diploma/Certificate	2

### Expenditure on and participation in teacher professional learning

The total funds expended on teacher professional learning in 2016 was \$ 77,902

The major professional development initiatives were as follows

A significant amount of professional development funding was directed towards the implementation of the Brisbane Catholic Education Initiative, "Delivering Excellent Learning and Teaching" strategy. Considerable professional learning in the area of Numeracy was a major component of this strategy for our context, with teachers engaging with numerous support staff from BCE through either attendance at external in-service days, or by being supported in school, on-site, through a variety of curriculum conversations, planning days, and engagement in high yield strategies. These are namely Review and Response cycles, Walks and Talks, and spending quality time engaging in administering monitoring tools to every student, and analysing data to determine future planning, to target the needs of each student. Funds for other professional development opportunities were directed to the areas of; Religious Education and spirituality, Literacy development, First Aid, Consistency of Teacher Judgement, ICT and 21st Century learning in the classroom (Robotics partnership and 1:1 device programs), specialised learning needs, and mandatory training requirements.

**Average staff attendance rate** The staff attendance rate was 97.82 % in 2016.

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

From the end of the 2015 school year, 97.53 % of staff were retained by the school for the 2016 year.

## SCHOOL INCOME

### School income by funding source

School income broken down by funding source is available via the My School website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>

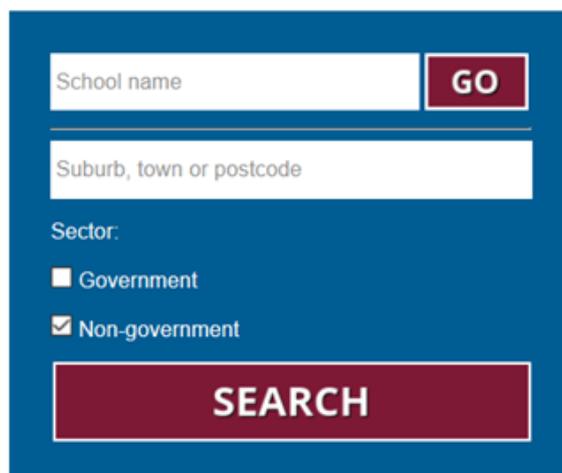
To access our school income details, click on the My School link above. You will then be taken to the My School website with the following:

'Find a school' text box.

Type in the name of the school you wish to view, and select '<GO>'. Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to accept the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy before being given access to the school's My School entry web page.

School financial information is available by selecting 'School finances' in the menu box in the top left corner of the school's entry web page.

### Find a school



The screenshot shows a search interface with a dark blue background. At the top, the text 'Find a school' is displayed. Below this, there are two input fields: 'School name' and 'Suburb, town or postcode'. To the right of the 'School name' field is a red button with the text 'GO'. Below the 'Suburb, town or postcode' field, the text 'Sector:' is followed by two radio button options: 'Government' (which is unselected) and 'Non-government' (which is selected with a checkmark). At the bottom of the form is a large red button with the text 'SEARCH' in white capital letters.