

**St Dymphna's Parish School,
ASPLEY**

Annual Report 2020

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



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Contact information

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Principal's foreword

St Dympna's is a Catholic coeducational school on the north side of Brisbane. St Dympna's Catholic School seeks to provide a quality Catholic learning environment reflecting the Josephite spirit, so that its students are faith filled and prepared to make a difference. We aspire to be a community which truly reflects the vision of God's love for all. This school offers a rich curriculum including religious education, excellence in academic pursuits, a diverse arts program as well as many and varied sporting opportunities. Extensive grounds provide diverse play opportunities for children of all ages. Up to date technology is available across the school and is complimented by a modern resource centre incorporating a media room and technology hub.

School progress towards its goals in 2020

- **To develop a whole-school curriculum delivery plan**

During 2020 the whole school curriculum plan was written and implemented. This plan is now used to inform and drive curriculum needs now and into the future.

- **To develop and use Reflective Practices**

The 4C model of curriculum delivery is embedded in the planning cycle and is used when staff engage in collaborative planning. Reflective practice is one of the stages of this model. The Student Support Team drive this by using data to determine the support needed to move all students forward. Classroom teachers have adopted this process in response to the leadership shown.

- **To improve Parent Engagement**

While COVID 19 put restrictions on face-to-face engagement, the online capabilities of our school during this time enabled a platform that not only supported student access to the curriculum but also enhanced our capacity to engage parents in the learning process. Specific online access was developed in the areas of curriculum, wellbeing and faith and prayer.

- **To ensure Learning Growth**

The school Professional Learning and Data Plans include goal setting practices, differentiation practices and the schools' expected ways of working. The teaching of reading comprehension was a major focus in 2020. Moving into the future, student voice will be a part of the reporting process.

- **To embed Catholic Perspectives in all curriculum areas**

During 2020 there was an emphasis during year level curriculum planning to consider and embed Catholic Perspectives across the curriculum. Curriculum leaders made staff aware of how to use all resources to enhance planning and were provided with practical examples using literature or statistics that would relevantly bring the Catholic Perspective into our classrooms. This trend will be ongoing to move from awareness to full implementation where the ideas are embedded and come naturally during future planning.

- **To ensure all student attendance is above 90%**

The school communicated to parents the link between attendance and achievement. A strong school parent partnership supports regular attendance and follow up was given to families of children showing significant absences. The school attendance rate reflects the success of this goal.

Future outlook

- Curriculum planning will continue in a three-week cycle with a focus on mathematics. St Dympna's School will continue to embed technology capabilities across all year levels. In 2021 the one-to-one iPad program will commence in year 1. Student online testing capabilities will be developed to ensure full engagement in online NAPLAN testing commencing in year 3.
- Staff will continue to develop their skills in curriculum differentiation with a focus on differentiation of assessments. Curriculum differentiation will be used to focus on students who have lower attendance than their peers.
- During 2021 we will continue our focus on Catholic Identity with a school team participating in the Dialogue retreat program. This will lead to professional development during 2021 and 2022, for the staff on the five Formation for Mission modules.
- Parental engagement will continue to be encouraged and developed to foster parent engagement in their children's learning.
- In 2021 the school, will review its behaviour matrix using a student voice approach and implement an effective PB4L process to support students demonstrating disengaged behaviour.

Our school at a glance

School profile

St Dympna's Parish School is a Catholic school administered through the Catholic Education Archdiocese Brisbane.

Coeducational or single sex: Coeducational

Year levels offered in 2020: Primary

Student enrolments for this school:

	Total	Girls	Boys	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
2020	654	364	290	1

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

St Dympna's is a diverse school community. The student population draws from across the globe, Europe, North America, South America, Africa and Asia. This means a diversity of faiths as well. Apart from various Christian faiths including Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran and Orthodox, we also have Hindu, Sikh, Buddhism and Islam. Priority during enrolment is given to Catholic families. The school successfully caters for the diverse needs of the student body. In 2020 there were multiple students with a disability as identified through the state EAP criteria and Commonwealth NCCD criteria. From prep to year 6 the curriculum is adjusted to meet the needs of learners. Approximately half of our prep students each year are siblings, and we have some second and third generation families. Our reputation within the area is enviable. Many students have one or two siblings at St Dympna's School. Some of our boys leave St Dympna's at the end of year 4 to attend the nearby boys' colleges such as Padua, St Joseph's Nudgee and St Patrick's Shorncliffe. The girls complete their primary schooling at St Dympna's leaving at the end of year 6 to go to St Rita's, Mt Alvernia, All Hallows, Mary McKillop College and St John Fisher College. There is significant interest from families in the new coeducational college, Holy Spirit College opening in 2022. Some of our students move onto the local state high schools. Most students draw from Aspley as well as the surrounding suburbs of Carseldine, Bridgeman Downs, Zillmere, Geebung, West Chermside and McDowall.

Curriculum implementation

Curriculum overview

St Dympna's curriculum is planned directly from and informed by:

- the Australian Curriculum (ACARA) - in the learning areas of Mathematics, English, Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS), The Arts, Technologies, Languages and Health and Physical Education (HPE).
- the Religious Education Guidelines of the Archdiocese of Brisbane
- Brisbane Catholic Education Learning & Teaching Framework and Early Years Policy
- Brisbane Catholic Education's Model of Pedagogy - *Focus* on learners and their learning; *Establish* clear Learning Intentions & Success Criteria; *Activate* multiple ways of knowing, and interacting and multiple opportunities for practice; *Respond* with feedback that moves learning forward & *Evaluate* the impact of teaching on student achievement and success
- Brisbane Catholic Education's Effective & Expected Practices

School, Year level & Class level planning focuses on:

- Religious Education that nurtures the faith life of all students through opportunities to be involved in prayer and liturgy & opportunities to support local charity community groups
- Establishing positive classroom environments to engage learners
- Collaborative planning and moderation
- Ongoing responsive cycles of learning and teaching based on data sources
- Teaching explicitly and differentiating to move each student's learning forward towards the success criteria
- Latest research in how to improve student learning
- Developing the Literacy of all subject areas
- Delivery of quality online learning opportunities (COVID response)
- Online support for parents during online learning due to COVID

Assessment & Reporting

Assessing student learning is an integral part of the school classroom. It improves learning and informs teaching. Students are assessed against the ACARA achievement standards that:

- provide an expectation of the quality of learning students should typically demonstrate by a particular point in their schooling
- emphasise the depth of conceptual understanding, the sophistication of skills and the ability to apply knowledge expected of students
- comprise a written description and illustrative student work samples
- support formative and summative assessment practices
- provide a basis for consistency of assessment and reporting (Shape of the Australian Curriculum v 2.0, 2010, 77)

At St Dymphna's School, reporting student progress and achievement follows current Australian Government legislative requirements:

- an opportunity for parents to meet with the child's teacher at least twice a year (Teams or phone meetings offered)
- a written report to parents at least twice yearly that includes each learning area or subject studied, against achievement standards using a five-point scale (modified report in Semester 1 due to COVID)
- an offer of information on a child's achievement relative to the child's peer group (cohort data)

Extra-curricular activities

- Extensive music program including the opportunity to learn an instrument from year 2 in strings (violin, viola, cello) band instruments (flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, percussion) keyboard, piano and guitar and/or join one of the four choirs
- Zone 6 & District Sport opportunities
- Camps – Outdoor education Year 5 & Moreton Island Year 6
- Leadership programs for senior students
- Under 8's day
- ICAS assessments
- Brainways Gifted & Talented Competitions
- STEM activities
- Public Speaking Competition – All Saints, Albany Creek
- APSMO Maths Olympiad (Years 5 & 6) Maths Games (Year 4 Extension)

How information and communication technologies are used to assist learning

In partnership with parents/carers, students are empowered to become digital citizens through the development of knowledge and skills to use and apply information communication technologies in real life tasks. These tasks include accessing and organising information, problem-solving, decision-making, communication, creating and reasoning. There are both benefits and challenges in the use of information technology, especially in online environments. As part of the home/school partnership we need parents/carers to foster an ICT environment outside of school that relies on parental permission and supervision of student ICT use.

St Dympna's School takes a whole school approach to digital citizenship. All students in Years 1 to 6 participate in a structured program introducing age-appropriate aspects of digital citizenship such as online safety and security, accessing online content, use of social media, communication and publishing. All students are also asked to sign a statement at the beginning of each school year to demonstrate an awareness of the expectations of ICT use. Parents/Carers are asked to sign this statement at this time as well.

The children of St Dympna's School are provided with every opportunity to experience 'technology' in all its forms. They are assisted to develop the skills necessary to meet the demands of the present and future. The school has invested significantly to provide the infrastructure and ready access to relevant technologies for all students as appropriate for their learning needs. This has allowed students to present their knowledge and skills in innovative and creative ways. We have a one-to-one iPad program for Years 3 to 6 and multiple sets of iPads are available for use by the Prep to 2 year levels. Playtime activities e.g., Scratch Club are also offered.

Students with identified needs/disabilities have access to specialised technology support/programs e.g., iPad Accessibility, Read Write Gold, dyslexic keyboards, Speech to Text, Scario pen, Spelling Aid to support differentiation in accessing the curriculum.

Social climate

Overview

The social climate of Saint Dympna's school is welcoming and harmonious. Using our School Vision and Mission statement as a guide we set out to maintain a safe and supportive learning environment for both our staff and students. Following BCE guidelines around 'Positive Behaviour for Learning' we developed our own school expectations which, while presented in the form of a matrix, builds on our school motto to 'Walk in God's Light'.

At the beginning of each year this matrix is revisited at the appropriate level for each grade and each class produces a Covenant expressing agreed upon expectations. The staff also develop an annual covenant which is expressed as a commitment to the school community.

Beginning each day as a whole school with our School Prayer and recital of the school's behaviour expectations builds both community and a desirable school climate. This is reinforced at school assemblies where students' efforts and attitudes are recognised and rewarded, including a special 'Kids in the Candle' awards given each fortnight to one member of each school colour team. There is a lucky draw from the WALK tickets given to students by staff over the past fortnight for those particularly demonstrating our 'WALK'.

Social and Emotional learning skills are promoted within a structured Buddies program at our school which is overseen by our Student Support Team (SST). This program draws on the best resources to support students in developing the appropriate soft skills needed for learning.

These initiatives result in a learning culture where there is very little need for the use of anti-bullying strategies. What we do offer for children having some social difficulties or anxiety is a Supported Play program which our Support Staff manage at play breaks. The employment of a full-time guidance counsellor lends support in responding to a diverse range of social and emotional needs within the student body. There are also opportunities for structured supervised play within our Library and

School Hall. Any antisocial behaviour is addressed by responding to student needs through the implementation of Targeted and Personalised support.

St Dympna's year 5 students of 2020 were actively involved in a Student Voice project. This allowed students to have a voice in their school climate and culture. The outcomes of this project are to be actioned by our year 6 students in 2021.

Our SST including an enrichment teacher and 2 enrichment school officers is responsible for supporting differentiation and whole-school inclusive approaches implemented to support the diverse range of students. We have an innovative whole school approach to curriculum planning which includes extensive input from our inclusive education team. The whole school curriculum plan outlines structures and procedures to record and manage student support in line with the BCE ENGAGE tool.

During 2020 we held a very successful trial of the 'Check In Check Out' method for helping children and this will continue in 2021.

The recontextualization of St Dympna, our namesake, from patron saint of mental illness to Patron for Wellbeing at our school has continued to be develop momentum and has been a highlight of our work about Catholic Identity. In 2020 for the first time, we held a Liturgy and activities to celebrate her Feast Day.

We take the issue of wellbeing very seriously and midway through each term have a Wellness Week to highlight ideas to promote wellbeing and to remind us to slow down and draw breath and take some time out. For example, we encourage meditation, nature play and creativity as well as checking in if others are 'OK'. During this week there is no staff meeting and no homework.

Each Wednesday we have Wellbeing Wednesday which extended from Active Travel 'Walking Wheeling Wednesday' to include other initiatives focusing on healthy us and a healthy environment. For example: healthy package free lunches, composting and recycling. Our staff are becoming more active in promoting sustainability and gardening is being included as a play time option.

Our school also has a parent Pastoral Care network to build community but importantly to be alert to the good and bad news going on in some families so that we can offer support. It was a challenge in 2020 to run this network effectively amidst Covid restrictions but we did become aware of families needing support and continued to provide this.

The Parents and Friends Association have sub committees that plan social activities as well as fundraise. Parents are regularly invited to participate in grade level or whole school celebrations and events, as well as to volunteer with classrooms activities, though this was restricted during 2020 due to Covid regulations.

The whole school community supports the parish Christmas appeal donating both food and gifts.

We set the scene as a welcoming school promoting partnership and wellbeing from the moment a family enrolls in our school. The interview process includes hospitality and a tour of the school (virtual during 2020). The orientation program incorporates parent education, including our wellbeing initiatives, and a welcome package including a piece of quality literature to support students' transition to school.

St Dympna's has a unique relationship with pre-prep providers whom we meet with annually to support students' transition to school.

We have a new school logo which reflects our history, teaching, learning and student support.

Parent, student and staff satisfaction

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

Percentage of parents/carers who agree that:	2018	2020
This school helps my child to develop their relationship with God	NA	98%
School staff demonstrate the school's Catholic Christian values	NA	99%
Teachers at this school have high expectations for my child	NA	96%
Staff at this school care about my child	NA	97%
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns	NA	100%
Teachers at this school encourage me to take an active role in my child's education	NA	94%
My child feels safe at this school	NA	97%
The facilities at this school support my child's educational needs	NA	98%
This school looks for ways to improve	NA	92%
I am happy my child is at this school	NA	97%

Percentage of students who agree that:	2018	2020
My school helps me develop my relationship with God	89%	93%
I enjoy learning at my school	94%	98%
Teachers expect me to work to the best of my ability in all my learning	95%	96%
Feedback from my teacher helps me learn	93%	94%
Teachers treat students fairly at my school	83%	93%
If I was unhappy about something at school I would talk to a school leader or teacher about it	81%	83%
I feel safe at school	92%	93%
I am happy to be at my school	92%	93%

Percentage of staff who agree that:	2018	2020
Working at this school helps me to have a deeper understanding of faith	100%	94%
School staff demonstrate this school's Catholic Christian values	97%	90%
This school acts on staff feedback	93%	96%
This school looks for ways to improve	98%	96%
I am recognised for my efforts at work	80%	84%
In general, students at this school respect staff members	93%	96%
This school makes student protection everyone's responsibility	100%	100%
I enjoy working at this school	92%	98%

Family and community engagement

We invite the parents to be present at as many functions and events as possible throughout the year, in particular to prayer, ritual and celebration such as fortnightly assemblies which begin with prayer and include the giving of student awards. Beyond school hours and to further connect with the parish we have a monthly school\parish joint children's mass. Most of these events were put on hold throughout 2020 due to COVID restrictions but will recommence in 2021. Daily morning prayer with students, parents and staff had to be abandoned because of COVID.

School sporting events were either cancelled or held without parental involvement. Our annual Performing Arts Day was cancelled. The Christmas Carols event was held during school hours with student participation only.

During 2020 a particularly popular and successful initiative was for the students to make cards and write letters to many elderly citizens and their carers which were distributed to nursing homes and villages in our area during lockdowns. COVID restrictions prevented students from making our regular visits to the nearby respite centre. Monthly morning tea for the elderly, our most vulnerable group, has been put on hold due to COVID. Our school leaders would normally assist with this activity. Guest speakers and volunteers could not access the school.

The school's biggest community event is the annual fair which was cancelled in 2020 due to COVID restrictions.

St Dympna's School welcomes students with diverse needs. Parents and school personnel meet regularly to develop and modify goals to assist students to access the Australian curriculum.

Pre prep providers are invited to St Dympna's School to discuss the skills that students need to successfully transition to a school community.

Environmental footprint

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

During 2020 the school obtained the services of a new rubbish removal which includes a recycling bin. St Dympna's students composts and recycles drinking containers. We have made a significant effort to increase awareness of our environmental footprint. During Wellness Week each term we bring attention to the environment endeavouring to reduce rubbish. We also promote a healthy lifestyle which includes Active Travel when possible.

The students began a gardening program, planting vegetables for consumption.

The school has solar panels which generate electricity for consumption during daylight hours.

Newly built classrooms have floor to ceiling glass panels to maximise indoor lighting.

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.

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	41
Full-time Equivalents	39.9	19.1

*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

Qualification of all teachers*

Highest level of qualification	Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school
Doctorate	1
Masters	7
Graduate diploma etc.**	9
Bachelor degree	29
Diploma	
Certificate	

*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

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

Professional development

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2020 were \$16,000. Most of this learning was facilitated at school level due to the pandemic.

The major professional development initiatives were as follows:

- Staff engaged in improving their ICLT skills to effectively use a variety of online platforms to deliver home schooling
- Building Brave -Supporting student resilience in protecting students against unhealthy levels of anxiety (Karen Young and Michelle Mitchell)
- Unpacking of the Australian and Religious Education Curriculum
 - Cross Curriculum Priority - Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander History & Culture
 - Personal and Social Capabilities and Catholic Perspectives
- Accessing support for students with needs - unpacking the school's curriculum plan with a focus on support procedures and processes.
- Understanding the NCCD process and the ENGAGE platform for data collection
- Responding to student behaviour needs and the use of the PB4L strategies
- Training in the 'The Drama Triangle' to skill and support staff when having those tough conversations
- Training in management of Epilepsy
- Skilling and building teacher capacity to include evidence of differentiation as part of the regular planning cycle

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	95.5%

Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year.

From the end of the previous school year, **92%** of staff was retained by the school for the entire 2020.

Performance of our students

Key student outcomes

Student attendance

The overall student attendance rate in 2020 for all Brisbane Catholic Education schools across years Prep to 6 was 92.1%.

Description	%
The overall attendance rate* for the students at this school	94.0%
Attendance rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at this school	91.8%

Average attendance rate per year level			
Prep attendance rate	94.7%	Year 4 attendance rate	93.8%
Year 1 attendance rate	93.8%	Year 5 attendance rate	95.0%
Year 2 attendance rate	94.6%	Year 6 attendance rate	91.9%
Year 3 attendance rate	93.8%		

*The student attendance rate is generated by dividing the total of full-days and part-days that student 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

- School rolls are marked each morning and again each afternoon.
- Initial school absence is managed by the classroom teacher who phones parents to establish the reason for absences.
- School refusal is referred to the school's guidance counsellor who contacts the family to discuss support options for the student with significant absences.
- Parents who do respond to the school counsellor's support are contacted by the school principal to set a time to meet to discuss absences.
- If parents do not attend the meeting with the principal, the school follows the BCE Policy and Procedure on Attendance.
- The weekly Parent Briefing contains information about the connection between attendance and academic achievement.
- Families are instructed to make appointments outside school hours.

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 interface with a text input field labeled 'Search by school name or suburb'. To the right are three dropdown menus labeled 'School sector', 'School type', and 'State', followed by a magnifying glass search icon.

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

The screenshot shows a rectangular button with the text 'View School Profile' in a light blue font.

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.

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.