



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

ST ANTHONY'S SCHOOL

DIMBULAH

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

School Profile:

St Anthony's Primary School is an integral part of the Catholic Education Diocese of Cairns and the Parish of St Anthony's located in Dimbulah. Our school is situated about 1.5 hours west of Cairns on the Atherton Tablelands.

The school was originally built in 1965 by Parishioners but had the dual purpose as a school during the week and a church on Sunday. In 1966 the school was staffed by the Sisters of St Joseph until the mid 80's when lay teachers were introduced. The school is situated on traditional land of the Barbarum people.

Our school has a welcoming feel with a group of dedicated and motivated parents who assist with the provision of the best educational environment possible for their children to ensure maximum outcomes for student learning. Close relationships exist between the school and the wider community offering outreach opportunities for our students to be active participants in the mission of the Church.

St Anthony's currently offers an educational range from Prep to Year 6 (as at 2019). By putting the wellbeing and learning of all students at the centre of our teaching, we focus on individualised learning for all students. The school is committed to the goals of inclusion and diversity within a supportive school environment.

St Anthony's School class structures are multi-age in nature with grouping of students dependent on the curriculum needs of the learner. We provide an Innovative Learning Environment catering for individuals based on each student's own progress and goals. P/1/2, 3/4, 5/6 or P-6 configurations are common and groupings vary according to student progress. The school provides a wide variety of learning experiences for students through following the Australian Curriculum in all Learning Areas and encouraging students to take ownership of their learning by tracking and engaging with their own data.

The school is considered a small rural school with 43 students currently enrolled (as at 2019). Neighbouring schools include Dimbulah State School (Prep-Year 10) and Mutchilba State School (Prep - 6). The closest Catholic Primary School is St Thomas of Villanova (P-6) in Mareeba.

Families are mostly from farming or cattle station backgrounds and some students travel to school from further outlying areas such as Mutchilba and Almaden, utilising the available bus services.

Catholic Life and Mission:

Spiritual Development

The Religious Education element of our whole school curriculum is embedded in the everyday life, relationships and culture at St Anthony's. We recognise the presence of God in our school community in each of our students, staff, parents and in the extended members of our wider school family. The sacredness of our people, their lives and our school life together is affirmed and celebrated. Celebration of liturgies and the Sacraments are an integral part of the formal, public prayer and worship at St. Anthony's. Our staff nurtures conscious and active participation in the prayer life of the school. We aim to develop a variety of approaches to ritualising everyday life in our school using words, actions and symbols in light of the Gospel. Our Religious Education curriculum

aims to develop the religious literacy of all of our students to provide a foundation for them to critically inform their participation in the life of their faith communities and in wider society.

In 2019 we participated in community events including Catholic Education Week, the Dimbulah Lions Festival, Anzac Day and the Great Wheelbarrow Race. Our school community actively plans and implements structures and practices reflective of Catholic social teaching for justice, peace and ecological sustainability.

The school community reflects the diversity of society with families of differing cultural, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. The school caters for diverse learning needs within an atmosphere of mutual respect and where individual differences are valued. St Anthony's is an integral part of the Parish community. The spiritual growth and welfare of each student, along with sound educational practices is a shared responsibility of the parish priest, principal, staff and parents under the supervision of both Catholic and Government Educational authorities.

STUDENT BODY

Demographics

St Anthony's is a Catholic Primary school offering a co-educational experience from Prep to Year 6.

With a total enrolment of 43 students, 15 girls and 28 boys. There are currently 2 Verified students, 3 students identifying as Indigenous and 7 students with a language other than English.

Enrolment is declining with a Demographic study conducted in the area in 2018 indicating a decline in families with young children living in the area. Student numbers at Dimbulah State School, Mutchilba State School, Kindergarten and Day Care facility have also dropped, which suggests this will filter through to St Anthony's in the coming years.

The area has become attractive again recently for families from overseas to settle on farms.

With many businesses closed in Dimbulah, opportunities for employment are limited. Many families are moving to Mareeba for work and moving their children for convenience to schools in Mareeba.

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS FRAMEWORK

St Anthony's conducted its five year review process in May this year. The review is conducted by an external review team and focusses on the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF) School Review Tool and a Compliance Audit of all school processes.

The following is a condensed summary of findings and recommendations by the QELi review team using the 10 Domains.

Domain 1 – A Lived and Celebrated Catholic Identity

Findings:

- Dedicated spaces for prayer and reflection in each classroom
- Regular school Masses and Liturgies to celebrate the life of the school
- Delivery of the RE curriculum in learning cycles in a multi-age setting
- Re-visioning committee set up to review the school Mission, Vision and Values which will underpin the school policies, practices and decision-making into the future
- A focus on student and staff wellbeing and a Social Emotional Learning program embedded throughout the school

Recommendations:

- Continue to build and strengthen Catholic Identity through the renewal of the Mission, Vision and Values of the school

Domain 2 – An Explicit Improvement Agenda

Findings:

- The school is committed to finding ways to improve student outcomes and has developed an agenda for improvement in collaboration with staff
- A strong commitment to understanding student achievement levels of all students including diverse learners and provision of support and resources for all students
- Professional Learning Teams established to review student data, curriculum and differentiating for all learners

Recommendations:

- Measure impact of Professional Learning Teams to improve teaching and learning and align targets and timelines to determine the next stages of learning

Domain 3 – Analysis and Discussion of Data

Findings:

- The staff can clearly articulate their belief that reliable data on student outcomes is crucial to the school's improvement agenda
- The school has a comprehensive Data Plan that provides timelines for collection and alignment with system expectations and teachers are effectively implementing the plan to collect student achievement data
- Students receive feedback to track progress over time through individual portfolios
- Data is triangulated and used by teachers to adjust the learning experiences and intervention of their students
- Professional Learning Teams allow for focussed conversations across year levels on data and improved teaching practices
- Data is used to monitor student behaviour and attendance

Recommendations:

- Continue to build teacher capacity in using data to inform improved student progress and teaching practices

Domain 4 – A Culture that Promotes Learning

Findings:

- Strong sense of community is evident with students, parents and staff members fostering positive caring relationships across the school
- Strong sense of belonging and a high priority on student and staff wellbeing
- Behaviour of students reflects a strong level of engagement in and outside the classroom
- Classrooms are well-presented and student behaviour is calm and orderly
- School has identified a need to support students with diverse needs including EAL/D and allocated additional resources to support teachers in delivery of the curriculum and social emotional learning
- New enrolments are welcome and reflect the changing culture of the school
- Students express appreciation of their teachers and the supportive learning environment
- A range of facilities offered including a library, kitchen facilities, vegetable and herb garden, playground and undercover sports space, support student learning
- Students are recognised for academic, sporting and behaviour excellence regularly
- Expectations for behaviour are visible in classrooms
- Students take on leadership roles which allow them to develop social and leadership skills
- Attendance is monitored and strategies in place to improve student attendance

Recommendations:

- Continue to seek new enrolments to be included in a safe and supportive environment

Domain 5 – Targeted use of School resources

Findings:

- The school recognises its responsibility for the effective stewardship of the resources it receives and manages
- Decision between school and CES to provide a substantial reduction in fees to ensure accessibility to a Catholic education is affordable for all families in the community
- An effective process to identify students with specific needs and support provided through school funding

- Technology is used effectively to support student learning
- Whole school approach gives school officers a clear direction and they feel valued in their role

Recommendations:

- Continue to develop staff capability in the effective use of technologies in learning

Domain 6 – An Expert Teaching Team

Findings:

- Development of staff into an expert teaching team with a high level of commitment
- Professional Learning Team developed to drive school improvement
- Culture of teamwork and collaboration is evident
- All staff have a Growth in Action Plan

Recommendations:

- Develop a process for formalised feedback to teachers

Domain 7 – Systematic Curriculum Delivery

Findings:

- A commitment to implementing curriculum programs aligned to the Australian Curriculum
- Teachers provided with extra release time to examine data and reflect on curriculum units
- APRE is building the capacity of teachers in the RE curriculum
- Use of formative and summative assessment to support student learning and progress
- Commitment to implementing moderation processes across the cluster of schools
- Parent - teacher interviews

Recommendations:

- Continue to provide extra release time for teachers to plan and review curriculum units and assessment

Domain 8 – Differentiated Classroom Learning

Findings:

- A high priority on ensuring that in the day to day teaching, classroom teachers identify and address the learning needs of individual students including high-achieving students in multi-level settings
- School engages personnel, programs, services and resources to meet a range of student needs
- Monitoring of student progress and adjust teaching in response to progress. Students are grouped for intervention in some curriculum areas across the multi-age groupings
- Implementation of Personal Learning Plans for students with complex learning needs and support given by School Officers and Learning Support Teacher
- Using testing instruments across year levels to provide consistent data for differentiated teaching and learning decisions
- Genius Hour is described by students as an opportunity to extend their talents and personal skills

Recommendations:

- Build staff capacity to further establish and embed classroom practices and strategies to differentiate learning experiences for a full range of students

Domain 9 – Effective Teaching Practices

Findings:

- Staff are working towards establishing and communicating clear and explicit expectations concerning the use of differentiated teaching strategies throughout the school
- Evidence of quality teaching in areas of the school
- CES coach visits the school for support in Writing, Reading and Spelling
- Classrooms, outside spaces and library provide learning environments in which students can learn

Recommendations:

- Establish and implement an agreed school-wide pedagogical framework
- Build and implement a classroom observation and feedback process to provide timely support and advice on classroom practice

Domain 10 – School Community Partnerships

Findings:

- Partnerships, are seen as an integral part of the school and its community and are used to broaden student knowledge, increase levels of engagement and facilitate successful transitions
- A School Counsellor, Learning Support Teacher and Principal contribute to student wellbeing by providing access to programs, and links with community organisations
- Partnerships with other service providers to support transitions to Prep and High School
- Active P and F who focus on providing support for improving the educational and physical resources
- Communication to parents and community through a newsletter, weekly events reminders and a term calendar

Recommendations:

- Continue to develop parent and community engagement

SCHOOL ANNUAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

In 2019, St Anthony's School through consultation developed the following goals for their School Annual Improvement Plan. The complete document can be found on the CES website.

- Plan and implement pedagogical practices that address **differentiated learning** for all students through tracking, monitoring and reviewing student data in targeted areas of literacy and numeracy. Future direction in curriculum planning will be to cater for the increase in EAL/D students and differentiating for all our learners in a small school setting.
- For students **to sustain growth in writing**. Collecting, analysing and monitoring data to inform best practice in the classroom by using the rubrics created by CES to develop consistency. Develop a Sequence and Scope to reflect current changes in integrated unit plans and to upskill teachers in their pedagogy through working individually with the CES Literacy Coach throughout the year.
- To **embed the Catholic Ethos and Charism** in the school by identifying 'what', 'how' and 'who' in the Religious Life of the School document. Staff engagement and embedding in our planning the charisms of the school with St Anthony and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

DISTINCTIVE CURRICULUM OFFERINGS

St Anthony's offers curriculum flexibility in its multi-age setting. Students are not bound by a year level but data is collected, individual students are tracked and teaching is differentiated for each student or small group. Class structures are typically P/1/2, 3/4 and 5/6 with very small classes, typically less than 14 students. Class structure flexibility allows students to move within the school and grouped in Literacy according to their needs.

Considerable time was spent in 2017 and 2018 writing multi-age units to accommodate the changing demographics of the school. Curriculum areas are addressed through 'conceptual threads' linking content descriptors. Students are reported against the Achievement Standards of their year level.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities when they are available. Students were selected for District and Peninsular sports. Availability of staff and declining numbers continues to restrict availability of activities. Many students travel to nearby Mareeba or Atherton each afternoon to access available facilities. Dimbulah offers soccer, swimming, Tae Kwon Do and horse sports seasonally.

SOCIAL CLIMATE

St Anthony's School is committed to ensuring that links are maintained with various agencies, organisations and groups within the wider community. Integral to the mission of St Anthony's School is our commitment to supporting parents as the first and primary educators of their children. We assume the belief that schooling is a partnership operation. Being a small school creates a family atmosphere at St Anthony's. The other benefit of a small school is the capacity for everyone to become involved in the social and family orientated events held each year.

Pastorally our families are close and support each other in times of need. The school has a positive behaviour management system in place in each classroom and any bullying incidents are reported through the staff and then followed up by the Principal with individual meetings with students and parents should the need arise. A school counsellor is available to students and will contact parents regularly to monitor student progress.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

St Anthony's School is fortunate to have a significant level of parent involvement within the school community. Parents contribute to and support the school in various ways:-

- Participation in school celebrations
- Sporting Events and Carnivals
- Regular Parents and Friends Meetings
- Parent Information Evenings
- Transition Days
- Working Bees and social events
- International Food Day
- Under 8's Day
- Leadership Camps and Excursions
- Catholic Education Week Mass
- Sacramental Program
- Fundraising events such as Wheelbarrow Race, Lions Festival and the Mutchilba Dinner

PARENT SATISFACTION

Parent Satisfaction Survey Data indicates:

- 95% of parents agree that at St Anthony's the school treats students from all backgrounds with respect, we have effective anti-bullying strategies in place and have clear and consistent strategies for managing student behaviour. The school average is consistently above the Diocese average in all areas of Bullying and Behaviour Management.
- 90% of parents believe that the school is a welcoming and caring community where everyone is treated with respect, and the students and staff live out the Catholic values in their words and actions. The school average is in line with the Diocese average.
- 95% of parents have confidence in the future direction of the school, agree that St Anthony's strives to improve and innovate to enhance its educational offerings to students and encourages parents to have a say in planning for the future. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of school improvement.
- 95% of parents agreed St Anthony's Leadership team are respected and would recommend the school to others. The school average is above the Diocese average in all areas of Leadership.
- 95% of parents have confidence in the teaching staff at St Anthony's and the programs that are being delivered. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of Learning and Teaching.
- 95% of parents believe the school is well equipped with learning and teaching resources, is well-presented and maintained and parents are consulted about how resources are allocated in the school. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of Resources.
- 90% of all parents believe that St Anthony's clearly communicates information about student protection processes. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of Student Protection.

MAJOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

In 2019 school funds were allocated to release all class teachers for a full day, every 3 weeks to analyse individual student data and adjust classroom teaching practices based on class and school results. School personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes.

These included:

- Curriculum Writing and Planning with Literacy Coach
- TREWTH Conference
- APRE Conference
- NCCD Moderation Meetings and Training
- SAIP Team Meetings and Planning

- Student Protection Training
- Workplace Health and Safety Training
- Library Assistant PD Day
- Siloam Retreat Day - all staff
- Consistency of Teacher Judgement
- NAPLAN Analysis
- NAPLAN online Training
-
- Administration Officer PD
- First Aid Training

STAFF SATISFACTION

The staff at St Anthony's Catholic School is a dedicated group comprising of:

- Principal / Curriculum Leader
- APRE / Class Teacher / Curriculum Leader (RE)
- Learning Support Teacher / EAL/D Teacher
- 2 Classroom Teachers (including The Arts/LOTE/HPE)
- 1 Administration Officer/Finance Officer/ Workplace Health and Safety Officer
- 1 Indigenous Liaison Officer
- 3 School Officers
- 2 Cleaners
- 1 Groundsperson

Staff Satisfaction Survey Data indicates:

- 98% of staff agree that St Anthony's has effective anti-bullying strategies in place, sets high standards in student behaviour and support programs are effectively implemented across the school. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of Bullying and Behaviour Management.
- 100% of staff agree that the school encourages prayer and the celebration of Eucharist, lives out Catholic values in their words and actions and is a school that promotes justice and compassion. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of Catholic Ethos.
- 100% of staff agree that access to professional development is consistent with the School Annual Improvement Plan and Individual Growth Plans.
- 98% of staff have confidence in the future direction of the school, have a clear understanding of the current improvement plan and have a say in the future planning of the school. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of School Improvement.
- 100% of staff agree the school is well managed, expects high standards from the staff and are provided with opportunities to show leadership in the life of the school. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of Leadership.
- 100% of staff agree they have the resources available to do their job effectively and safely and appropriate training /professional development is provided to do their job well. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of Resources.
- 98% of staff are provided with an effective induction program, work productively together, have job satisfaction, feel empowered to make a positive difference and deliver a quality educational outcome for students. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of Staff Engagement.
- 100% of staff are informed of the school's student protection processes and know where to go if they need more information. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of Student Protection.

MANAGEMENT OF NON-ATTENDANCE

The school has a higher percentage of non-attendance than other Cairns schools. As a small school we manage the situation individually. Each extended absence is managed by the Principal in consultation with the individual family. Non-attendance is recorded each day with a phone call to parents for an explanation and offer of assistance if the situation is for an extended period.

Beginning of school year can be disrupted with flooding each year as many families travel through creeks and rivers to attend school. Flooding has a major impact on attendance in Term 1.

Some families are involved in the running of stock (cattle/horses) and require their children to assist with mustering for an extended time during the dry season. A lack of available transport to a bus service when the family are mustering in a remote area makes their attendance difficult. The school manages these individual absences with confidentiality and sensitivity.

All family holidays outside of school holidays is discouraged and communicated in newsletters and verbal conversations with families.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

The school is unable to compare NAPLAN results as the cohort size is too small and our results will not be published in 2019. All students achieved above National Minimum Standard in Years 3 and 5.

Academically our students are compared to CES Benchmarks and receive a written report card twice a year as well as the school conducting Parent – Teacher Interviews.

STUDENT SATISFACTION

Students at St Anthony's rated higher than other CES schools in the areas of Positive School Community, Support for Student Wellbeing and Student Wellbeing Skills.

Student Satisfaction Survey Data indicates:

- 90% of students agree that at St Anthony's teachers are fair, bad behaviour is managed and they feel safe at school. The school average is above the Diocese average in positive areas of Bullying and Behaviour Management.
- 90% of students show respect for each other and staff, feel that prayer and Religion are important, are encouraged to think about God and are proud to be a student at the school. The school average is above the Diocese average in all areas of Catholic Ethos.
- 95% of students feel their teachers give specific feedback about their learning, are encouraged to learn from mistakes and can go to a teacher for help.
- 85% of students think everyone at the school is trying to make the school better and that the staff are interested in what students think. The school average is above the Diocese average in the areas of School Improvement.
- 85% of the students agree that the school rules are fair and consistent, that the Principal is respected and that they see the Principal regularly around the school. The school average is above the Diocese average in all areas of Leadership.
- 90 % of students feel that the teachers are helpful, the amount of homework is fair, and they are encouraged to do their best. The school average is above the Diocese average in most areas of Learning and Teaching.
- 90% of the students feel that they have enough resources and equipment to learn, that the grounds are kept clean and tidy and that the library is a great place to visit. The school average is above the Diocese average in all areas of Resources.
- 95% of students feel safe and know who the student protection contacts are in the school and know an adult who they can tell if they have a problem. The school average is well above the Diocese average in all areas of Student Protection.

In summary 2019 has been a year to consolidate our School Annual Improvement Plan and reflect on feedback received from our five year cyclical review as a school. This data has help us to verify our achievements to date and plan for the future.

Katherine Porter
Principal