



# Star of the Sea Primary School Gladstone

2022 Annual School Report



**Catholic Education**  
Diocese of Rockhampton

# **Star of the Sea Primary School, Gladstone**

Catholic Education Diocese of Rockhampton

## **Principal**

Jennett O'Mullane

## **Address**

181 Goondoon Street  
Gladstone Qld 4680

## **Total enrolments**

330

## **Year levels offered**

Prep to Year 6

## **Type of School:**

Co-educational

## School Overview

Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School is situated in the centre of Gladstone, with the school drawing enrolments from many areas of the Gladstone region. Star of the Sea was established in 1902 and has a distinct Catholic ethos with a particular focus on Gospel values, the teachings of Jesus, and Mary as a guide and role model. We value deeply our Parish family, with our local priests officiating at masses and liturgies, visiting classrooms and playing an important part in the religious and faith development of our community.

The school has a strong focus on digital technologies with teachers utilising a wide variety of technology and strategies to facilitate learning and to equip students for their role as digital citizens. Outside School Hours and Vacation Care is available for enrolled families. Our school has a dedicated and active Board, and Parents and Friends Association. These groups meet monthly and provide much appreciated input into policy and program development. Star of the Sea operates an open-door policy, where all staff members are accessible to parents for formal and informal discussions regarding their children's progress. Parents are encouraged to take an active role as partners in their children's education and are acknowledged for their crucial role in the development of each child's character.

More information on our school can be accessed from [myschool.edu.au](http://myschool.edu.au)

## Curriculum Offerings

### **Distinctive Curriculum Offerings**

Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School is a Catholic community which seeks to give witness to the gospel as modelled by our namesake, Mary, Star of the Sea, and as a result has a distinctive Marian flavour. At Star of the Sea, we endeavour to provide students with a safe, supportive, and caring Christian environment enabling all learners to strive towards their full potential. We believe that children learn by doing and classrooms should be full of investigation and challenge, with students encouraged to be actively involved and responsible for their learning. We seek to provide an education that caters for the needs of the whole child – nurturing, not only their academic qualities, but also their physical, social, emotional, and spiritual development as well.

### **Extra Curricula Activities**

Music and the Arts has a particularly strong emphasis across all areas of the curriculum and is also used during masses, liturgies, and school assemblies. Our specialist teacher delivers an accredited program with opportunities for student performances taking place at the annual Eisteddfod, our annual School Christmas Concert and at various community and school functions. Our School Choir is offered to Years 3 to 6 with performances also occurring throughout the year. Our school also has a tradition of competing in various speech and drama sections of the Eisteddfod with staff and students often involved in the bi-annual community theatre performance.

An Instrumental Program is offered in Years 3 to 6 in the areas of brass, woodwind, and percussion. The School Band and Bell Ensemble both rehearse once a week, and play regularly at school assemblies, at the local Eisteddfod and at various community functions. Students are also encouraged to attend the annual week-long Instrumental workshop run by visiting inter-state conductors.

A fully accredited Physical Education Program is offered at the school with a variety of skills taught. Students are encouraged to participate in a period of daily physical activity. School swimming is also offered as part of the program. A gross motor program forms an essential part of our P - 2 curriculum.

The school is represented in the local Interschool Sports Competition in the following areas – Netball, Soccer (boys and girls), Hockey (boys and girls), Touch Football and Rugby League – as well as Interschool Athletics and Cross Country.

Students at the school are encouraged to participate in local primary school sports, and a strong percentage of students have been chosen to represent their region at local, regional, and state level. Our school has a process to formally recognise and acknowledge these students.

Students are also encouraged to take part in additional academic competitions such as the International Australasian Competitions.

A variety of lunch time clubs and activities are offered to students such as School Dance Choir, Social Justice Group and our Robotics and Drone Groups which meet to prepare for participation in local Robotic and Drone Challenges.

## How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning

Information and communication technologies form an integral part of the learning environment at Star of the Sea. The school supplies a variety of digital technology aids such as laptops, Chromebooks, iPads, EV3 robots, Microbits and Beebots which assist in providing dynamic and meaningful learning experiences. Ongoing professional development assists teachers to use these technologies as an effective teaching tool. Google Classroom is used in our older classes as a digital learning and communication platform. Bee-bots and Microbits are a solid introduction to basic coding which is expanded throughout the Year Levels. All students from Prep to Year Six participate in lessons with a specialist IT teacher as well as class-based lessons with their own teacher using various digital technologies for a variety of purposes. Over the course of the year, students are exposed to Microsoft and Google products and apps, Internet Safety activities, Robotics and explore a myriad of skills such as coding, film production and digital presentations.

## Social Climate

### Strategies to Promote a Positive Culture

Wellbeing and strong personal relationships are a priority in the school's efforts to build a strong positive culture. Multi-age Pastoral Care Groups meet regularly throughout the year to help build connections across the age groups and present a unified message regarding important social and personal skills and strategies to deal with bullying and relationship difficulties. Our Leadership Team work closely across all year levels to deliver consistent messages about wellbeing, social and personal development and following the example of Jesus in the way we treat others. Consistent practices and language are used across the school to provide a safe and familiar learning environment across the school. Programs such as Berry Street and Be You offer resources and strategies to support the whole school focus in this area. A Buddy System operates across the school with our Year 5 & 6 students mentoring and supporting our younger students.

The school employs a qualified School Counsellor three days per week, and the service is available to all students and parents.

One of the local parish priests officiates at masses and liturgies, visiting classrooms and playing an important part in the religious and faith development of our community. The school encourages all students to treat each other according to Christian principles of love and respect and provides them with the strategies and vocabulary to do this.

A particular focus on building future leaders guides several initiatives put in place with our upper primary students. An induction program is implemented each year supporting students in the development of both leadership and social skills such as conflict resolution, problem solving and relationship building.

### Cyber Safety and Anti-Bullying Strategies

Our school has implemented Diocesan policies on Acceptable Use Agreements for students and staff. The school regularly communicates with parents and the school community about cyber safety issues. We also have appropriate policies in place to deal with the use of mobile phones and other electronic devices. As part of our Information Technology curriculum, all students complete a cyber safety and cyber bullying program each year.

Our school has several social/emotional learning programs and a Positive Behavior Policy in place to assist students in guarding against bullying at school. Professional Development for staff in this area is a priority as is regularly communicating information to parents. The school actively works to create a safe and supportive learning environment where all members are encouraged to advocate for their own and other's safety. All Diocesan and school policies are reviewed on a regular basis.

### Strategies for involving parents in their child's education

We believe that parents and family are the most significant influences in a child's life, and we value the opportunity to work in partnership with them as educators. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in their children's education. Star of the Sea operates an open-door policy, where all staff members are accessible to parents for formal and informal discussions regarding their children's progress. At the beginning of the school year, parents are invited to Parent Information Evenings to meet teachers and have teaching programs and classroom routines explained. Parent workshops are conducted on a needs and interest basis.

The school has a dedicated and active Board, and Parents and Friends Association. These groups meet monthly and provide much appreciated input into policy and program development, and funds for additional equipment and

resources. Opportunities for relaxed, social interactions occur regularly, such as our monthly gathering before the P&F Meeting and our School Discos and Christmas Concert.

Parents are welcome to assist in the classroom and are particularly active in the early years of schooling. Programs such as our Reading Stars depend on committed volunteers who help to support the learning of our students. Parents also volunteer their time at sporting events, tuckshop, school events, retreats, and excursions.

## Reducing the school's environmental footprint

Star of the Sea is a Reef Guardian school that has engaged in a range of environmental initiatives and programs. We actively recycle paper and cardboard and promote the sorting of rubbish within the classroom. We have an energetic group of student leaders who work to educate the students and their families and initiate environmentally sound practices within the school community. Students engage in community projects that seek to give back to the environment, and classrooms include sustainability principles across the curriculum. Lunch scraps are composted, and our students participate in programs based around creek to coast thinking, allowing them to explore our impact on waterways and estuaries. Drink containers are recycled for money which is donated to charity.

## Characteristics of the Student Body

Students at Star of the Sea come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, including those of Indigenous Australia, and those from Asia, Africa and New Zealand. A number have English as a second language. Many travel quite extensively.

Star of the Sea draws on enrolments from many areas of the Gladstone region. It has experienced sustained growth in recent years with the total capacity remaining at two-stream. Many students come from families where both parents are in the workforce, while a number reside in single or shared parenting situations. The number of students and families with English as a second language continues to grow in Gladstone and at Star of the Sea with our teachers and Inclusive Curriculum team supporting these students and their families.

As Gladstone attracts many families who work in industry, the city is still considered quite transient in nature.

## Average student attendance rate (%)

The average student attendance rate for 2022 was 88.21%.

## Management of non-attendance

Student attendance is generally very good at Star of the Sea. Our school maintains a procedure of requesting parent contact to explain student absences. Our office staff liaise with classroom teachers to coordinate this procedure. Electronic rolls are used in all classrooms with direct communication made with parents if a child is absent for roll call. Extended absences are brought to the attention of the Principal who works with relevant parties to support the student's return to in class learning. Parent education through newsletters and parent information evenings reinforces the importance of regular student attendance.

## Staffing Information

### Workforce Composition

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	26.00	16.00	1.00
Full-time equivalents	20.72	10.49	0.58

## Qualifications of all teachers

Qualification – highest level of attainment	Percentage of staff with this Qualification
Doctoral / Post-doctoral	
Masters	4.55%
Bachelor Degree	95.45%
Diploma	
Certificate	

## Major Professional Development Initiatives

Star of the Sea staff members are involved in a diverse range of ongoing professional development opportunities with a major focus on creating consistency in our teaching approaches and using data effectively to improve teaching and learning. Implementing the new Religion Program and reviewing our Catholic Identity has also been a focus for professional development along with a continued investigation into approaches that nurture deep learning and critical thinking skills. The school has also begun a journey to develop trauma aware, whole school practices for the development of student personal and social competencies.

Many staff engage in additional personal professional development in a multitude of areas such as First Aid, Curriculum and diverse learning needs.

Whole staff Professional Development days have addressed the following areas:

- Student Protection and Workplace Health and Safety Inductions.
- Planning for diverse needs.
- Improving Reading Instruction & Increasing reader confidence & motivation.
- Using data to inform practice in Reading & Spelling.
- Bishop's In-service Day – Catholic Schools and their Mission today.
- Trauma Informed Practice.
- First Aid / Anaphylaxis Training.
- Berry Street Training
- Catholic Pedagogy: Nurturing Pilgrims or Educating Tourists.

The percentage of teachers engaged in professional development was 100%.

## Total funds expended on Professional Development

The total of funds expended on teacher professional development was \$35,400.

## Average Staff Attendance and Retention

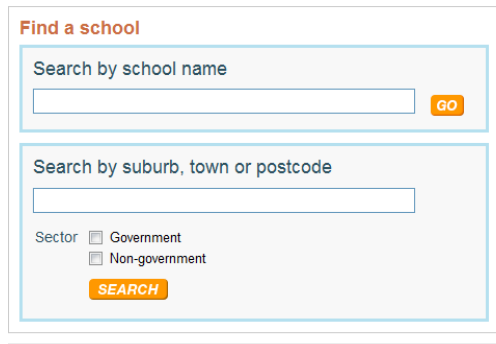
The average staff attendance for the school year, based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave for periods of up to five days, was 88.80%.

Percentage of teaching staff retained from the previous school year was 92.86%.

## School Income

<http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

(The School information below is available on the My School website).



The screenshot shows a search interface titled "Find a school". It contains two search boxes: "Search by school name" with a "GO" button, and "Search by suburb, town or postcode" with a "SEARCH" button. Below the second search box, there are radio buttons for "Sector" with options for "Government" and "Non-government".

## National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy Results

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for Years 3 and 5 are available via the My School website at [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au).

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school's NAPLAN results.

## Key Student Outcomes and Value Added

Generally, our student body performs very well in NAPLAN. Our approach has been guided by good teaching for the entire year, rather than focusing only on test preparation. As cohorts, our classes achieve good results. We are continuing to use technology to assist us in assessing our results and trends across year levels. This data is used to inform teaching and learning across the school. Our solid results are attributed to quality literacy and numeracy programs, the setting of high expectations for all learners, explicitly teaching learner assets and skills, and a focus on differentiating for the individual needs of learners. Writing continues to show steady growth and the school is focused on improving spelling and reading results through a focus on investigative, literature-based approaches that build engagement and confidence.

## Strategic Improvement Progress and Next Steps

### **Strategic progress in 2022**

Our Core Goals and Strategies for 2022 included:

To provide for deeper student learning through concept-based planning and inquiry based pedagogies  
To develop a culture of respect and inclusivity modelled through whole school trauma aware practices  
To develop a whole school approach to supporting the diverse needs of students  
To develop an authentic and contemporary Catholic Identity in our school.

Strategies to support the implementation of these goals included:

- Regular opportunities to explore data and planning with cohort groups
- Explore key reading principles and best practice in their implementation
- Work with Diocesan and Berry Street staff to begin the implementation of trauma informed practices
- Review the language, symbols and practices we use to ensure meaning for students
- Leadership modelling of best practice in teaching social and personal capabilities

- Explore strategies for increased student voice in personal and whole school goals and success criteria.
- Explicit teaching of learner assets
- Review the current model of support for inclusivity and diverse learning needs.

Staff are reaping the benefits of our sustained work in the area of establishing whole school beliefs for teaching and learning. With a shared vision and established agreements for discussion and investigation, we continue to pursue our hunches and identified areas for growth as we strive towards providing best practice in teaching and learning. Collaborating with peers and area specialists has deepened learning and widened the sphere of strategies available. The implementation of our Positive Behaviour Policy has begun with an investigation of trauma aware practices that help ensure alignment of belief and practice.

### Strategic Priorities for 2023

Our school's commitment to the wellbeing of our community has led us to explore the benefits of a trauma aware approach to teaching and learning and developing social/emotional skills. The school continues to work with Diocesan Staff and the Berry Street Education Team to develop whole school strategies and language that support the development of student personal and social capabilities. This involves ongoing consultation and education of all members of the school community and is closely linked to the school's renewed commitment to developing an authentic Catholic Identity, with dialogue and deep respect for the individual dignity of all human beings at the heart of its efforts.

We continue our exploration of best practice in supporting the diverse learning needs of our students. A project takes place this year to explore the effect of planning formats, timeframes and personnel input towards achieving best practice. Our journey with digging deeper into data and making it a useful and relevant part of our decisions continues as an important tool for our planning.

Our focus on developing critical thinking skills and deepening student learning is explored further this year as we enter into our second year of the Mathematics Project. Our Math coaches will work to upskill classroom teachers while continuing their individual journey of learning in this area.

Our Core Goals and Strategies for 2023 include:

To deepen our understanding and use of dialogue to build an authentic Catholic Identity

To encourage deep learning through the development of critical thinking skills and skillful questioning techniques, especially in Mathematics

To put into practice whole school language and strategies that support engagement and wellbeing and safe, supportive learning environments

To explore collaborative planning practices and refine data collection techniques to track and plan for the diverse needs of learners.

### Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction

In general, the parents and students seem very satisfied with the school and its progress. The parent community is supportive of the P&F and its goals to provide funds to support school initiatives. The School Board is well attended and parent response to requests for feedback is relatively strong. The school continues to embrace a cycle of improvement, seeking regular input from the community and implementing goals that have stemmed from the data collected.

A strong emphasis is on all members of the community having a strong voice within the school. Teachers work with students to help them develop personal learning goals and plan for growth. Opportunities for suggestions are implemented throughout the year on an individual, class and whole school basis. Parents are strongly encouraged to support their children in sharing their voice as needed.