



Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn  
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE

# ST BERNARD'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Batemans Bay, NSW

## 2014 School Report to the Community



## SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Address:	2-10 David Avenue Batehaven NSW 2536 PO Box 3141 Batehaven NSW 2536
Principal:	Jacqueline Heffernan
Parish Priest / School Chaplain:	Fr John Armstrong
School Board / Council Chair:	Mr Geoff Hatton
Telephone:	02 4472 4446
Fax:	02 4472 8323
Email:	office.stbernards@cg.catholic.edu.au
Website:	<a href="http://www.stbernardsbb.nsw.edu.au">www.stbernardsbb.nsw.edu.au</a>

This report was prepared by:

Jacqueline Heffernan

PRINCIPAL

## MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

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### **Principal's Message**

I feel very honoured to be part of the rich tradition that is Catholic education. St Bernard's emulates the teachings of Jesus in all aspects of school life and truly expresses our Christian faith in word and action.

I have felt very welcomed this year as your new principal and look forward to a bright and exciting future. St Bernard's is well placed as one of the leading schools in the Eurobodalla. Our K-12 pathways with St Mary's, Moruya and Carroll College, Broulee has enabled many opportunities for our students from Kindergarten to Year 12.

As you well know, we are in a time of rapid change in education. We are teaching children how to learn; not just what to learn. We face new challenges with curriculum development, innovation, globalisation and constant technological change. Our secular society demands more from us in educating our students with the skills and capacities to meet our changing world. Our focus is on engaging students with their learning in a way that personalises and motivates. Self-direction and collaboration have become essential skills for student engagement. Our role as educators is such that we now facilitate rather than instruct. As we guide the students to become independent learners, we are growing confident, relational and discerning individuals with a thirst for knowledge and a passion to enact change. *Education has never been more exciting!*

Thank you for the many ways you have supported St Bernard's throughout the year. I speak for all the staff in saying that St Bernard's wouldn't be the school it is without your high level of commitment and participation. *Making Jesus Real* is about being connected. Our faith, life and culture make this possible and this is what Catholic schools aim to achieve on a daily basis. The staff and students of St Bernard's are testament to this living faith.

I take this opportunity to thank our Parish Priest, Fr John Armstrong, School Board members and the Parents and Friends Association for their work this year. A school becomes a special place when we open ourselves to the possibilities. Effective school governance is essential in moving a school from good to great. I appreciate the exceptional leadership of our parents in these roles as they have supported school development and encouraged a sense of belonging for all who are associated with our community.

This year we have undergone School Registration, introduced a new curriculum, upgraded a number of areas in the school, implemented a school improvement project on Assessment, engaged in extensive professional learning, and topped the year with renovating ten classrooms! We are focused on improving student achievement and increasing the capacity of all in our school community. I am thrilled to be a part of it!

Thank you for the support you so generously give to the staff and students. 2014 has been professionally rewarding. I look forward to the journey ahead as we shape St Bernard's to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century landscape in education.

## **School Board Message**

The School Board in 2014 has had a successful year, with new members of the Board, a new Principal and Acting Assistant Principal, all coming together to form a cohesive and focused group of leaders with a common purpose. Each year passes quickly and it is always enjoyable to reflect on our achievements and decisions, many of which are for the benefit of future teachers and students. I have been involved as a parent of St Bernard's now for 11 years and the school has continued to grow and develop, but has not lost its place in the parish and community. I have recently been involved more at a Diocesan level as the Parent Representative for the South Coast and this has given an important insight into the forward planning that goes into running the schools across the Region. I know that we are really blessed with great talented people at the Catholic Education Office that are committed to supporting the school teams achieve their goals of being the best at educating our children.

## **Student Representative's Message**

2014 has been a busy yet successful year. The SRC have had a great time participating in activities like the Anzac March, Remembrance Day, Mission Day, The Talent Quest and many more fundraisers. There have been a few changes made to the school this year. Earlier in the year the library was transformed into a new flexible learning space called the Information Centre. The Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 classrooms are being renovated with new carpets and furniture for next year. Overall, being in the SRC this year has been hard work but lots of fun and a memory we will never forget.

## **SCHOOL FEATURES**

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St Bernard's Primary School is a Catholic Primary School located in Batemans Bay. The school caters for students in Kindergarten - Year 6, and has a current enrolment of 388 students.

Students attending this school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities consisting of 196 male and 192 female students; 6 indigenous students; and 14 Language Background other than English (LBOTE).

The school employs 39 staff comprising 25 teachers and 14 non-teaching staff, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including IT Support, Student Welfare, Maintenance, Canteen Management, Office Administration, Learning Support and Library Administration. No staff identify as Indigenous.

The school's website can be found at [www.stbernardsbb.nsw.edu.au](http://www.stbernardsbb.nsw.edu.au)

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

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St Bernard's Primary School follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*.

An important focus for 2014 as identified in the Internal School Review (ISR), has been strengthening our links with the parish community. Regular informal visits from the new parish priest Fr John, together with formal planning meetings, have ensured that we are meeting this goal. Our newly ordained priest Fr Dominic has also been a regular visitor to the school. The school community has

had the opportunity to attend Mass on a regular basis. Focus areas created for these masses in the sanctuary have helped parishioners connect with sacramental programs and ways the sacraments link with the events of Holy Week and the Easter Season. Stage 3 students continued with their Monday Morning prayer gathering in the convent chapel. Each class also attended an Anointing Mass to support the sick and elderly in the parish throughout the year.

Adopting a fresh approach to sacramental preparation has resulted in staff being actively engaged at each of the meetings and assisting with planning the sacramental preparations. In Term 1, Trish Ferlitsch from the CEO spent a day with Stage 3 teachers and Year 6 students to provide further professional learning on the 'Making Jesus Real' program. Year 6 students also participated in the Caritas Leadership day.

St Bernard's hosted the annual Combined Schools Mass in March as part of Catholic Schools Week. This event was attended by approximately 1600 students, staff and parishioners from the 3 schools/parishes in the area.

New staff for 2014 attended Accreditation A days and one has completed Accreditation B. Staff also participated in Catholic Education Office programs in faith formation with one completing the Look, Listen, Learn, Lead program and two attending the Spiritual Formation Day. The Staff Spirituality Day for all staff – 'Called to Compassion' was facilitated by Andrea Dean.

School based staff professional learning included an introduction to *Evangelii Gaudium*, looking at new resource materials and an introduction to the revised 'Treasures New and Old' units in the Church strand.

Living our mission as a Catholic School has continued to be an area of which we are justifiably proud. Year 3 students conducted a cake stall to support the work of Caritas' Project Compassion. Our Mission Week activities in October raised over \$2000.00 for Catholic Mission. A group of students prepared bags of reindeer food during their recess and lunch breaks to raise money for Fr Chris Riley's projects and the school community continued to support Vinnies Christmas Appeal with donations of food and gifts which were presented at the annual Giving Service.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT - NAPLAN

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Students in **Years 3 and 5** sat the *National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy* (NAPLAN) in May this year. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in Literacy and Numeracy. An analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

### School and National Mean Scale Scores

<b>YEAR 3</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>National</b>	419	402	412	426	402
<b>School</b>	441	412	414	447	415

<b>YEAR 5</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>National</b>	501	468	498	504	487
<b>School</b>	515	473	502	498	484

**Proportion of students at or above the National Minimum Standard**

<b>YEAR 3</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>National</b>	94%	94%	93%	94%	95%
<b>School</b>	94%	96%	96%	94%	96%

<b>YEAR 5</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>National</b>	93%	90%	93%	93%	93%
<b>School</b>	98%	92%	96%	94%	96%

**Proportion of students in each Achievement Band**

<b>YEAR 3</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>Band 6</b>	35%	10%	15%	41%	12%
<b>Band 5</b>	21%	33%	29%	19%	31%
<b>Band 4</b>	23%	33%	33%	23%	31%
<b>Band 3</b>	19%	21%	14%	15%	26%
<b>Band 2</b>	0%	4%	10%	0%	0%
<b>Band 1</b>	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%

<b>YEAR 5</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>Band 8</b>	23%	8%	10%	12%	8%
<b>Band 7</b>	17%	8%	27%	31%	14%
<b>Band 6</b>	31%	27%	29%	22%	37%
<b>Band 5</b>	10%	39%	25%	12%	20%
<b>Band 4</b>	17%	10%	6%	16%	16%
<b>Band 3</b>	2%	8%	4%	6%	4%

The above tables show:

### Year 3

- Positive results were achieved across all Literacy and Numeracy strands. Spelling will continue to be an area of focus in 2015.

### Year 5

- Reading trends are improving.
- Writing trends show improvement equal to state.
- Spelling - Positive trend but implementation of a whole school approach to teaching spelling is required.
- Grammar and Punctuation results reflect a need for improvement.
- Numeracy results indicate a drop in growth between Years 3 and 5.
- In general, an over-representation of students is evident in the middle achievement bands. Students require extension and further consolidation of concepts to attain results in the higher achievement bands. Teaching strategies will focus on addressing specific areas of weakness.

## SCHOOL POLICIES

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### Enrolment Policy

In enrolling students we are directed by the Archdiocesan Enrolment Policy which can be found on the Annual Report page of the school's website or on the Catholic Education Office website at <http://www.ceocg.catholic.edu.au/parents/Pages/GeneralPolicies.aspx>

### Application for Enrolment

Application forms for enrolment are available at the School Office or on the website. Parents wishing to enrol their child for Kindergarten for the following year are encouraged to apply during the official enrolment period each year in May (late enrolments are accepted subject to places being available). All new families applying for enrolment are interviewed by the Principal or a member of the School Executive Team. Interviews for Kindergarten enrolments are conducted in Terms 2 and 3, and parents are advised in writing of successful application. To be eligible for enrolment in Kindergarten a child must turn 5 on or before the 30 April in the year of admission. *Enrolment applications must be accompanied with copies of the child's birth certificate, immunisation record and Baptismal certificate (where applicable).*

### Attendance Policy

According to the NSW Department of Education it is imperative that we keep a record of partial or late absences. Students arriving at school after the bell should report to the office and collect a partial or late absence note which is registered on the electronic roll marking database. The part-absence slip is then provided to the classroom teacher to be filed in the term absentee note folder. This folder is archived at the conclusion of each term. Parents/carers wishing to collect their child/ren outside regular school hours must first go to the Office to advise staff and details are entered on the electronic database. A partial leave note must be filled in and then given to the class teacher. An Application for Exemption from Attendance form must be filled in if an absence is known in advance (eg holidays taken in school time). Forms are available at the office or on the school website. This is a legal requirement.

For further information regarding attendance please to the CEO policy at <https://intranet.cg.catholic.edu.au/StaffServices/Policies/Lists/Policies/Attachments/1359/Attendance%20at%20School%20%20%28NSW%29%20-%20August%202014.pdf>

## **Behaviour (Pastoral Care and Welfare Policy)**

### **Policy Goals**

The goals of the Pastoral Care and Welfare Policy at St Bernard's Primary School are to:

- promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and support by establishing a network of Christian relationships among the students, staff, parents, clergy and the wider community;
- ensure that Pastoral Care and Welfare is integral in all that we do;
- increase communication between home and school;
- encourage and affirm each other;
- ensure that each member of the community accepts responsibility for the Pastoral Care and Welfare of others;
- respect the rights and freedoms of each individual
- respect confidentiality;
- ensure that students, staff and parents are supported by the processes in place to support all students; and
- promote restorative justice practices that build relationships.

St Bernard's follows the principles of Restorative Practices when helping students, parents and teachers to resolve issues of interpersonal conflict. The Restorative Practices approach asks what has happened, who was harmed by what happened and what steps need to be taken to repair the harm. All parties involved in the conflict have the opportunity to voice their story and play a role in negotiating a resolution.

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. In addition we do not sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons to enforce discipline at our school.

The teachers at St Bernard's Primary School agree to follow these practices:

- acknowledge shared responsibility for all students;
- negotiate and establish clear rights and responsibilities through developing Essential Agreements;
- recognise the needs of individuals;
- maximise students' ownership of behaviour through Restorative Practices;
- maintain impartiality;
- follow up and follow through (consistency) with parents; and
- utilise wide support (peers, staff, counselling support and parents).

The full text of the school's Pastoral Care and Welfare Policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

### **Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy**

The school policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly and confidentiality is always maintained. A full text of the school's Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures is available on the school website or from the Front Office.



## PRIORITIES AND TARGETS

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Our Vision promotes a learning for life mindset. We have continued to build the school community this year and have enjoyed strong parental support. Curriculum development and school improvements have been a highlight. The following key areas have been a priority throughout 2014 and will continue to be a focus at St Bernard's for 2015 and beyond:

- Catholic identity
- Promoting excellence in education
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Inquiry Learning
- Developing contemporary classroom spaces to promote

Our School Improvement Project focuses on developing a culture of regular and consistent use of data from Learning Assessment Framework, SENA, NAPLAN, ACER PAT and classroom assessment data to explicitly plan teaching programmes that address needs of students.