



# St Joseph's Catholic High School, Albion Park

2024

## Annual School Report

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## About this Report

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St Joseph's Catholic High School, Albion Park is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by Catholic Education, Diocese of Wollongong (CEDoW). Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW) is the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual School Report is a formal document prepared in compliance with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). It provides an overview of the school's performance, policies, and major developments throughout the year. The report lists Continuous Catholic School Improvement Strategic Priority Areas aligned with the School's Strategic Intents/Targets.

The document serves as an accountability measure for the school community, regulatory bodies, and CEDoW, ensuring that the institution meets NESA's registration requirements.

This report is made publicly accessible on the school's website after its approval by CEDoW, with a release date of 30 June 2025.

Further information about the school or this report may be obtained by contacting the school:

St Joseph's Catholic High School  
16 Macquarie St  
Albion Park NSW 2527

Ph: 02 4230 8500  
Email: [info@sjchsdow.catholic.edu.au](mailto:info@sjchsdow.catholic.edu.au)  
Website: [www.sjchsdow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.sjchsdow.catholic.edu.au)

Principal: Amanda Wilson  
Date: 18 March 2025

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## Vision - Statement

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Guided by the teachings of Jesus, St Joseph's Catholic High School provides opportunities for students to develop as respectful people who are prepared to act justly and contribute to a dynamic world through engagement in faith, learning and community. This is summarised by the School Motto 'Act Justly'.

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## Message from Key School Bodies

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### Principal's Message

St Joseph's Catholic High School started 2024 with the loss from accidental death of a staff member and student in separate incidents. This had a significant and ongoing impact on the community. The school has continued to offer support to all students in the face of teacher shortages, as well as the changing landscape of curriculum renewal. St Joseph's is a microcosm of society and, as such, has been affected by all the social issues that exist in broader society.

The Pathways Program for Year 10 students with early commencement of a Stage 6 course, has continued to be an ongoing success. Three Industrial Technology Timber Projects were nominated for their HSC major works. The HSC results were very pleasing, and the school ranked in the top three hundred schools in the state. The Stage 6 Religious Education Program created an integrated experience approach for students and the school will continue to develop the program in 2025.

The school is in a high-growth area as families are relocating, creating an increased interest in enrolments. School facilities have been improved including the carpark area and the Science laboratories which have been refurbished to provide an up-to-date learning environment for students.

Staff have been working collaboratively on the development of new and refreshed programs and focusing on the school goal of improving students' ability to 'read, comprehend and respond' to all aspects of learning.

The school day during Term 4 shifted to an earlier start time of 8:15am and finishing at 2:40pm which has had an impact on reducing student travel time. The house system has become an embedded part of the school during this year and there has been a focus on Engagement, Effort and Excellence in learning for students.

## Parent Involvement

The St Joseph's Parents and Friends Association (P&F) has continued to support school programs and improvements for students throughout the school year. Working closely with the Principal and executive team the P&F has continued to engage and show presence at all school events with the presentation of awards and the welcome BBQ for Year 7 students. P&F funds have been spent on special projects and the house system rewards day. The school encourages parents to have a voice through the parent forum and be involved.

### *Parents and Friends Association*

## Student Leadership

The SRC has successfully undertaken numerous initiatives and made significant contributions to enhance the school. The SRC was engaged in fortnightly meetings and participated in training sessions aimed at enhancing leadership skills. There were different leadership opportunities such as the Whitlam Youth Leaders Roundtable hosted by the local Member of Parliament which saw students gather from other local schools to discuss key issues such as climate change, mental health, and education. Senior SRC leaders had the opportunity to be involved in the GRIP Leadership Conference which concentrated specifically on training student leaders for their role at school.

As a team, the SRC held several fundraising events to support key charities which included St Vincent de Paul, Project Compassion and Catholic Mission. Such fundraising activities highlighted the community's dedication to promoting social justice and fostering a spirit of generosity within the school community.

The year was defined by a sense of belonging, resilience, and continuous improvement, ensuring that every student is prepared for future success.

### *School Leaders*

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## School Profile

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### School Context

St Joseph's Catholic High School is a Catholic systemic co-educational school located in Albion Park. The school caters for students in Years 7-12 and has a current enrolment of 686.

St Joseph's was established as a regional secondary school in 1982 to serve from Gerringong to Kembla Grange. The school Motto is "Act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). Guided by the teachings of Jesus, St Joseph's provides opportunities for students to develop as respectful people who are prepared to act justly and contribute to a dynamic world through engagement in faith, learning and community. It is a faith-based learning community, enriched by the Josephite Charism where students and staff have high expectations and strive to reach their potential through respecting self, others, learning and the environment. Inspired by the life of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, St Joseph's espouses the Josephite values of respect, humility, courage, compassion, hospitality, justice, and service. The school has a proud tradition as a welcoming and vibrant learning community.

Students are supported by dedicated and expert staff. Quality teaching and learning is driven by a commitment to continuous school improvement. Staff embed research-based practices of learning intentions and success criteria to enhance student learning. Teachers are data-informed, using a range of internal and external sources to provide targeted learning activities and feedback to help students to progress along the learning continuum in each key learning area.

The Diverse Learning Needs Faculty provides support for students with individual learning needs and works collaboratively with parents and staff to ensure learning adjustments and quality differentiated teaching are available to students. The school offers a variety of clubs and programs to cater for a range of student interests including the Aspiring/Elite Athlete Program, Student Representative Council, Youth Mission, and War on Waste Club. The school is renowned for its expansive extra-curricular program including the annual School Musical, School Choir, and sporting opportunities.

### Student Enrolments

2024 Enrolments	
Boys	341
Girls	345
Total	686
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	39
LBOTE	203

The [Diocesan Enrolment Policy and Procedures](http://www.sjchsdown.catholic.edu.au) exists to assist schools in the equitable prioritising of enrolment applications and in order to ensure that the requirements of State and Commonwealth legislation are met. Documentation can be found on both the school website: [www.sjchsdown.catholic.edu.au](http://www.sjchsdown.catholic.edu.au) and the CEDoW website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.dow.catholic.edu.au). No changes were made to this Policy in 2024.

### Student Attendance

2024 Attendance	
Year 7	87.3%
Year 8	84.6%
Year 9	84.8%
Year 10	84.1%
Year 11	87.7%
Year 12	90.7%
Whole school	86.5%

### Management of Student Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

In 2024, student attendance was closely monitored through Compass to ensure the wellbeing and engagement of all students. Homeroom teachers were responsible for contacting families when a student had been absent for three consecutive days. This allowed leadership to provide support, identify any concerns, and assist in overcoming barriers to attendance.

Pastoral and Learning Support Leaders regularly held proactive meetings with families of students experiencing declining attendance. They worked collaboratively with parents and carers to develop a structured Attendance Improvement Plan, ensuring ongoing monitoring and support to help students re-engage with their learning.

Attendance was a regular discussion point at School Assemblies and Stage Meetings. In 2024, St Joseph's introduced Attendance Awards to recognise those students who had met the school's 95% attendance goal.

## Student Attainment in Senior Years

Years 11 and 12, 2024	
Percentage of students undertaking vocational training or training in a trade during Years 11 and 12	40%
Percentage of students who have completed at least one (1) VET course in either Year 11 or Year 12	17%
Percentage of students in Year 12 attaining the award of Higher School Certificate or equivalent vocational education and training qualification	99%

## Destination Survey

2024	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
Number of school leavers	24	11	91
Further study	16	6	61
Workforce	8	5	22
Other/unknown	0	0	8

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## Staffing Profile

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There are 106 staff members consisting of 66 teachers and 40 support staff. There are 43 full-time, and 23 part-time teachers. In 2024, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People represented 2.6% of the Diocesan schools' workforce.

### Teacher Accreditation Status

The accreditation status of all teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum is:

Teacher Accreditation Status	
Conditional	1
Graduate / Provisional	1
Proficient Teacher	64
Highly Accomplished Teacher	0
Lead Teacher	0

In 2024, staff engaged in a comprehensive range of professional learning designed to enhance student outcomes with a particular focus on *Continuous Catholic School Improvement* (CCSI).

These initiatives were aimed at fostering both academic success and the holistic development of students in alignment with Catholic values, including deepening the integration of Catholic identity within the school community. This involved reinforcing the faith-based ethos in daily practices, curriculum design, and student engagement, ensuring that Catholic teachings and values remain central to the educational experience.

Staff were encouraged to explore innovative pedagogies that align with the principles of Catholic social teaching, fostering a learning environment that nurtures both intellectual and spiritual growth.

Additionally, professional learning centred on improving instructional practices, assessment strategies, and pastoral care, all with the goal of creating a more supportive and inclusive environment for students. By strengthening their professional capabilities, staff were better equipped to meet the diverse needs of students and further the mission of the school as a beacon of faith, service, and academic excellence.



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## Catholic Life & Religious Education

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Catholic Life and Religious Education continued at St Joseph's in 2024 with a focus on youth leadership, values of the Josephite Charism and the teaching of Christ. The school theme for 2024 was 'Engagement, Effort, Excellence'. This theme, along with the Josephite values was infused into a rich Catholic curriculum that embedded spirituality, the Catholic tradition and prayer life.

The Religious Education team led and coordinated the school's Religious Education Curriculum, along with the spiritual formation of both staff and students. This included a restructuring of the Youth Ministry Leaders position of leadership with a targeted approach and theme each term. This included an excellent staff spirituality day focused on Pope Francis' ecological message of stewardship, and care for creation; inspired by *Laudato Si* (2015) and *Laudate Deum* (2023).

The school community had the pleasure of hosting the Bishop of Wollongong for the 'Year 12 Conversation with Bishop Mascord'. This was a great opportunity for students to meet the Bishop and to ask questions regarding the current challenges facing the Catholic Church. Year 12 students attended a retreat, which provided opportunities for self-reflection, prayer, and discussion, connecting with self, and building relationships with others and God.

In 2024, students participated in several social justice opportunities and experiences. These included a visit and talk with the Vinnie's Van, Shrove Tuesday Pancake making and fundraising, Caritas Project Compassion, fundraising activities, such as Valentine's Day and RUOK Day, St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal including a senior student winter eat-out, *Laudato Si* and Environment Week activities and fundraising, Catholic Mission Month and Socktober, and St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal.

The funds raised by the school community for social justice initiatives in 2024 included the Caritas Project Compassion \$2,048, Red Cross \$345, Catholic Mission Australia \$827, St Vincent de Paul \$3,366, plus donations of canned foods, baby items and toys.

### Religious Literacy Assessment

The Religious Literacy Assessment framework of *Knowing, Working with, Applying and Valuing the Tradition* informs and shapes assessment in RE across 7-12 with a focussed system collection of data in Year 8. The Religious Literacy Assessment Program was successfully completed by 128 students on 4-7 November 2024.

The performance of each student was described according to the Common Grade Scale (A to E).

Students showed a high level of performance in their knowledge of the religious tradition. This high level of performance was particularly noticeable in their ability to:

- articulate an understanding of how aspects of Christian living can assist people to grow in goodness.
- identify the core values shown and espoused by Jesus and applies them to contemporary life situations.
- investigate and identify the key characteristics of Catholic communities.

The students' responses showed a need for them to develop their capacity to work with and apply the religious tradition, especially in their ability to explain and to:

- describe the structure of the Bible and some of its principal themes.
- identify that being human involves rights and responsibilities.
- Understand Jesus' principal teachings.

In the assessment, 5% of students were placed in the elementary level, 27% in the basic level, 31% in the sound level, 17% in the thorough level, and 20% in the extensive level.

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## Continuous Catholic School Improvement

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CEDoW's Lighting the Way strategic plan outlines five focus areas, these are: formation in the Catholic tradition, student learning and wellbeing, belonging in a connected community, system support for the core work of teaching, and ensuring Catholic schools continue to thrive.

Continuous Catholic School Improvement (CCSI) is the overarching, linked and integrated system-wide process, designed to improve student outcomes through impactful school, leader and teacher practice and differentiated support from the Catholic Education Office (CEO). CCSI is focused on growth and improvement in faith, learning and well-being outcomes for all students. It involves systemic collaboration, inquiry, reflection and learning to identify and evaluate long-term and short-term priority areas for ongoing school improvement.

The purpose of CCSI is to provide CEDoW schools with a shared approach to strategic planning and ongoing cyclic inquiry that is evidence-based, supports sustainable and ongoing improvement, and maximises local impact through alignment and collaboration across schools and the CEO.

### Lighting the Way Strategic Priority Areas - 2024

- Student Learning and Wellbeing
  - Focus Area/Strategic Intent Statement/Goal: by the end of 2024, data will be used to identify starting points and develop interventions in learning for improvement/growth in literacy/numeracy and wellbeing.
- Student Learning and Wellbeing
  - Focus Area: Strategic Intent Statement/Goal: by the end of 2024, students will have developed an increase in skills to read - comprehend and respond across all subject areas. This will be evident through an increase in the percentage of students who have exceeded or met expected PAT growth for 2024.

### Lighting the Way Strategic Priority Areas - 2025

- Student Learning and Wellbeing
  - Focus Area: Strategic Intent Statement/Goal: by the end of 2025, student learning growth and achievement will improve through a specific focus on literacy and numeracy characterised by a culture of high expectations and achievement.
    - Increasing the capacity of staff to plan, teach, and evaluate reading, comprehension and responding skills specific to their subject through targeted professional development.
    - Enhancing school culture to promote engagement and learning growth.

- Improving student attendance rates closer to 95% to ensure students have more time in class to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of course content.

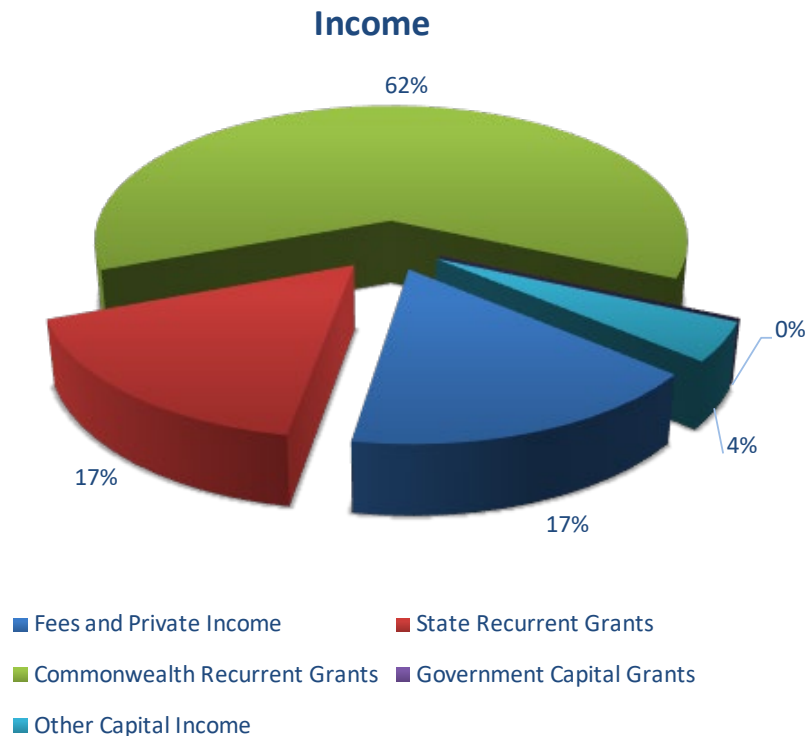
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## Financial Summary

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Over the 2024 year, the expenditure on the refurbishment of the science laboratories and car park has impacted the school budget with sundry items having to come out of the school budget. The cost-of-living crisis has impacted the cost of items for the school including utilities and general maintenance items. The school's direction is to spend the money collected from parents on the students each year so that there is a direct correlation and impact.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2024. This data is taken from the 2024 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education and Training.



## Expenditure



- Salaries, Allowances and Related Expenses
- Non-Salary Expenses
- Capital Expenditure

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## School Policies

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Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wollongong are committed to fostering a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment for all members of the school community. This commitment is guided by the principles, guidelines, and procedures outlined in the [Code of Conduct Policy](#) which provides a framework for school leaders, students, staff, parents, and the wider community to cultivate a culture of safety, respect, and care.

In 2024, several actions were taken to actively promote respect and responsibility within the school community. These included targeted programs aimed at teaching students about respectful relationships, responsible decision-making, and the importance of empathy and kindness in all interactions. Schools also implemented peer support programs and student leadership initiatives that empowered students to model positive behaviours and mentor their peers. Ongoing staff professional development focused on restorative practices have further strengthened the emphasis on resolving conflicts constructively and maintaining harmonious relationships within the school.

All schools strictly adhere to CEDoW's [Student Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Policy](#) and the [Student Anti-Bullying Procedure](#), which emphasise student welfare and ensures that any incidents of bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively. These policies, along with the [Diocesan Complaints Handling Procedures](#), reflect the Diocese's ongoing commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in creating safe and respectful school environments.

These key documents can be accessed on the CEDoW website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.dow.catholic.edu.au). It should also be noted that no changes were made to these documents in 2024.

In accordance with the NSW Education Reform Act 1990, corporal punishment is prohibited in all schools within the Diocese of Wollongong, further emphasising the commitment to creating a respectful and supportive learning environment for all students.

For additional information or to access policies and guidelines, please visit the school's website [www.sichsdow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.sichsdow.catholic.edu.au) or contact the school office directly.

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## Learning and Teaching

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St Joseph's commitment to academic excellence and holistic education continues to shape the learning experience for all students. In 2024, teaching and learning programs were guided by the principles of faith, inquiry, and innovation, ensuring that students are supported in their journey to reach their full potential.

Educators have embraced contemporary pedagogical approaches, integrating technology, differentiated instruction, use of data and collaborative learning strategies to cater to diverse learning needs. The professional development of teachers remains a priority, with staff engaging in ongoing training focused on evidence-based practices, student well-being, and faith-based learning.

A focus this year has been on literacy and numeracy enhancement, supported by targeted interventions and data-driven instruction. The implementation of formative assessment strategies has enabled teachers to provide timely feedback and personalised learning pathways, ensuring that every student progresses at their own pace.

In addition, curriculum offerings have expanded to include interdisciplinary learning experiences that foster critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Through project-based learning and cross-curricular initiatives, students have engaged in meaningful real-world applications of their knowledge. This approach will continue as staff continue the implementation of new syllabus' as part of the NSW Curriculum reform process.

Faith formation remains central to the school's approach, with Religious Education programs integrating scripture, service, and reflection to nurture students' spiritual growth. St Joseph's Catholic identity is reflected in classroom practice, school liturgies, and social justice initiatives that encourage students to live out their faith in action. 2024 saw many Year 11 students complete the Studies of Religion 1 HSC pathways program with their HSC results very pleasing indicating the initial success of this initiative.

Looking ahead, St Joseph's remains dedicated to fostering a dynamic and inclusive learning environment where students are inspired to excel academically and grow as compassionate, faith-filled individuals. The school's leadership thank the dedicated staff, supportive parents, and engaged students for their contributions to the continued success of teaching and learning at St Joseph's.



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## Student Achievement

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The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, projects, presentations, and student work samples. The school also participates in the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for the purposes of diagnosing individual learning needs and reviewing whole class teaching programs. Information on student progress is communicated on a regular basis and external assessment results are discussed with parents on an individual basis annually.

### NAPLAN

NAPLAN is implemented for students in Years 7 and 9 with the results providing valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. Analysis of the results is used at school level to support the enhancement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students.

Year 7 students achieved results that provided valuable information to help support individual student needs and plan for their ongoing academic growth. The cohort had excellent results in the reading domain, being above Diocesan, State and National averages.

A highlight is the improved performance of Year 9 students in the 2024 NAPLAN assessments. Students demonstrated growth in all key areas with Year 9 students performing above the Diocesan, State, and National averages, in Reading, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy.

### Reporting of Student NAPLAN Achievements

Student achievement is shown against four levels of proficiency: *Exceeding*, *Strong*, *Developing*, and *Needs additional support*.

- *Exceeding*: the student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- *Strong*: the student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- *Developing*: the student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- *Needs additional support*: the student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

Each of the standards represents increasingly challenging skills and understandings as students move through the years of schooling.

Assessment Domains (results shown as %)	Year	Needs Additional Support	Developing	Strong	Exceeding
Reading	7	3	20	58	19
	9	8	24	51	17
Writing	7	5	27	56	12
	9	8	25	51	16
Spelling	7	7	14	61	18
	9	8	13	69	10
Grammar & Punctuation	7	8	27	55	10
	9	10	30	50	10
Numeracy	7	5	24	68	3
	9	6	24	61	9

### Higher School Certificate

The HSC results for the class of 2024 were pleasing and continued to reflect the ongoing improvement in learning outcomes for the senior students at St Joseph's. Students undertook study across 31 school-based subjects as well as others via distance ed or EVET options (Retail, Human Services).

Pathways programs proved popular allowing 23 students to complete one HSC course while a total of 41 students took the opportunity to complete the Studies of Religion 1 Course a year early. The results of these students across all subjects were pleasing with 6 students receiving a Band 6 result in their subject.

Some of the highlights for the students of 2024 include - 25 students received a Band 6 result (the highest number in 9 years), an increase in the number of students who received a Band 4-6 in their subject, a decrease in the number of students who received a Band 1-3 in their subject. Eight students achieved results above the NSW State average, 8 students with an ATAR over 85.00, the school Dux received an ATAR of 96.65. Six students recognised as first in their subject in the Diocese, 3 students received nominations for SHAPE in recognition of their major project in Industrial Technology - Timber, 1 student recognised as Diocesan VET student of the year, 1 student recognised as Diocesan SBAT student of the year; 1 student recognised as Diocesan Construction student of the year, and 1 student recognised as Diocesan Electrotechnology student of the year.

### Student Achievement (Band Performance)

Band Performance (%in bands)		Bands 1 & 2	Bands 3 & 4	Bands 5&6
English Standard	School	1.8	96.4	1.8
	State	7.6	79.0	13.4
English Advanced	School	0.0	38.5	61.5
	State	0.5	31.9	67.6
Mathematics Standard 2	School	5.4	81.1	13.5
	State	16.8	54.4	28.8
Mathematics Advanced	School	0.0	42.9	57.1
	State	5.2	44.8	50.0
Biology	School	8.0	52.0	40.0
	State	11.8	52.6	35.6
Business Studies	School	7.1	78.6	14.3
	State	12.8	49.7	37.5
Investigating Science	School	0.0	48.3	51.7
	State	7.0	57.0	36.0
Modern History	School	15.8	68.4	15.8
	State	9.5	51.3	39.2
Personal Development, Health & PE	School	0.0	100.0	0.0
	State	8.9	56.1	35.0
Studies of Religion I	School	4.7	74.7	20.6
	State	3.7	52.5	43.8

### Student Achievement (Mean Performance)

Band Performance (%)	Student Total	School	State
English Standard	59	70.5	71.4
English Advanced	13	80.9	82.0
Mathematics Standard 2	40	70.5	71.6
Mathematics Advanced	7	81.8	78.4
Biology	25	75.0	73.9
Business Studies	15	68.4	73.5
Investigating Science	31	78.1	74.6
Modern History	20	67.7	75.0
Personal Development, Health & PE	9	73.8	74.0
Studies of Religion I	111	36.0	38.4

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## Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

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Parent, student, and staff satisfaction was gathered through the school's engagement with the 'Tell Them From Me' Survey. The following information represents areas of strength and future development from each response group.

### Parents

Parents reported that they feel welcome when visiting the school; feel well informed about school activities; and that the school supports positive behaviour from their child. Areas of development noted, include communication around opportunities concerning their child's future and the scheduling of events at times convenient to them.

### Students

Most students have a positive sense of belonging to the school community, have friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices, and they find classroom instruction relevant to their everyday lives. Areas of development noted is the increasing student aspiration to move into higher education post-school, and their interest and motivation in the classroom.

### Staff

Teachers are supported to connect with other teachers to discuss strategies to better engage students, set high expectations for student learning, and establish clear expectations for classroom behaviour. Areas for future development are the increasing opportunities for members of the community to be involved in learning opportunities, and the embedding of formal opportunities for school leaders to observe teaching.