



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Portland

Prospectus



"Thank you for considering our beautiful school.

We invite you to explore our Prospectus, providing a glimpse of the exceptional educational experience we offer.

In our small school, we prioritise individual attention, fostering meaningful connections between students, teachers, families and Jesus Christ.

Discover how size creates a supportive and inclusive atmosphere where each child is known, valued and encouraged to thrive, academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

We look forward to the possibility of partnering with you in nurturing your child's growth and success."

Simone Taylor

PRINCIPAL



A Small School Inspiring Big Dreams

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Portland is a Kindergarten to Year 6 Catholic School, only 164km west of Sydney and within the Bathurst Diocese.

The school is set on Convent Hill in Portland overlooking peaceful and historic views of the town and surrounding landscape.

The school was founded by the Sisters of St Joseph upon their arrival to the township of Portland in 1905. A makeshift school, with classes taught in a tent, preceded the construction of our school building as it stands today.

The school was formally opened by Bishop Dunne on Sunday 23rd February 1908 and firmly established Catholic education within the Portland community.

"The Catholic School, far more than any other, must be a community whose aim is the transmission of values for living. Its work is seen as promoting a faith relationship with Christ in whom all values find fulfilment. (The Catholic School, 1977, n.53)."

At St Joseph's we strive to develop an environment celebrating faith, striving for excellence and promoting wellbeing for all.

Our motto "Faith & Truth" signifies our commitment to living a life of faith grounded in the truth of God's love and justice. It reminds us to seek out and embrace truth in all its forms, and to use that truth to guide our actions and decisions.



Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Wiradjuri people, the traditional custodians of the land which we gather. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes. We extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

OUR VISION

We at St Joseph's believe that we can provide a faith-filled, caring environment where each child is given the best opportunities to grow and develop, while striving for excellence in all areas of learning and building meaningful relationships with Jesus Christ and each other.

OUR MISSION

In partnership with family, parish and community, the staff of St Joseph's Catholic School will provide all students with opportunities to succeed and reach their full potential through a culture of high expectations. Authentic relationships and positive attitudes will foster the emotional wellbeing of students and staff.

The Benefits of our Small School

- **Every child is truly known**

We see high value in knowing each child at our school by name. No child is 'lost in the crowd'. Transitioning between years is a seamless process, with students already familiar with their class and all teachers. As educators we are invested in the wellbeing and growth of each child.

- **"Have a go" mindset**

In a small school every child is given the opportunity, and actively prompted to cultivate a "have a go" mindset. Smaller size brings greater opportunities to express thoughts, share ideas and ask questions, particularly benefitting less assertive children in nurturing their unique perspective.

- **Better able to identify and address a child's individual strengths and challenges**

In a multi-stage class, we excel in identifying and addressing a child's strengths and challenges. Educators are better able to facilitate access to enrichment opportunities allowing for a child to be extended academically or conversely, able to provide prompt intervention and focused support through personalised learning.

- **Students develop a strong sense of belonging**

As a small school we excel in cultivating a profound sense of belonging and strong connection. This allows for the development of meaningful relationships to flourish among students, teachers, and staff. This supportive environment fosters a sense of unity, shared responsibility, and an inclusive atmosphere where every individual feels valued, contributing to a deep and lasting connection.

- **Consistency of teaching practices**

Our children benefit from consistency in teaching practices from Kindergarten to Year 6. A streamlined collaboration between our educators enables the sharing of effective teaching methods and a unified approach to curriculum implementation. This cohesive education experience promotes a stable learning environment for children.

- **Strong child-parent-teacher relationship**

In a small school, the child-parent-teacher relationship is able to be more personal and collaborative. With fewer students, our educators can engage parents more effectively, leading to a better understanding of a child's needs. This close-knit dynamic fosters open communication, allowing a team approach for continued growth and success of students.

- **A community within a community**

Seeing familiar faces, knowing the names of all the children and being greeted by the staff characterises daily life at St Joseph's, and is a very special reason why we are more than a school.

As a small school we have a strong mutual relationship with the Parish and Portland community. Our children develop a strong sense of local identity and pride. This connection is integral to our identity and sets us apart as more than just a school; we are an active and involved part of the broader community.



Strategic Directions

At St Joseph's Portland our Strategic Directions are crafted to provide a clear vision for cultivating not only academic success, but equally important, wellbeing, resilience and a strong sense of community, to ensure every child feels empowered

and connected during their educational journey with us. We aim to empower our students to excel not only in their studies, but also in becoming well-rounded individuals who contribute positively to their communities.

FAITH

Faith serves as the foundational compass guiding the strategic directions of our school, shaping a cohesive vision that integrates values, purpose and a commitment to holistic education.

BELONGING

At the heart of our educational approach is our commitment to ensuring that every child is not just a student but a valued member of our community. Through individualised attention, genuine care, and an inclusive atmosphere, we create a strong sense of belonging for all stakeholders.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

The whole school community sets high expectations and strives to establish ideal learning environments that motivate all students to be challenged and actively pursue their full potential.

We believe in cultivating a culture of high expectations, in both academic achievement and personal conduct.

GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT

Relentless school-wide improvement is powered by the combination of quality teaching practice and a collective belief in enhancing student growth. This is supported through the application of a comprehensive range of assessment strategies.

Our Faith

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a faith community based on belief in Jesus Christ. We ensure students come to know God through the promotion of Catholic tradition and teaching.

Faith experiences are woven throughout the life of the school and school values, and are realised within the Religious Education program.

We participate in daily prayer and opportunities to celebrate the life, mission, liturgies, Masses and celebrations of the broader Catholic community.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious education underpins all aspects of the daily learning experiences of children at St Joseph's through core Catholic principles and values.

St Joseph's follows the Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum supporting the catechetical and evangelising mission of the Church while supporting young people in their lifelong journey of faith.

ST VINCENT'S CHURCH AND PARISH

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School shares its grounds with St Vincent's Catholic Church Portland.

The proximity of our church conveniently allows our school to attend religious services, including the celebration of weekly Mass with parishioners and our Parish Priest.

Our close relationship with the parish supports Catholic values and teachings, in accordance with the principles of Catholic faith.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Catholic education supports students to become more informed about the world and their role in its future.

Social justice initiatives give schools the chance to take action and empower young people to be part of a solution.

There is no better way for students to express the



principles of Catholic social teaching than to stand together with their peers and teachers at school in support of those most in need.

St Joseph's regularly engages in activities to support Catholic Mission with fundraising and awareness raising initiatives. We understand the value of working closely with our local parish, community groups and supporting local charities for the benefit of the whole community and the students' personal development.



***“An education
in the fullness
of humanity
should be
the defining
feature of
Catholic
Schools.” -
Pope Francis***

PASTORAL CARE & WELLBEING

At St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School we understand the vital role we have in promoting the wellbeing of our students. St Joseph’s follows the Bathurst Diocese Pastoral Care & Wellbeing Framework “Encounter, Achieve and Flourish” which is underpinned by the Gospel values that characterise Catholic Education.

This framework assists schools in offering each student the most solid groundwork to help them achieve their educational and life aspirations. It is founded on evidence showing a significant connection between safety, wellbeing, and the learning process.

To complement the Pastoral Care & Wellbeing Framework, St Joseph’s utilises various programs for students from Kinder to Year 6. These programs are designed to improve students’ educational outcomes, school-readiness and peer relationships while decreasing problem behaviours by promoting social-emotional competence and self-regulation.

The holistic approach, delivered to students, builds a supportive community for every child through social-emotional learning experiences.

CENTACARE

To support the positive growth of relationships and interactions between students and their school environment, St Joseph’s benefits from a visiting qualified counsellor. Centacare counsellors foster educational engagement and work with both individuals, small groups and families to enhance the schooling experience for all students.

OUR LEARNING

CURRICULUM

Our commitment to excellence in education is reflected in our unwavering dedication to prioritising literacy and numeracy through explicit instruction. We understand that a strong foundation in these fundamental skills forms the bedrock of academic success.

Furthermore, we recognise the ever-evolving role of technology in our world. We place significant emphasis on equipping our students with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in the digital age.

We are continually developing our Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics (STREAM) Programs incorporating coding and robotics, to empower students to not only understand technology but also harness its potential to solve real-world problems and innovate for the future.

By providing a well-rounded education that combines traditional academic strengths with modern technological fluency, we prepare our students to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

***"We must
teach more
by example
than by word."
- Saint Mary
MacKillop***





SPORT

At St Joseph's we encourage participation in sport believing that the enjoyment, competition, fair play and the opportunity it brings for friends is of great value for our children.

Classes have dedicated sports lessons each week as part of the school's PDHPE curriculum. These lessons involve the teaching of skills allowing students to build confidence and capability to be active for life.

Each year the school runs three major carnivals for swimming, athletics and cross country. Additionally, our school also participates in a number of Gala Days in a variety of sports including soccer, netball, cricket, rugby league and touch football.

Representative opportunities exist for students with appropriate skill and ability, who wish to compete in individual or team sports at a higher level. The pathway for sporting representation is School, Eastern Region, Bathurst Diocese, through to State and National representation.

There are three Sports houses at St Joseph's:

AIDAN

In memory of our last resident Sister of St Joseph, Sr Aidan, a wonderful educator.

GRANNALL

In memory of our last resident Parish priest, Monsignor John Grannall.

MACKILLOP

In memory of our founder St Mary MacKillop.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we place tremendous emphasis on nurturing student leadership as an integral part of our school culture.

We hold in high regard every student's unique voice and firmly believe that each one deserves the chance to cultivate essential leadership skills, such as effective communication and fostering strong interpersonal relationships.

The culminating year of education at St Joseph's serves as a significant opportunity for students to formalise and demonstrate their developing leadership abilities.

In Year 6, all students assume positions within the Senior Leadership Team, with select students subsequently elected to the roles of School Captains and Sports Captains.

Our senior students are further encouraged to enrich their leadership potential through participation in the annual GRIP Leadership Conference, which provides invaluable training and insights.

***"Leaders instill in
their people a hope
for success
and a belief in
themselves.
Positive leaders
empower people
to accomplish
their goals."
- Anonymous***



EXTRA-CURRICULAR & CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Portland, we understand that education extends far beyond the classroom.

We are proud to offer a diverse range of co-curricular and extracurricular activities to enrich our students' lives and foster their personal growth.

At St Joseph's we are committed to nurturing well-rounded individuals who are not only academically proficient but also socially and culturally aware, and our co-curricular and extracurricular offerings play a vital role in achieving this holistic education.

***"The future
starts today,
not tomorrow." -
St John Paul the Great***

NETWORK & ENGAGEMENT WITH LA SALLE ACADEMY LITHGOW

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Portland is proud of the strong and symbiotic relationship with our local secondary Catholic school, La Salle Academy Lithgow.

This partnership unlocks valuable opportunities for student's academic and personal growth.

We collaborate closely with La Salle Academy to ensure a smooth transition, sharing curriculum insights and fostering a sense of continuity in our students' learning experience.

This dynamic alliance not only promotes academic excellence but also nurtures the values and principles that underpin our Catholic faith, creating a supportive and enriching environment for our students throughout their educational journey.



KINDER TRANSITION PROGRAMS

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we are committed to ensuring students transitioning to Kindergarten receive the best possible start to their schooling.

Our "Jump Into Joey's" sessions and formal transition programs are family friendly and designed to promote relationships between staff and students.

We pride ourselves in providing a multitude of opportunities for new students to feel comfortable in the formal school setting prior to commencing.



***"Start by doing
what's necessary,
then do what's
possible and
suddenly you
are doing the
impossible." -
St Francis of Assisi***



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