

Rathdowney State School

School annual report

**Queensland state school reporting**

# 2021



*Every student succeeding*

*State Schools Improvement Strategy*

Department of Education

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| From the Principal |
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Rathdowney State School is a small school located in a rural community, south west of Beaudesert. A unique, quality educational program is offered for students from Prep to Year 6. The mission of the school is to encourage students to reach their academic, physical and social potential within an inspirational and supported learning environment. Multi-age classrooms give the opportunity for individual needs to be met through the personal approach of the small school, with many of the facilities and resources found in larger schools. A garden setting, spacious well-equipped grounds, air-conditioned classrooms, a well-stocked library and resource centre, dedicated school hall and 25 metre in-ground pool, makes Rathdowney a complete educational facility.

While the main curriculum focus is on the teaching of the underpinning areas of literacy and numeracy, practical programs in Science, Technology, HASS, HPE, Language and The Arts are provided for all year levels. Swimming is a dominant feature of the school HPE program. Other sporting pursuits are supported by playground and sporting equipment, competition and team trials with other schools. As well as the academic focus, emphasis is placed on the development of students' positive personal values and social responsibility, creating global citizens of the future. A vibrant Early Learning Centre provides a seamless progression through the first four years of school for students of Prep to Year 2. The non-graded curriculum allows students to progress in response to their own individual rates of development. Facilities at the centre are used by a weekly playgroup.

During Term 4 each year, Prep students enrolled for the coming year, spend time each week in the classroom, allowing an easy transition to school. Extra-curricular activities are strongly supported. The Arts program includes the school drum and fife band and workshops including arts and dance. Musical productions of a high standard are performed each year.

 A unique excursion program provides parent and citizen subsidised excursions for all children in the school, to give real life experiences which support and complement classroom learning. Excursions include annual three-day visits to the city for the younger children and a three-year rotation of city, beach and an excursion to Sydney and Canberra for the older children.

Our school is supported by a dedicated, competent staff of a teaching principal, teachers, aides and specialist teachers. Parents are valuable helpers in the classroom and in fundraising for school excursions and facilities. Experts within the community augment the resource base of the school. The strong bond the school has with the local community is exemplified by the successful, long-standing triennial theatre restaurant drawing on the staff, parents and community for performers, caterers and audience. Rathdowney School lives up to its motto, 'Small School, Big Opportunities'.

**School progress towards its goals in 2021**

2021 presented the school with some wonderful accomplishments, many positive outcomes and a few challenges.

The school’s priorities of 2021 were met. They included: continuing to implement the Rathdowney State School strategic plan for 2020-2023 and writing the explicit improvement agenda. Staff continued to implement the Australian Curriculum throughout the year across all subject areas and continued to embed the school’s pedagogical framework. Staff enhanced the ‘quality teaching’ and ‘successful students’ areas of school’s operations by coaching and mentoring and classroom observation of teachers, encouraging students to set their own learning goals, giving students and teachers timely feedback, and differentiating for the individual needs of each student.

Topics for the professional development for staff during the year included the following priority areas: the Literacy Continuum, Early Start, and achievement standards for English from the Australian curriculum, HASS School Program, STEM/STEAM, Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Plan, Pedagogical Framework, HITS Focus, Teacher Observation and Feedback, Success Criteria, Strategic Planning and Data Analysis, Community Coaching and Head Concussion Training, Age Appropriate Pedagogies, and Early Start Assessment.

In 2021, there was a continuing focus on the “every day counts” strategy to boost school attendance.

Rathdowney State School has always been strongly supported by staff, parents and the local community. The school forms an integral part of this community. The school and the community work together to support each other wherever possible.

One unique aspect of our school is the Early Learning Centre which, in 2021, catered for Prep to Year 3 students in a multi-age setting. In 2021, the class was staffed by 2 part time teachers, one very experienced full time teacher aide and 1 part-time teacher aide. The Centre is located in an airconditioned double storey building with an adjacent early childhood play area. At various times during the year, staff in the Early Learning Centre invited and included younger pre-prep children (and their parents), in some of the activities at the Centre.

A playgroup for parents/carers and very young children met weekly at the school, using the resources and facilities of the Early Learning Centre. The school enlisted the resources of a local community organisation, Scenic Rim Regional Council, Beaudesert Library. Staff from the Beaudesert Library came Rathdowney State School every month and implement “Rhyme Time”, which follows the First 5 Forever program. They were keen to become involved and this gave the school the opportunity to offer a more formalised program for children in the early years (0-5). This was a very successful partnership and continued into 2021. The playgroup program served to introduce carers and children to the school in an informal way and so allowed for a smooth entry into an already familiar setting when the children started Prep. It also allowed staff to identify children with special needs early and allowed them to advise parents on using some early intervention/extension strategies before the children started formal schooling. The weekly playgroup has proven to be very successful and numbers have continued to grow at this time.

In 2021, during terms 1 and 4, swimming continued to be a focus, with students swimming at the pool for three 45-minute sessions each week. The school subsidised the swimming of all the students so that there would be a 100% participation rate. The school also supplied some swimming costumes and other swimming gear to allow all students to take full advantage of every lesson. A swim coach was engaged to provide lessons in tandem with the PE teacher each week. Due to flooding, the annual Easter swimming carnival was cancelled, however a carnival was held in term 4. The carnival offers parents the opportunity to see the improvement in swimming made by their children over the year. One other school also held “Learn to Swim” classes at the school’s pool, during this time and the school contributed to the cost of running the pool by paying entry each time.

In 2021, the Christmas Creek Athletics carnival, an annual 2-day event, was hosted at Rathdowney State School after being cancelled in 2020 due to Covid-19. With the successful staging of the sports at Rathdowney State School in the past, the Christmas Creek Association decided to continue to hold this event at our venue.

**Future outlook**

Attracting enrolments continues to present a challenge for this school at the start of each school year. It was important to continue to advocate for more enrolments throughout 2021 as this would have significant repercussions for resourcing at the school. This rural area has not yet experienced the housing development taking place in other parts of the regions and so has not experienced the enrolment growth of other local schools. The Scenic Rim Region Council had advised that future planning indicates that there is to be more residential housing in Rathdowney in the near future to help to grow the town. To lift the school’s public profile and attract more enrolments, the school needs to continue to publicise its achievements, activities and ‘uniqueness’ as much and as often as possible.

After the 2019 quadrennial school review, the staff developed a Strategic Plan with the following improvement priorities to be implemented. The following priorities were continued to be implemented and worked towards in 2021:

* Establish an EIA to ensure a narrow, sharp and deep focus in reading
* Establish an EIA to ensure a narrow, sharp and deep focus in spelling
* Develop and implement a whole-school strategy to increase enrolments
* Review school-wide curriculum to align with version 8 of the Australian Curriculum and P-12 CARF
* Further enhance established local networks to improve professional development opportunities and moderation of student work
* Continue to provide human resources to allow each class a full-time teacher aide
* Continue to provide first-hand learning opportunities for students through workshops, excursions and camps for all age groups

In 2020, the staff developed an Explicit Improvement Agenda. This included the following areas:

Systematic curriculum delivery

* School Wide Curriculum aligned to Australian Curriculum (version 8)
* Deep focus on reading and spelling

Expert Teaching Team

* Professional development opportunities
* Participation and professional development

Effective Pedagogical Practices

* First- hand learning opportunities for students
* Deep focus on productive pedagogical practices

School Community Relationships

* Whole school strategy to increase enrolments
* Parent engagement and goal setting

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| School context |  |
| **Coeducational or single sex** | Coeducational |
| **Independent Public School** | No |
| **Year levels offered in 2021** | Prep Year – Year 6 |
| **Webpages** | Additional information about Queensland state schools is located on the:* [*My School*](http://www.myschool.edu.au/) website
* [Queensland Government data](http://data.qld.gov.au/) website
* Queensland Government [schools directory](https://schoolsdirectory.eq.edu.au/) website.
 |

## Characteristics of the student body

### Student enrolments

#### Table 1: Student enrolments by year level



Notes

1. Student counts include headcount of all full- and part-time students at the school.

### Average class sizes

#### Table 2: Average class size information for each phase of schooling

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year Levels** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Prep – Year 3 | 13 | 13 | 13 |
| Year 4 – Year 6 |  |  |  |

Notes

1. Classes are measured against the target of 25 students per teacher in Prep to Year 3 and Years 11 to 12, and target of 28 students per teacher in Years 4 to 10. Where composite classes exist across cohorts (e.g. Year 3/4) the class size targets would be the lower cohort target.

|  |
| --- |
| Curriculum implementation  |
|  |

## Our approach to curriculum delivery

## Our school’s curriculum is based on the Australian Curriculum and the use of C2C units and resources. Assessment is integral to the teaching of C2C units. In addition, the school uses individual student data to provide for the specific learning needs of each student. This data is provided with the use of a variety of diagnostic tests in the areas of literacy and numeracy, as well as observational data and specialised tests administered by visiting Guidance Officer, Speech Pathologist and learning support teacher. Outside professionals have also provided useful data to support individual student’s needs. The inclusive nature of our school program has seen students with disabilities being welcomed and accepted into the school community, and supported with the necessary resources to cater to their specific needs.

## An Early Learning Centre provides a seamless transition through the first three years of school for students from Prep to Year 2. The Centre provides a curriculum that allows students to progress in response to their 2019 Annual Report Rathdowney State School own individual rates of development. This ensures that students with slower learning development don’t experience a sense of “failure” (and the related loss of self-confidence and self-esteem) should they not attain an expected year level standard at end of Prep, Year 1 or Year 2. Decisions about students with learning delays spending an extra year in the Early Learning Centre, if needed, are made only at the end of Year 2. Furthermore, those students showing faster individual rates of learning development are also well catered for in the school’s Early Learning Centre, as they are provided with opportunities to work with groups of students at higher year levels

## Curriculum offerings also include:

## Rigorous intervention programs focusing on literacy and numeracy

## Strong swimming and water safety program for all year levels in the school pool.

## Strong emphasis on learning improvement for all students, especially in ‘the basics’ of literacy and numeracy across the school.

## Unique school drum and fife band

## Weekly dancing classes with Dance Fever for all students in term 3

## Annual junior school camp to Brisbane for all students in 2021, 3 days for Prep to Year 2’s including visits to Australia Zoo, Ipswich Railway Museum, Boondall Wetlands Indigenous Centre and the Science Centre.

## The students in Years 3-6 joined the junior students on a whole school camp. The senior students stayed an extra day and visit Queensland Parliament House and the Brisbane City Clock Tower.

## Throughout the year, there was an emphasis on participation of all students in a wide variety of sports at various levels: school, cluster, district, regional and beyond Integration of technology as a tool for learning and teaching

## Co-curricular activities

## School participation in community events fancy dress disco nights, NAIDOC Day, interschool sporting competitions and clinics. Throughout the year, students also entered various competitions generated by community groups.

## Leadership training days for Year 5 and 6 school leaders

## Successful sporting grant application allowed the school to provide Water Polo classes for our students in term 4

## In term 3, the students (Prep to Year 6) received weekly dancing lessons from private company, Dance Fever.

## Rathdowney successfully participated at the annual interschool cross country event at Darlington School

## How information and communication technologies are utilized to assist learning

## Teachers incorporate the use of computer and other electronic devices across all key learning areas where appropriate. They have continued to improve on their own skills in the use of various electronic communication devices by attending professional development in this area both within the school through peer tutoring and mentoring and by attending professional development that is offered by external providers.

## The school has continued to emphasize the development of a broad range of computer skills in all year levels from Prep to Year 6.

## These include but are not limited to:

## The use of Word, PowerPoint, Excel and email

## Use of digital video and still cameras and computers for film making, animations and slide shows

## Electronic Art, Coding, Robotics and drones

## Internet research

## Electronic books

## Use of variety of software in all key learning areas

## Use of The Learning Place, on-line learning programs, etc.

## Teachers actively use ICT’s and Oneschool for their planning, assessment and reporting.

## Electronic whiteboards used in all classrooms.

## Computer technologies used to access quality professional development for all staff in the form of webinars and other online learning tools.

## Social climate

**Overview**

Rathdowney State School prides itself on being a friendly country school where visitors and new students are warmly welcomed. There is a strong focus on positive behaviour, good citizenship and respect for others within the school.

In 2021, behaviour issues, as compared with many other schools, continued to be relatively minor in nature for the majority of students.

In 2021, we continued to use a reward scheme to recognise good school citizenship and celebrated positive student behaviour. This scheme allowed the students to earn prizes in recognition of their positive behaviour.

In 2021, older students worked with and mentored younger students in a variety of activities including swimming lessons, other sports’ training, art activities, reading, cooking, computers and games.

In 2021, the school continued its policy of parent involvement within the school. Parents were invited to attend all sporting events. Parent-teacher interviews were put on hold in semester 1 due to Covid restrictions and voice problems with both classroom teachers. Interviews were conducted in semester 2, for those parents who requested one. Parents were invited to come along on our whole school camp, our school’s Easter celebrations, dance demonstrations and weekly school assemblies. Parents were also invited to volunteer for reading support, cooking and art activities. Our parents and the P&C worked together with staff at the school and community members to raise the funds necessary to send the students on the whole school camp

## Social climate

### Respectful relationships education

To support students’ learning, health and wellbeing all state schools are required to implement respectful relationships education through the Prep to Year 10 Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education and/or through school pastoral care programs across Prep to Year 12.

### Parent, student and staff satisfaction

Tables 3–5 show selected items from the Parent/Caregiver, Student and Staff School Opinion Surveys. In response to the COVID-19 health emergency, the annual school opinion surveys of students, teachers and staff were not administered in 2020. A new time series started in 2021 and data from this collection is not considered directly comparable with earlier collections due to significant methodology changes.

For state level information go to the [*School Opinion Survey* webpage](https://qed.qld.gov.au/publications/reports/statistics/schooling/schools/schoolopinionsurvey).

**Table 3: Parent/Caregiver Survey**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Percentage of parents/caregivers who agree¹ that:** | **2019 2020** | **2021** |
| This is a good school. | 66.7% | 57.1% |
| My child likes being at this school.² | 66.7% | 57.1% |
| My child feels safe at this school.² | 66.7% | 85.7% |
| My child's learning needs are being met at this school.² | 66.7% | 71.4% |
| My child is making good progress at this school.² | 66.7% | 85.7% |
| Teachers at this school expect my child to do his or her best.² | DW | 85.7% |
| Teachers at this school provide my child with useful feedback about his or her school work.² | 66.7% | 71.4% |
| Teachers at this school motivate my child to learn.² | 66.7% | 71.4% |
| Teachers at this school treat students fairly.² | 66.7% | 85.7% |
| I can talk to my child’s teachers about my concerns.² | 100.0% | 71.4% |
| This school works with me to support my child's learning.² | 66.7% | 71.4% |
| This school takes parents’ opinions seriously.² | 66.7% | 71.4% |
| Student behaviour is well managed at this school.² | 33.3% | 57.1% |
| This school looks for ways to improve.² | DW | 71.4% |
| This school is well maintained.² | 100.0% | 71.4% |

Notes

1. *Agree* represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement.
2. Nationally agreed parents/caregiver items.
3. DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

#### Table 4: Student Survey

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Percentage of students who agree¹ that:** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021\*** |
| I like being at my school.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| I feel safe at my school.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| My teachers motivate me to learn.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| My teachers expect me to do my best.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| My teachers provide me with useful feedback about my school work.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| Teachers at my school treat students fairly.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| I can talk to my teachers about my concerns.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| My school takes students’ opinions seriously.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| Student behaviour is well managed at my school.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| My school looks for ways to improve.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| My school is well maintained.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| My school gives me opportunities to do interesting things.² | 100.0% |  | DW |
| Notes 1. *Agree* represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with
2. Nationally agreed student items.
3. DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

**Table 5: Staff Survey** | the statement. |  |  |
| **Percentage of staff who agree¹ that:** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| I feel confident embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the learning areas. | 100.0% |  | 100.0% |
| I enjoy working at this school.² | 100.0% |  | 100.0% |
| I feel this school is a safe place in which to work.² | 100.0% |  | 100.0% |
| I receive useful feedback about my work at this school.² | 83.3% |  | 100.0% |
| Students are encouraged to do their best at this school.² | 100.0% |  | 100.0% |
| Students are treated fairly at this school.² | 100.0% |  | 100.0% |
| Student behaviour is well managed at this school.² | 83.3% |  | 88.9% |
| Staff are well supported at this school.² | 100.0% |  | 100.0% |
| This school takes staff opinions seriously.² | 100.0% |  | 100.0% |
| This school looks for ways to improve.² | 100.0% |  | 100.0% |
| This school is well maintained.² | 100.0% |  | 100.0% |
| This school gives me opportunities to do interesting things.² | 100.0% |  | 87.5% |

Notes

1. *Agree* represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement.
2. Nationally agreed staff items.
3. DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

### Description of how this school manages non-attendance

Queensland state schools manage non-attendance in line with the Queensland Department of Education procedures: [*Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools*](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/managing-student-absences-and-enforcing-enrolment-and-attendance-at-state-schools-procedure); and [*Roll Marking in State Schools*](https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/roll-marking-in-state-schools-procedure)*,* which outline processes for managing and recording student attendance and absenteeism.

### School disciplinary absences

#### Table 6: Count of school disciplinary absences at this school

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of school disciplinary absence** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Short suspension | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long suspension | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Exclusion | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Notes

1. School disciplinary absence (SDA) data is a total of short suspensions (1–10 days), long suspensions (11–20 days), exclusions and cancellations.
2. The number of SDAs is not the number of students who received an SDA as one student may be suspended several times in a school year. Each time a student is suspended it is recorded as an additional SDA. The data does not reflect the outcomes of appeal decisions.
3. 2020 data was impacted by the COVID-19 health emergency. There were significantly fewer SDAs during the home-based learning period (the first five weeks of Term 2) compared to other years.

## School funding

### School income broken down by funding source

School income, reported by financial year accounting cycle using standardised national methodologies and broken down by funding source is available via the [*My School*](http://www.myschool.edu.au/) website.

#### *How to access our income details*

1. Click on the *My School* link <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.
2. Enter the school name or suburb of the school you wish to search.



1. Click on *View School Profile* to access the school’s profile.



1. Click on *Finances* and select the appropriate year to view school financial information.



Staff profile

## Teacher standards and qualifications

The *Teacher registration eligibility requirements: Policy* (p.1) states:

To be eligible for registration, a person must satisfy the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) that they meet requirements regarding qualification and experience, or have otherwise met the requirements of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (APST). A person must also satisfy the QCT that they are suitable to teach and meet English language proficiency requirements. All these requirements are specified in the Act and the *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Regulation 2005* (the Regulation).

The qualifications required for teacher registration are successful completion of either -

1. a four-year initial teacher education program including teacher education studies of at least one year (e.g. a Bachelor of Education, or a double Bachelor degree in Science and Teaching) or
2. a one-year graduate initial teacher education program following a degree (e.g. a one-year Graduate Diploma of Education (Secondary) after a three-year Bachelor degree) or
3. another course of teacher education that the QCT is reasonably satisfied is the equivalent of (a) or (b). These are considered on a case-by-case basis.

For more information, please refer to the following link:

• <https://www.qct.edu.au/registration/qualifications>

## Workforce composition

### Staff composition, including Indigenous staff Table 7: Workforce composition for this school

**Description**

**Teaching staff**

**Non-teaching staff**

**Indigenous staff**

**2019**

**2020**

**2021**

**2019**

**2020**

**2021**

**2019**

**2020**

**2021**

Headcount

7

7

8

5

5

5

FTE

<5

<5

<5

<5

<5

<5

Notes

1. Teaching staff includes school leaders.
2. Indigenous refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.
3. FTE = full-time equivalent

Student performance

## Key student outcomes

### Student attendance

Tables 8–9 show attendance rates at this school as percentages. In 2020, the COVID-19 health emergency affected student attendance in Queensland Government schools. Comparisons between 2020 and other years’ attendance data should not be made. **Table 8: Overall student attendance at this school**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Overall attendance rate for students at this school | 84% | 90% | 92% |

Notes

1. The attendance rate is the full- and part-time days attended as a percentage of enrolled school days.
2. Full-time students only.

#### Table 9: Student attendance rates for each year level at this school

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year Level** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** |
| Prep Year | 97% | 96% | 94% |
| Year 1 | 65% | 97% | 94% |
| Year 2 | 91% | 80% | 93% |
| Year 3 | 77% | 100% | 85% |
| Year 4 | 98% | 82% | DW |
| Year 5 | 67% | 99% | 87% |
| Year 6 | 89% | 78% | 96% |

Notes

1. The attendance rate is the full- and part-time days attended as a percentage of enrolled school days.
2. Full-time students only.
3. DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality

## NAPLAN

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN tests are available via the [*My School*](http://www.myschool.edu.au/) website.

### *How to access our NAPLAN results*

1. Click on the *My School* link <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.
2. Enter the school name or suburb of the school you wish to search.



1. Click on *View School Profile* of the appropriate school to access the school’s profile.



1. Click on *NAPLAN* and select a year to view school NAPLAN information.



Notes

1. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a hard copy of the school’s NAPLAN results.
2. The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy ([NAPLAN](http://www.nap.edu.au/naplan)) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.