St Francis Xavier’s Primary School

“growth through love and loyalty”
Welcome

Dear Parents/Guardians

I take this opportunity to officially welcome you and your family to St Francis Xavier Primary School.

Catholic Education began in Ballina back in 1892 with an enrolment of 44 children and totally staffed by the Presentation Sisters. In 1987 the first lay Principal was appointed and from 2006 our school has been staffed by lay teachers and Principals.

We as a staff believe that all children are created with talents and are special individuals. At St Francis Xavier we create an atmosphere where thinking and learning are modelled and valued. As our logo states, we hope each child will experience “Growth through love and loyalty,” academically, socially, physically, spiritually and emotionally. I have great confidence in our staff as a result of what I readily observe and hear from the parents and students.

I invite all parents and guardians to take up the commitment to your child’s schooling in general. Your support and active interest enables the school to provide the best possible education for your child. Catholic schools exist to provide education in a Catholic culture where the meaning and message of Jesus Christ is available to students. This message permeates all dimensions of school life.

Our school educates for today’s world and is involved in the offer of faith and community in the Catholic Church.

Get involved!

Yours in Catholic Education,

Mark McDonald
PRINCIPAL

PS Information contained in this package is designed to provide a ‘snapshot’ of our wonderful school. More details on anything everything covered here is available on our school website - http://moodle.balplism.catholic.edu.au
Dear Parents,

The Catholic Parish of St. Francis Xavier Ballina welcomes you as a new family presenting a child at our parish school of St. Francis Xavier for the first time or if you are presenting another child at the school for the first time.

The parish school is an integral and major component of the parish as a whole, and as such, enjoys a very close relationship with a strong involvement in the life of the Church.

The Catholic school primarily exists to be the instrument of the parish, whereby every assistance and support is offered to parents in their own efforts in educating and raising their children in the teaching of Jesus Christ, and the Catholic faith.

In conclusion, the parish sincerely thanks you for choosing our parish school for your child's primary education and for entrusting your child or children to the care of our carefully selected and extremely dedicated staff.

I trust that each child will reach his or her highest potential while being educated within the solidly Christian environment of our school.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Father Michael Nilon
PARISH PRIEST
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
BALLINA
1892-2013
St Francis Xavier School was opened on July 11th, 1892 by the Presentation Sisters. It was run by the Presentation Sisters for nearly 100 years until Mrs Lorraine Barlow was appointed as the first Lay Principal in 1987. The school opened in the first Church, which is now the ‘Old Hall’ and had a total of 44 pupils.

Our current Kindergarten classrooms were the second school buildings to be erected in 1952. In 1971 due to the efforts of the Parish Priest, Dean Redford, the two storey building on Swift street was erected, this included the current Year 3 and 4 classrooms, basement and staffroom. In 1980 the Dean Redford Wing was erected due to the untiring efforts of Father Tom Chapman. This is our current Year 1 and 2 classrooms, toilet area and canteen. In 1986, with school rapidly expanding our Year 5 classrooms were built as well as the Administration block and extensions to the staffroom. The last of our classrooms – the current Year 6 rooms were built in 1995.

During the last ten years the school has again undergone much refurbishment with a new library, teacher resource room, school office, art room and our wonderful new hall, attained with the great help of the Parish Finance Council and the Australian Government.
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education or Catechesis is central to all facets of life and learning at St Francis Xavier's Primary School.

From classroom prayer, to formal classroom Religious Education lessons, our students learn about The Kingdom of God, Scripture, Tradition, Doctrine, Sacraments and Rituals which leads them to the most important celebration and focal point of our faith journey; The Eucharist or Mass.

In this era of 'The New Evangelisation' our teachers strive, in partnership with Parents and the Parish Community, to bring to the children a community that is caring and supportive, where Jesus is 'real' in their everyday lives through action and word.
INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

SAFETY FIRST

No child should be in the playground before **8.30am**. Supervision will be from 8.30am to 3.30pm. No responsibility will be taken by the school outside these hours.

SCHOOL TIMETABLE (Mon – Fri)

- **8.30 am**  Supervision of Playground
- **8.50 am**  Bell/Assembly
- **10.55am - 11.40am**  Lunch Time
- **1.43pm - 2.15pm**  Afternoon Tea
- **3.15pm**  End of School Day

After children have been picked up they then become the responsibility of that parent or carer. Children should remain with their parent or carer at all times as supervision for playground activities is not provided. The school is not responsible for supervising students after they have been picked up by a parent or carer.

STAFF MEETINGS/PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Staff meetings are held every alternate Tuesday at 3.30pm. Staff meetings discuss whole school issues, planning of events. Professional Learning Team meetings take place each fortnight. These teams focus on developing the curriculum and enhancing learning in each stage.

ATTENDANCE

In New South Wales, all children from six years of age are legally required to attend school or be registered for home schooling.
Children are expected to attend all school activities, on time. Regular attendance helps your child:

- develop the skills needed to access the world of work and other opportunities.
- learn the importance of punctuality and routine.
- make and keep friendships.

Parents are asked to limit the times their children arrive late to school or leave early. If a child has to leave early or is arriving late they must report to the front office to receive an Early Exit/Late Entry slip which is kept with the student attendance information.

The class roll is a legal document and children’s attendance is marked by the class teacher every day. If children are not present at school for any reason, they are required to bring a note of explanation from their parent/guardian the next day of attendance.

Absences of 15 days or more are required to be approved by the Principal in writing.

**FEES**

School Fees are set by the Parish Finance Committee and fees are reviewed each year. Regular accounts will be sent. A schedule of fees is available from the school office. The Resource Fee covers the books and consumables that will be required during the year for each child. This amount is standard from grade to grade. Parents will be notified of current fees at the commencement of each year.

Any parent experiencing a problem with paying fees by the due date should contact the School Principal to discuss suitable payment arrangements.
PARISH SCHOOL FORUM

The Parish School Forum provides an advisory structure to enable parents, teachers, students, school leaders and members of the parish to work in partnership in providing the best education for our students.

The Parish School Forum consists of a Forum team and committees formed for particular purposes. One member from each committee will join other school and parish representatives to form the Forum Team.

The Parish School Forum has five principles:

1. Enriching families through support.
2. Developing understanding and commitment to the school’s identity and mission.
3. Enhancing communication and partnership between the families, school and parish.
4. Collaborate with the Diocesan Education Board and the Catholic Schools Parent Assembly.
5. Consult widely with all members of the Parish School community.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

Best Start

Each student starting in Kindergarten will participate in the Best Start screening process before school begins. Soon after this parents will meet with teachers to discuss the results of the screening.

Partnership Conferences

Early in Term One, parents and students meet with their teacher to discuss individual goals for the first semester. These are developed in partnership to ensure the needs of each student are met. Teachers will also provide general information to parents at this meeting including an overview for the Term.
**Reports and Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences**

Written reports are sent home twice yearly, usually towards the end of terms two and four. All students from Year 1 to Year 6 will be assessed using the A-E scale as required by the Australian Government.

At the end of term two Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences are conducted to review your child’s progress for the first semester and to jointly set goals for the remainder of the year. A conference opportunity is also available towards the end of term four if requested by either the class teacher or parents.

Teachers are always available to discuss any issues or concerns that parents may have. A telephone call to make an appointment is all that is required.

**ASSEMBLIES**

The School Assembly is held Friday morning at the School Hall. Parents are most welcome to attend assemblies. Our Year 6 children play an active role in leading our assemblies.

Every morning when the bell sounds, children assemble at designated areas.
**HOMEWORK**

Our school’s homework policy includes compulsory and optional tasks. As a staff we recognise the need for some revision and consolidation of learning while being mindful of the busy lives today’s children lead.

In keeping with current research around homework teachers will incorporate some activities which are already happening at home as part of homework. This could include music lessons, sports practice or other worthwhile activities where learning is taking place.

**COMMUNICATION**

The school Newsletter is produced each Wednesday and is distributed via email. It can also be accessed through the school website [http://moodle.balplism.catholic.edu.au/](http://moodle.balplism.catholic.edu.au/) or hard copies can be picked up from the front office.

The school also has a more interactive Moodle website as do all the classes. These sites can be very informative and we are working on developing the potential within this form of communication.

The school also has its own Twitter account which teachers use from time to time and parents can follow us @SFXBallina.

Teachers may also set up closed Class Facebook pages to which parents can subscribe.

Parents are also encouraged to download our Skoolbag App from either the App Store or Google Play. This is used by the school to send push notifications and parents can also update contact details or provide absent notes via this App.

**IMMUNISATION**

The Public Health (Amendment) Act 1992 requires parents to provide documented evidence of a child’s immunisation status on enrolment in schools. Children enrolling in this school will be required to provide the school with an Immunisation Certificate. This is not compulsory immunisation and parents will always have the right of choice. However, in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, unimmunised children will be required to remain at home for the duration of the outbreak.
HEALTH and SAFETY

The school is a member of the Catholic Church Insurance School Accident Scheme which provides limited cover for all students should the need arise. Although the school makes every effort to ensure the safety of all students accidents do happen and included in our insurance is ambulance cover should the need arise.

To assist us in health and safety matters parents and carers are asked to complete a Student Health Note each year so our records are up to date. It is also vitally important that the school is kept informed of any changes to a student’s health and that home and emergency contacts are current.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please notify the school office of any change of address or phone number, or any alteration to your family routine. The school needs accurate records particularly in the case of any emergency. Change of details can be provided either by calling the office, sending in a note or through the Skoolbag App.

CANTEEN

Lunches are available at the Canteen from Tuesday to Friday. **Voluntary helpers are always welcomed.**

Lunch Orders - To be written on a paper bag with name, class, order and money. Orders must be placed before 9.10am.

Price Lists are available from the Office, the Canteen or our website.
TRAVEL

Students are supervised at school from 8.30am. When they arrive at school they are to sit in the Shelter Shed until instructed by the teacher on duty.

When leaving school students depart in one of four ways:

1. Bus - Children are to sit in bus lines and wait for teachers’ instructions to board their bus. No one else should be in this area. Bus pass forms are available from the front office.

2. Bike - Students are to move quickly to their bikes or scooters and walk these to the gate at the front of the school. They must not ride these on school premises and they should take the shortest and safest route home.

3. Walkers - These children should leave through the front school gate without delay. Any child needing to cross Swift Street should wait at the crossing and be directed by the Crossing Supervisor.

4. Pick up - Children being picked up should wait in the School Hall until collected and then leave with their parent or guardian.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

SUMMER UNIFORM:

BOYS: Navy shorts with School Emblem, navy, green, white polo shirt with School Emblem and navy ankle socks (visible above shoes) and navy school hat with School Emblem.

GIRLS: Navy Culottes with School Emblem or navy shorts with School Emblem, navy, green, white polo shirt with School Emblem, navy ankle socks (visible above shoes) and navy school hat with School Emblem. Navy, green or white (to match School Polo) hair ribbons or scrunchies only.
WINTER UNIFORM:

BOYS: Navy tracksuit pants with School Emblem or navy shorts with School Emblem, navy, green, white polo shirt with School Emblem, navy tracksuit jacket with School Emblem, navy ankle socks (visible above shoes) and navy school hat with School Emblem.

GIRLS: Navy tracksuit pants with School Emblem or navy culottes/navy shorts with School Emblem, navy, green, white polo shirt with School Emblem, navy school tracksuit jacket with School Emblem, navy ankle socks (visible above shoes) and navy school hat with Emblem, navy, green or white (to match school polo) hair ribbons or scrunchies only. During terms two and three in colder weather, tights may be worn as an addition to the school uniform, however, the first preference is still for children to wear the school tracksuit pant. **Tights must be worn under either the school culottes or school shorts.** The tights must be navy blue, 70 denier, they can be opaque or ribbed. If the tights are ripped, torn or not of the type designated in this policy, children will be asked to remove them. **Leggings or dance pants are not allowed.**

SHOES: Both boys and girls wear **all black leather school shoes or joggers** (polishable) no coloured stripes, trims or logos, no coloured shoe laces. **(No skate shoes/basketball boots, canvas shoes or ballet type shoes allowed – these pose an OH & S issue).**

Substitute uniforms are not permitted (this includes boys shorts, tracksuit pants and hats). All pupils must be neat and tidy. At St. Francis Xavier’s School we believe this to mean:

- Correct uniform worn at all times. If a pupil is out of uniform a note of explanation is required.
- No jewellery, other than sleepers (max 10mm diameter) /studs or a watch to be worn.
- Hair that reaches collar length must be tied back off the face.
- No bleaching, colouring or “extreme” haircuts will be allowed.
- No nail polish or makeup to be worn.

EXTRA CURRICULA ACTIVITIES

A wide range of extra curricula activities are available through the school. These can include: Representative sporting teams, visiting performers, Eisteddfod, coaching clinics, school camps and excursions.

Information about any of these activities will be sent home prior to any activity taking place.
SPORT

Sport plays an important part in our Physical Education and Personal Development curriculum. All students participate in weekly sport and PE lessons to meet curriculum requirements.

The school also holds athletics, swimming and cross country carnivals where students have the opportunity to represent the school at zone, diocesan and state levels.

SWIMMING

Each year in term four all students participate in a Water Safety Proficiency Test. These records are updated annually. We also have other swimming programs throughout the year including a Learn to Swim Program for the infant grades.

STUDENT WELFARE

(Behaviour Management)

Our Behaviour Management practices develop the skills for children to learn to be responsible for their own behaviour individually and collectively so that they can reach their full learning potential and allow others to do the same, in the best possible environment.

By following Jesus’ example of compassion and self-control our Behaviour Management practices are focused on children learning to:-

1. Manage themselves;
2. Consider others.

At school, children learn to support and encourage each other as they celebrate their successes and as they make plans to change irresponsible
behaviours to enable learning. Children understand that they are responsible for the consequences of their own behaviour.

A student who is wearing the St. Francis Xavier school uniform is deemed to be representing the school. This student is expected to behave in a manner suitable to the standards and image of the school.

At St Francis Xavier we aim to:

- Uphold Christian principles, accept the teachings of the Catholic Church and foster the living out of true Gospel values.
- Develop to the best of our ability the potential of each child according to their level of maturity.
- Provide a climate for effective learning by discovering and recognising the abilities of each child and accepting the limitations of each.
- Instil in the children a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves, parents, teachers and other people and a realisation of the rights of these people.
- Provide varying opportunities and stimulating situations in each subject, at the same time emphasising the basic skills of each area.
- Encourage interaction between school, parish and community.

The school has three (3) basic rules of respect:
SCHOOL RULES

- Respect for ourselves.
- Respect for others
- Respect for the environment.

Ultimately at St. Francis Xavier we believe that all members (staff, parents and children) have a right to feel safe and be valued. A basic rule of thumb is that one child will not stop another child from learning or feeling safe. Our Policy includes; first and foremost positive affirmation for acceptable behaviour, (praise, awards.....); for unacceptable/inappropriate behaviour, thought/reflection time, time out, separate safe areas, detention, counselling, mediation, suspension and exclusion.

(If children are referred to the office, parents are notified to ensure a partnership in the Behaviour Management of their children).

At enrolment, parents are asked to read the Policy and sign in acceptance accordingly. If parents do not agree with and subsequently do not sign, their enrolment is not accepted.

Supporting our three (3) school rules of respect are the four (4) codes of behaviour being:

- **SAFETY** – I am safe in the classroom; I am safe on the playground. I will solve my problems without violence.
- **EFFORT** – I will set my goals, I will plan my time and do my best.
- **RESPECT** – I treat others with courtesy and consideration. I show this in what I say and what I do.
- **SELF RESPONSIBILITY** – I am responsible for my own behaviour. I am responsible for getting myself organised. I am responsible for my choices.
CURRICULUM

In the Catholic Primary School there are seven Key Learning Areas.

- Religious Education
- English
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- History
- Creative Arts
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

In support of these Key Learning Areas, the Board of Studies publishes ongoing syllabus and support documents.

All learning is organised in Stages, with Early Stage 1 being Kindergarten, Stage 1 – Years 1 and 2, Stage 2 – Years 3 and 4, and Stage 3 – Years 5 and 6.

The following time allocations act as a guideline for weekly instruction:

- English - 10 hours
- Maths - 5 hours
- R.E. - 2 ½ hours
- Science & Technology (I.T.) - 2 hours
- HSIE/History - 1 ½ hours
- The ‘Arts’ - 2 hours
- PDHPE - 2 hours

25 hours

The school’s timetable is ‘blocked’ to ensure that literacy and numeracy occur during prime learning time (ie before 1.30pm).

We have specialist teachers in the Key Learning Areas of Creative Arts and PE. These teachers provide a rich and engaging education environment for all students from Kindergarten to Year 6.
Contemporary Learning Framework

An important element guiding our school is the Contemporary Learning Framework (CLF), a Lismore Diocesan initiative. The Contemporary Learning Framework is a diocesan response to the challenge to clearly articulate what we value as our educative purpose, our agreed pedagogy. The CLF neatly expresses what we value and believe about learning. The statement guides, challenges and supports the notion of powerful contemporary learning. It will help us shape the appropriate curriculum to serve our educative purpose for our current and future context – the context of the learning in the emerging Knowledge Era.

In supporting the CLF we have created Professional Learning Communities (PLC) throughout the school to create a shared vision for each individual learner. In 2012 the concept of stage based PLC’s was created and will continue with a collaborative planning focus in the future. The Professional Learning Community will focus their collaboration time on four critical questions:

1. What do we want all children to learn?
2. How will we know our children have learnt it?
3. How will we respond when some children do not learn?
4. How will we extend and enrich the learning for the children who are already proficient?

Enrichment

St Francis Xavier acknowledges that each student is unique and exhibits a range of differing abilities, interests and styles of learning. We recognise and value individuality and aim to provide appropriate, challenging experiences that encourage students to aspire to the highest levels of learning and conduct, and the development of self-esteem, confidence, motivation and independence.

In recognising the need to provide for students who are gifted and talented, St Francis Xavier has a responsibility to provide programs that assist students to reach their full potential.
NAPLAN

NAPLAN assesses literacy and numeracy skills that students are already learning through the school curriculum. NAPLAN tests the sorts of skills that are essential for every child to progress through school and life, such as reading, writing, spelling, grammar and numeracy. It is important to remember that NAPLAN tests are not pass/fail tests. NAPLAN tests provide very valuable information which is used to develop meaningful learning for both the individual student and for the class as a whole. At the classroom level it is one of a number of important tools used by teachers to measure student progress. Teachers will ensure that students are familiar with the test formats and will provide appropriate support and guidance.

Best Start

The Best Start Kindergarten Assessment helps teachers identify the literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills that each child brings to school as they enter Kindergarten, to inform the development of quality teaching and learning programs. After the assessment, parents are given the opportunity to meet with the class teacher, discuss results and set educational goals for the year ahead.

Learning Support

The Additional Needs Teacher ensures that the specific needs of individuals who have learning difficulties or an identified disability are met. The Additional Needs Teacher works collaboratively with the Parents, Principal, Class Teachers, Teacher’s Assistance, and health professionals in order to establish “best practice” principles within the school.

Guided by the philosophy of inclusion and in adherence to the Disability Standards in Education, St Francis Xavier School endeavours to provide an education program that is focused on the growth of the whole person.

The Additional Needs Teacher can be contacted through the school office.
1. St. Francis Xavier Primary School and the Diocese of Lismore collect personal information, including sensitive information about pupils and parents or guardians before and during the course of a pupil’s enrolment at the school. The primary purpose of collecting this information is to enable the school to provide schooling for your son/daughter.

2. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the school’s legal obligations, particularly to enable the school to discharge its duty of care.

3. Certain laws governing or relating to the operation of schools require that certain information is collected. These include public health and child protection laws.

4. Health information about pupils is sensitive information within the terms of the National Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act. We may ask you to provide medical reports about pupils from time to time.

5. If we do not obtain the information referred to above we may not be able to enrol or continue the enrolment of your son/daughter.

6. The school from time to time discloses personal and sensitive information to others for administrative and educational purposes. This includes to other schools, government departments, the Catholic Schools Office, the Catholic Education Commission of New South Wales, your local diocese and the parish, schools within other dioceses/other dioceses, medical practitioners, and people providing services to the school, including specialist visiting teachers, (sports) coaches, volunteers and counsellors.

7. The school from time to time may also collect and disclose personal and sensitive information about current or prospective students to others if it is required to satisfy the school’s legal obligations under Part 5A of the Education Act 1990 (NSW).

8. Personal information collected from pupils is regularly disclosed to their parents or guardians. On occasions personal information disclosed to a school counsellor may be disclosed to others if the school considers it appropriate for the wellbeing or development of the pupil who is counselled or other pupils at the school.

9. Schools may also disclose information under public health and child protection laws or in circumstances where there is a serious threat to an individual life, health or safety.

10. On occasions, information such as academic and sporting achievements, pupil activities and other news is published in media articles, school newsletters, magazines and on our website.

11. Parents may seek access to personal information collected about them and their son/daughter by contacting the school principal. Pupils may also seek access to personal information about them. However, there will be occasions when access is denied. Such occasions would include where
access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, where access may result in a breach of the school’s duty of care to the pupil or where pupils have provided information in confidence.

12. As you may know, the school from time to time engages in fundraising activities. Information received from you may be used to make an appeal to you. It may also be disclosed to organisations that assist in the school’s fundraising activities solely for that purpose. We will not disclose your personal information to third parties for their own marketing purposes without your consent.

13. We may include your contact details in a class list and school directory unless specifically requested (in writing) not to do so.

14. If you provide the school with the personal information of others, such as doctors or emergency contacts, we encourage you to inform them that you are disclosing that information to the school and why, that they can access that information if they wish and that the school does not usually disclose the information to third parties.
SCHOOL MAP

CHURCH

PARISH CENTRE

Yr 6
Yr 6
Kindy
Kindy

Yr 5
Yr 5
Admin

Yr 4
Yr 3

Library/Computer Lab

Old School Hall

Bus Lines/Assembly Area

New Hall

Canteen

Yr 2
Yr 2
Yr 2
Yr 1
Yr 1

New Hall