

90 years on St Ambrose's Primary School reveals its best kept secret - community

"The spirit of the school was exceptional," – Former St Ambrose's Primary School, Newmarket parent Lisa Miller.

In the ever-changing landscape of education, what makes a school last 90 years?

For St Ambrose's Primary School Principal John Hinton, the success of the Newmarket primary school, which opened in 1936 under the guidance of Father Brian Bolton and the Sisters of the Good Samaritan, is no secret to those who know it!

"The answer is simple, it's the spirit of the people who make it what it is," he said.

"It's the way families, staff, students and alumni come together, support one another and stay connected long after their time at the school.

"That sense of community is why St Ambrose's has not only endured for 90 years but continues to thrive."

What our parent community has to say

These sentiments are shared by families like the Millers, whose five children all attended the primary school up until 2020.

"There was always so much love and support in the school, from the teachers to the school staff, and the students," said Lisa.

"Then there was the parent group. We met some of our best friends in that parent group."

What our alumni have to say

Another defining strength of St Ambrose's is its thriving alumni network.

St Ambrose's Primary School alumni and co-founder of Orange Sky Laundry Nicholas Marchesi said that at the heart of Orange Sky Laundry is community.

"One of the very first communities I was part of was St Ambrose's Primary School," he said.

"This was where I made my first friends.

"What we do at Orange Sky Laundry is very similar to what happens in the classroom environment, where people from all walks of life come together and connect.

"The street sweeper I invented with my friends at St Ambroses some 20 years earlier is a reminder of the power of community, and that if we all work together, we can achieve something incredible."

BCE media release

Marist Brother Daniel Hollamby attended the school in 1958 as a student of Parish Priest Father Bolton, who had founded the school some 22 years earlier.

"Everything is beautiful today," he said.

"Plenty of playground space for the students.

"To walk into the school is very different now, but the atmosphere is very much the same."

Continuing Father Bolton's vision

90 years on, Father Bolton's vision can still be seen across the campus, in the original buildings that have stood for decades, in traditions that continue to connect past and present, and most importantly, in the people who make up the St Ambrose's Primary School community.

Father Bolton's legacy lives on not only in the school's story but also in landmarks such as the Bolton Centre, named in his honour.

Did you know?

1. St Ambrose's is known for its welcoming, tight-knit feel. Many families stay connected long after their children leave,
2. It's not uncommon to find parents, grandparents and children all part of the St Ambrose's story,
3. The school has been educating local families since **1936**, with original buildings still part of the campus,
4. Alongside core subjects, students now also explore **Philosophy**, helping them think critically, ask questions and grow in confidence.

For more information about St Ambrose's Primary School, Newmarket or to enrol click [here](#).

About Catholic Education Week (CEW) 2026

CEW (26 July to 1 August) celebrations will centre around a new theme, 'Share your light, inspire others.' Calling for students, staff and school communities to recognise their gifts and share them generously.

It captures both the personal and communal dimension of Catholic education: nurturing individual talents and faith, and inspiring others through service, compassion and example.