

St Declan's Penshurst

St Declan's is a two stream Catholic Primary School. We are a school that is a place of quality education. We are a learning community that engenders in our students a love of learning. A place where all reach out, like Blessed Mary MacKillop, to never see a need without trying to do something about it.

In 1900 Penshurst was an outlying bushland district on the new Illawarra railway. The nearest parish priest, Father J. O'Driscoll, lived at Kogarah. Thirty seven Catholic families petitioned Cardinal Moran for a Catholic school, and in 1907 Father O'Driscoll built St Declan's Church / school for them on the present site. He arranged for the Sisters of Charity to come there each day from their convent in Hurstville. At first a horse and carriage were hired, but later they travelled by train. The school began in 1907 with two Sisters of Charity. The original enrolment is not known, but by 1908 there were 71 pupils.

An important change occurred in 1914 when the Sisters of Charity agreed to hand over management of the school to the Sisters of St Joseph. So in 1914 two Sisters of St Joseph travelled from their convent in Arncliffe to teach 76 pupils. The school developed as a primary school with classes from kindergarten to sixth class. The older boys above Third class, however, would attend the Marist' Brothers School at Kogarah.

As the district continued to grow, Penshurst in 1916 became a separate parish, and a convent was built there for the Sisters. By 1939 St Declan's had over 300 pupils and the new parish priest, Father O'Kelly, arranged for a new school building of nine classrooms. By 1950 classes had extended to the Intermediate (secondary) for girls and numbers had grown to about 500. Two more classrooms were added in 1956. Pressures were eased to some extent when new parishes and parish schools were formed in Beverly Hills, Peakhurst and Oatley. A Marist Brothers' School for boys from Third Class to Intermediate also began at Penshurst in 1953.

During the 1960's Archdiocesan authorities needed to rationalise the provision of Catholic Schools, and so by 1968 secondary classes were ended at St Declan's. This rationalisation was taken further in 1993 when Marist Brothers' Penshurst ended primary classes and St Declan's became a fully coeducational primary school with classes from kindergarten to year six. Another change was that in 1986 the Sisters of St Joseph ended their seventy year leadership of the school. In 1972 a new classroom wing was constructed, and in 1990 an administration and staff section was added.

Enrolments have remained strong, so that in 2000 there were 435 boys and girls from Kindergarten to Year 6. In 1972 a new classroom wing was constructed, and in 1990 an administration and staff section, which included a library, was added. Enrolments have remained strong, so that in 2000 there were 435 boys and girls from Kindergarten to Year 6. In 2005 plans were begun to again extend the school. Property was purchased adjacent to the school and plans were drawn for new buildings and the refurbishment of older ones. To visit the school's website:

Please click link below.....

<http://stdpenshurst.catholic.edu.au>