

St Mary's Primary ARMIDALE
Annual School Report to the Community

2014



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Principal

Mrs Belinda Burton

ABOUT THIS REPORT

St Mary's Primary is registered by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW. The Catholic Schools Office, Armidale the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the Education Act 1990 (NSW).

The *Annual School Report to the Community* provides parents and the wider School community with fair, reliable and objective information about School performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education. The *Report* also outlines information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the School's Annual Improvement Plan.

The *Report* demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the School community and the Catholic Schools Office, Armidale. This *Report* has been approved by the Catholic Schools Office, Armidale in consultation with the Regional Consultant who monitors that the School has appropriate processes in place to ensure compliance with all Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards, NSW requirements for Registration and Accreditation.

This *Report* complements and is supplementary to School newsletters and other regular communications. Further information about the School may be obtained by contacting the School or by visiting the School's website.

Principal's Message

St Mary's Catholic Primary School lives and celebrates the Gospel values in the rich traditions of the Catholic faith. It is a place where students are nurtured and empowered to become independent lifelong learners. St Mary's is a harmonious community where all members are valued and respected. St Mary's is a sacred place where we live Christ's mission in word and action. With Christ as our guide and inspiration we welcome all and encourage each other to grow spiritually. We are rich in stories and tradition providing a strong foundation for life.

Educational excellence drives our successful and dynamic learning community. We nurture innovative approaches to teaching and learning ensuring opportunities for individual achievement. Learning is collaborative and student centred focused on meeting current and future needs.

St Mary's is a welcoming and inclusive community that embraces compassion and respect for all. We work and grow together in a happy, secure and healthy environment where every individual has a sense of belonging. We are enriched by strong partnerships with families, parish and the wider community as we prepare our students to be effective leaders of tomorrow.

Parent Body Message

St Mary's is seen as an educator of choice for parents in Armidale, which is a credit to the teachers, support staff, volunteers, consultants, parents and the students of the school. 2014 saw the school continuing to grow in student numbers, evident in the number of new enrolments received at the end of the year requiring 14 classes for 2015.

The two major fundraising events of the Parent and Friends; the Fete and Revue; were again very successful - credit must go to the people who volunteer their time and skills to make these events work. The money raised by the P&F is essential for the budgeting of the school. 2014 saw the P & F purchase the following items for the school – Home Readers, English Texts, PM Readers, High Jump Mats, Math resources & Primary Connections Science Kits.

The School Board and the P & F play important roles in the school providing the Principal with advice on a wide range of matters in the operation of the school. The work in 2014 has been very rewarding & successful.

Student Body Message

The Year 6 students have had many opportunities in 2014 to be involved in the International Competitions & Assessments for Schools, Tournament of the Minds, Brain Olympia, Young Leaders' Conference, Grip Leadership, Anzac Day, New England Schools Remember, Remembrance Day, Autumn Festival Parade & New England Sings to name a few!

In sport several Year 6 students achieved a high level of success. Some of the outstanding results were Nathan Czinner – State & National Hockey, Jake McCann – National Hockey, Liam Smith – State Hockey, Amelia Mazzei- National Swimming & Athletics & Daniel Mahini – State Athletics.

Once again a number of Year 6 have been part of the school Chess Club, which came first, second & third in the NSW Chess League One Day Tournament.

All St Mary's children performed in the Eisteddfod and a smaller group in the New England Sings concert this year and received accolades for their performances.

The seven years of Primary school has well equipped the Year 6 students with a wide range of skills, knowledge and Catholic values to assist them on their journey into Secondary Education.

School Leaders 2014

SECTION TWO: SCHOOL FEATURES

St Mary's Primary is a Catholic systemic Co-educational School located in ARMIDALE.

St Mary's has a long history dating back to 1848. Our story and traditions have been shaped by the Ursuline sisters, the Patrician brothers and the De La Salle brothers. St Mary's is the oldest school in the Armidale Diocese, established by lay people in 1848. The Ursuline Sisters arrived in 1882 and maintained a presence in the school until 2001.

The Patrician Brothers established a boys' primary school on the site from 1889 until 1897. Later in 1906 the De La Salle Brothers re-established the boys' primary school and taught there until 1972. The school has been under lay administration since 2001.

St Angela Merici was the founder of the Ursuline Sisters. The St Mary's buildings are named after St Angela, St Ursula and St Anne. The school crest is common to Ursuline schools as is the motto: "Serviam" I will serve. Generations of families have been educated at St Mary's under the Ursuline motto.

St Mary's is located in the Cathedral precinct of Armidale adjacent to the CBD. The Cathedral, Bishop's House, Catholic Chancery, Parish Hall, Ursuline Convent, Centacare, Catholic Schools Office and Armidale Diocesan Investment Group are all located in the same block. Armidale is a vibrant town and is the centre of the Northern Tablelands.

The town has full services and hosts the University of New England. This gives Armidale a unique character and diverse population. St Mary's attracts enrolment from the surrounding district including students from, Invergowrie, Uralla, Black Mountain, Guyra, Yarrowyck, Walcha and Wollombi. Our classrooms are housed in three main buildings surrounded by spacious and park like grounds planted out to make the most of the four distinct seasons we experience. St Mary's has excellent facilities and playing fields. The school library is well appointed and spacious. There are excellent computer facilities available for all students.

SECTION THREE: STUDENT PROFILE

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Kindergarten to Year 6. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds. The following information describes the student profile for 2014:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
178	160	13	338

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Armidale adheres to the policy as endorsed by the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment of Students in the Catholic Systemic Schools of the Diocese of Armidale'. The Catholic Schools Office Armidale monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements. Children from families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church may be considered eligible for enrolment. A pastoral approach is adopted for parents experiencing genuine difficulty with the payment of fees.

The full text of the 'Enrolment of Students in Catholic Systemic Schools of the Diocese of Armidale', along with any specific enrolment policy for the school, is printed at the end of this document.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2014 was 93.64%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	91.24%
Year 1	94.65%
Year 2	95.36%
Year 3	93.39%
Year 4	93.67%
Year 5	94.78%
Year 6	92.42%

Managing Student Non-Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The School, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, School staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the School community;
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance;
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance;
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance;
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented;
- documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern;
- the Director of Catholic Schools or designated Catholic Schools Office Armidale officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom School strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

SECTION FOUR: STAFFING PROFILE

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2014:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
23	12	35

* This number includes 14 full-time teachers and 9 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	11%
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Professional Learning

The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning can take many forms including whole school staff days, subject specific in services, meetings and conferences and a range of professional learning programs provided by the Catholic Schools Office Armidale. The School takes responsibility for planning, implementing, evaluating and tracking of its staff professional learning and individual staff members take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All teachers have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year related to improving student outcomes.

The School held the equivalent of five staff development days this year with areas of focus as follows:

Term 1	Child Protection and WH&S Modules
Term 2	Thinking and Learning Conference Melbourne – 4 days
Term 3	No Staff Development Day
Term 4	RE Spirituality Day

School staff participated in the following: Thinking & Learning Conference, Spirituality Day, NVCI, Anaphylaxis training, Disability Standards for Education, Australian Curriculum, BART, PLCs, Kids Matter, Additional Needs, CPR, First Aid, MiniLit, Anita Chin Math, RE Storytelling, ICT, Kitchen Garden Program and Keep Them Safe.

The Principal, Assistant Principal, Religious Education Coordinator, Education Assistants, Aboriginal Education Assistants, Librarians, Secretaries, Project Teachers and Student Support Teachers attended specific workshops throughout the year.

Teacher Standards

The following table sets out the number of teachers who fall into each of the categories determined by the Board of Studies:

Teacher Qualifications		Number of Teachers
1	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	23
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	0

SECTION FIVE: CATHOLIC LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

School follows the Armidale Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student text *To Know, Worship and Love*, as authorised by the Bishop of Armidale, Michael Kennedy.

St Mary's is able to celebrate Mass regularly in the Cathedral. At the beginning of the year we celebrated our Opening School Mass with O'Connor Catholic College. Our school captains were presented to the school and parish communities at this Mass. Our Primary students attended the Parish Mass on alternate Fridays.

Throughout the year the whole school celebrated Mass together twice each term including Holy Days of Obligation. Primary grades attend Mass each fortnight with the parish. The children participated reverently and prayerfully in Holy Week celebrations. The school hosted Grandparents Day which included a well-attended Grandparents Mass. A school based Lenten program and three twilight prayer sessions were offered in 2014 for staff & parents. During Advent, students in Kindergarten to Year 4 presented Christmas Prayer Assemblies, celebrating the Christmas message of love, hope and goodwill. The end of year finished with Mass on the last school day of Term 4. Primary students were Altar Servers for both daily and weekend Masses.

The Parish Priests regularly visited each classroom and provided the Sacrament of Reconciliation each term for Primary grades. Our school based sacramental program prepared children in Years 2 for Reconciliation, Year 3 for Eucharist and Year 6 for Confirmation.

In 2014 26 Year 6 students from St Mary's received the Sacrament of Confirmation, which was conferred by Bishop Kennedy on Pentecost Sunday. On the last weekend in August - 30 Year 3 students received the Sacrament of the Eucharist and in December - 33 Year 2 students received the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In Staff formation, new teachers and Education Assistants attended the New Employees Retreat. Teachers were able to attend the Diocesan Teachers Retreat, the Principal attended the Principals Retreat, Assistant Principal attended the AP Retreat and our Religious Education Coordinator attended the REC Conference.

Families supported the following events as part of the Parish:

- 40 Families for Forty Days by attending a 7am week day Mass during Lent, also the Friday Stations of the Cross.
- Parish & School celebrations including the Chrism Mass, Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Feast of Saint Mary of the Cross.

- Catholic Schools Week Mass & the Spirit of Catholic Education Awards.
- Professor Richard Rymarz talk on Engaging Young People in the Church.

The Parish provides regular financial support for school building and maintenance projects. The Parish Administrator is a member of the School Board and the Principal is a member of Parish Pastoral Council.

Students in Years 6 in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Armidale undertake the Diocesan Religious Education (RE) Test annually. The test consists of fifty multiple-choice questions. Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education.

Our School's average result (as a mark out of 50)	
Year 6	37.45

SECTION SIX: CURRICULUM

The school provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies, Teacher and Educational Standards, NSW syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. In addition, the school implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office Armidale.

Dedicated work by St Mary's staff resulted in improved student learning and progress across the school in 2014. Targeted Intervention continued in 2014. This program has provided differentiated learning to meet the needs of students in all grades. A whole school focus on making learning explicit for students by describing the learning intentions and success criteria for lessons has better enabled students to better meet learning targets. The implementation of Best Start assessments for all students prior to the commencement of Kinder has given us accurate data on the entry literacy and numeracy skills of these students. Participation of all primary students in the ACER PAT Reading and Maths assessments in the first few weeks of the school year has given us valid achievement data for these students so as to accurately track their learning progress. The Personalised Learning Plans for all our Aboriginal students enables us to have meaningful meetings with our Aboriginal families to discuss student progress.

The Project Teacher position continued for 2014. The Project Teacher was responsible for implementing the diocesan Literacy Enhancement strategy K to Yr 2 and supporting teachers in the implementation of the NSW Syllabus of the Australian Curriculum. All students on this program made substantial progress in their reading skills. The Quicksmart numeracy program continued in 2014 as an intervention strategy for students in Year 6.

The 2014 Year started with all classes doing 'A Quality Beginning Program.' This is a 2 week focus establishing Quality Learning processes and Positive behaviour expectations in the school.

Professional Learning Team Meetings were held weekly to plan learning and assessment tasks, analyse student data and progress and plan appropriate interventions. These meetings ensure consistent contemporary approach to the teaching of Reading and Numeracy, effective use of student achievement data from NAPLAN and standardised tests to monitor student progress and plan for future learning & interventions, the use of common assessment tasks across all grades, common rubrics, matrices and marking criteria K-6, effective support for differentiation of learning in Reading, Spelling and Numeracy.

Additional student learning opportunities offered in 2014 included Tournament of Minds, Brain Olympia, Da Vinci Decathlon, Individual music tuition, Indonesian, school choirs and orchestra,

Eisteddfod, Chess, ICAS competitions and representative sport at Diocesan, Polding & State levels.

SECTION SEVEN: STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN STATE-WIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in literacy and numeracy. An analysis of these results assists School planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

The tables below show the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands in numeracy and the aspects of literacy. The School results shown are compared to students nationally. Literacy is reported in four content strands (aspects): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.

NAPLAN RESULTS 2014		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 3	Reading	51.00%	46.20%	4.00%	13.10%
	Writing	38.00%	39.10%	16.00%	11.20%
	Spelling	47.00%	43.70%	7.00%	14.80%
	Grammar	44.00%	49.90%	4.00%	11.90%
	Numeracy	25.00%	36.20%	11.00%	13.40%

NAPLAN RESULTS 2014		% of students in the top 2 bands		% of students in the bottom 2 bands	
		School	Australia	School	Australia
Year 5	Reading	29.00%	34.50%	13.00%	16.30%
	Writing	0.00%	15.50%	37.00%	21.40%
	Spelling	24.00%	33.60%	22.00%	16.40%
	Grammar	35.00%	36.60%	7.00%	16.10%
	Numeracy	16.00%	25.90%	9.00%	18.10%

Student Welfare Policy

No changes to policy this year.

The full text of the School's Pastoral Care Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the administration office.

Discipline Policy

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this School. The School does not sanction administration of corporal punishment by School persons and non-School persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the School.

No changes to policy this year.

The full text of the School's Student Discipline Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the administration office.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Catholic Schools Office, Armidale has established a *Student Anti-Bullying Policy* which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the Diocese. It provides a framework for school communities to work together to prevent and address issues of student bullying, in order to build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each person. The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) monitors the implementation of this policy. No changes were made to the policy this year.

The full text of the *Anti-Bullying Policy* may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.

Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

The Diocese of Armidale has established a *Staff Grievance Policy* which is implemented by our school in the Diocese. Each school also has an individual Grievance Policy and Procedure for dealing with matters at a school level. The rationale for these policies is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of our contemporary world. The Catholic Schools Office monitors the implementation of these policy. No changes were made to

the policy this year.

The full text of the individual policies may be accessed on the School's website, the administration office or at the CSO website.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

During 2014 St Mary's continued to consolidate Kids Matter and Positive Behaviours for Learning programs through our 7 Kinds of Best and the Student, Staff and Parent Codes of Cooperation. Our Term Award system has specific criteria for each award level allowing students to strive to achieve their best. The Restorative Justice approach was also utilised by teachers in their approach to behaviour management issues.

Students were encouraged to participate in the school, parish and local community by attending ANZAC Day March, Remembrance Day, NAIDOC Week, International Pinwheels for Peace, Clean Up Australia Day, Cathedral Cleaning Roster, Junior Land Care and Green Thumbs.

2014 School Captains enjoyed attending the Young Leaders Day in Sydney with hundreds of School Leaders from Primary Schools in NSW in Term 1. Stage 3 students also attended the GRIP Student Leadership Conference in Armidale as part of their role as School Leaders with responsibility.

Each year, the School develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the School's Strategic Improvement Plan and informed by the document *Diocesan Intentions and Directions 2012-2014*. The School engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the Schools Consultant.

Key Improvements Achieved in 2014

School Priorities that were achieved in 2014 outlined below under the CSO Strategic Directions

CSO Strategic Direction 1:

- Continued collaboration with priests and the parish,
- Mini Vinnies led whole school outreach programs,
- Spiritual formation opportunities for students as part of the Parish,
- Spiritual formation opportunities for parents –after school reflection opportunities,

CSO Strategic Direction 2:

- Professional development for all teachers -2014 Hawker Brownlow Thinking & Learning Conference,
- All teachers to join 2014 staff Committees,
- Professional Learning Teams meet weekly,
- Team Planning Days for collaborative planning,

CSO Strategic Direction 3:

- Induction provided for the new staff,
- Staff attended Diocesan Retreats,

CSO Strategic Direction 4:

- The Parent Engagement Committee led initiatives for parent engagement evenings,
- Facilitate and encourage positive partnerships between the system and the local, regional and global communities,
- E-learning opportunities for staff,
- Use of the Diocesan Community of Learners website

Priority Key Improvements for 2015

The following key improvements are taken from St Mary's Annual Improvement Plan & Annual School Report to the Community 2014

improvements identified by the school for 2015;

- The school to support the life of the Parish
- Opportunities for Parental involvement in the Parish
- Parish & School family Mass each term
- Integration of the Catholic Principles and Values for NSW Syllabuses across all KLA/s
- Christian Meditation & Prayer throughout the school
- Staff to utilise the AITSL standards in goal setting
- Mentoring of staff
- Implementation of the Diocesan Literacy Enhancement Program - (MiniLit, Comprehension, Reading Tutor Program)
- Project Teachers involved in classroom procedures for Literacy
- Implementation of "Read On"
- Implementation of Anita Chin Numeracy strategies
- Further develop Professional Learning Teams *Collaborative analysis of student results
- Programming development using the new curriculum documents
- Improved ICT technology
- Social & emotional well being of all students
- Explicit teaching – WALT & WILF across all KLA's
- Staff Professional Development –WH&S, Child Protection, Curriculum, Spiritual
- Update School Policies & Procedures
- Opportunities for Parental involvement in student learning

SECTION TEN: PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

MYP again conducted a School Results Survey for St Mary's in 2014. Responses from parents were 49.8% of families. The Parents indicated an overall satisfaction score of 82% (4.10 out of 5). The overall satisfaction score increased by 0.04 out of 5 from the 2013 results.

The best practice areas identified by parents in order were: leadership, general, resources and Catholic Ethos.

Student Satisfaction

Responses from students were received from 88.2% of eligible respondents in Years 4 & 6. The students indicated an overall satisfaction score of 83% (4.13 out of 5). The overall satisfaction score increased by 0.09 out of 5 from the 2013 results.

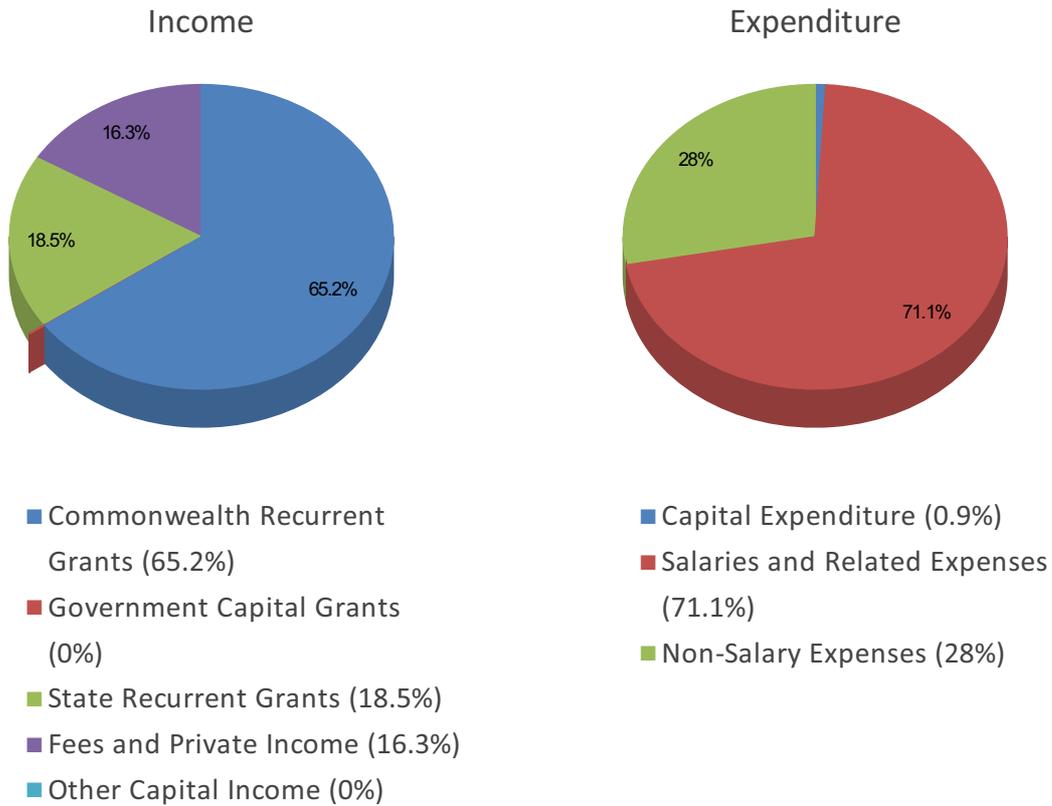
The best practice areas identified by students in order were: Catholic ethos, leadership, general, teaching & learning and resources.

Teacher Satisfaction

Responses from staff were received from 71.4% of eligible respondents. Staff indicated an overall satisfaction score of 86% (4.32 out of 5). The overall satisfaction score increased by 0.19 out of 5 from the 2013 results.

The best practice areas identified by staff in order were: Catholic Ethos, general, resources and leadership.

SECTION ELEVEN: FINANCIAL STATEMENT



This School Financial Information is based on the detailed information provided to the Commonwealth Government in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

School Financial Information for the 2014 year is detailed below:

RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$2,536,173
Government Capital Grants ²	\$1,497
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$718,927
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$635,602
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$0
Total Income	\$3,875,940

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$32,130
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$2,528,969
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$994,147
Total Expenditure	\$3,555,246

Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.

3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture and Equipment.
7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.

Enrolment Policy

St Mary's Catholic Primary School bases its Enrolment Policy on the *Bishop's Commission Policy for the Enrolment of Students in Catholic Systemic Schools in the Diocese of Armidale*.

The school accepts all baptised Catholic children irrespective of family background and circumstances, according to the regulations and limitations of the Enrolment Policy of the Diocese of Armidale.

1. While children from all families who are prepared to support the ideals and principles of the Catholic School may be considered for enrolment, priority in enrolment is given in the following order:-

Baptised Catholic children whose families worship in the parish
Baptised Catholic children whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education and who are supportive of the Catholic ethos of the school
Siblings of children already enrolled whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education and who are supportive of the Catholic ethos of the school
Non-Catholic children, who belongs to a family that can demonstrate some meaningful relationship with a Christian tradition and whose parents wish them to have a Catholic education. The parents are supportive of the Catholic ethos of the school
Other students whose parents are supportive of the Catholic ethos of the school

The Principal, in consultation with the Parish Priest may exercise discretion regarding any application and may determine a child's eligibility beyond the stated guidelines. Also relevant is the human/physical resources of the school.

2. Children applying for enrolment in Kindergarten must turn five (5) years of age by 31st March in the year of enrolment, as per Diocesan Policy.

3. Families of new children to be enrolled at the school will be interviewed prior to enrolment. The interview establishes the strengths and needs of the child and is used as the basis for enrolment.

4. The interview will include discussion and clarification of the nature and mission of the school with reference to the current School Vision Statement. It is vital that new parents become familiar with the vision of the school and are willing to support the values promoted by the school.

5. Neither a subjective judgment of parental faith-commitment nor the capacity to support the school financially are determinants in the enrolment of Catholic children, notwithstanding the priorities listed in No. 2 above.

6. Enrolment of non-catholic children already enrolled at other schools will be dependent upon the reasons for the transfer. The school will not accept children whose enrolment could create behaviour problems in our own school.

Parent interview prior to enrolment assumes greater significance as it establishes the reasons for enrolment and to identify the needs of the child, the required commitment to the values and programs of the school by the parents, and the support of the school expected from the parents.

7. Prior to enrolment the educational/physical needs of applicants will be identified. If the level of support required is beyond the capacity/ability of the school to provide, the matter will be referred to the Catholic Schools Office to make a determination as to the ability of the Diocese to meet the needs of the applicant.

8. The school accepts its responsibility to promote Catholicism in all its forms of expression and undertakes to provide children and their families with the opportunity for religious development, and to promote Parish Life through school activities. Parents of non-catholic children must accept that their children will be involved in all Catholic faith education programs and worship.

9. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by the Principal and advised that they may appeal to the Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools.

Enrolment of Children with Disabilities

Aims

- Students will be able to achieve the dignity of some degree of independence and self-determination.
- Students will be able to participate in activities enjoyed by other members of society.
- Students will be able to participate in meaningful and personally satisfying activities.
- Students will be able to participate in activities that are valued and considered worthwhile by other members of society.

Principles for the Education of Children with Disabilities

- Each student with severe intellectual disability has the capacity to learn and develop.
- Each student learns and develops through the provision of appropriate educational services, experiences and environments.
- Each student requires an education that focuses on the development of basic skills for personal independence and participation in society.
- Each student should receive an education that broadens the individual's opportunities and options for a personally satisfying and valued life style.
- Each student requires individual assessment and a structured learning program in accord with his/her identified needs and educational objectives.

Children with Special Needs are enrolled according to the procedures recommended in the CSO Policy *'Integration of Students with Special Needs'*.

PROCEDURES:

Parents requesting enrolment are provided with a copy of the School Handbook to assist them in their decision about where to enrol their child. The Handbook includes comprehensive information about the policies, practices and expectations of St Mary's Catholic School community.

Information required at enrolment:

Information required for enrolment includes Birth and Baptismal Certificates if available, an Immunization Certificate and details of early intervention at Pre-school.

The Enrolment form includes information about the child, their family, addresses, an extra contact person, medical details and signatures confirming agreement with school expectations including fee-paying situation responsibilities

Children transferring from other schools are required to bring a report from their previous school. The former school will also be contacted to discern the child's needs.

BISHOP'S COMMISSION FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

POLICY STATEMENT

1. RATIONALE

The Catholic Church teaches that the “task of imparting education belongs primarily to the family” and that parents “have a primary and inalienable duty and right in regard to the education of their children”. (Vatican Council II, Decree on Christian Education, nn 3 & 6) Furthermore, parents have the duty “to entrust their children to Catholic schools whenever this is possible”. (ibid, n.8)

1.1 This policy addresses the needs of families seeking a Catholic education.

Its primary focus is to provide guidelines for the enrolment of children from Catholic families. Catholic families are defined as:

Families in which at least one parent is a Catholic or in which the children to be enrolled have been baptised Catholics.

1.2 This policy seeks to establish consistency across the Diocese in enrolment practices.

1.3 This policy reflects and supports the Diocesan Mission and Vision Statement (1997-2001 Catholic Schools Office Diocese of Armidale): To provide quality education for students in the Catholic Tradition in partnership with rural communities, and the words of Bishop Kevin Manning in launching this statement “Catholic schools in the Armidale Diocese aim to educate, to build community and to serve and thus support parents who are the primary and principal educators of their children.”

2. ESSENTIAL PROVISIONS

The following provisions are essential to the implementation of the policy:

2.1 Each school develops an enrolment policy which is consistent with the provisions of this and other Diocesan Policies and directives while being sensitive to local needs.

2.2 Each school establishes a school enrolment process.

2.2.1 This process encompasses the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the school’s enrolment policy.

2.2.2 This process includes appropriate consultation between the Principal, the Parish Priest(s), the school board and relevant representatives of the community(ies) on which the school depends.

2.3 Each school will have an Application for Enrolment form as part of the school Enrolment Policy. See Appendix 2.

2.4 The school enrolment policy is available to all members of the parish and school communities and a copy is forwarded to the Diocesan Director of Schools.

2.5 All parents seeking to enrol children in Catholic schools are assisted to understand the ideals and principles upon which the Catholic School is based.

2.6 While children from all families who are prepared to support the ideals and principles of the Catholic school may be considered for enrolment, priority in enrolment is given in the following order, except in special circumstances: (See Bases of Discretion)

2.6.1 Children of Catholic families.

2.6.2 Non-Catholic children who have previously attended another Catholic school or whose parents, for religious reasons, wish them to have a Catholic education.

2.7 It is expected that children of Catholic families will normally make up at least 75% of the enrolment of the school. Permission to allow any significant departure from this norm must be sought from the Diocesan Director of Schools.

2.8 Enrolment age of children entering kindergarten must be in accordance with the directives in the CSO Administrative Handbook.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Prior to enrolment the educational needs of applicants will be identified. If the level of support required is beyond the capacity/ability of the school to provide, the matter will be referred to the CSO to make a determination as to the ability of the Diocese to meet the needs of the applicant. Refer to Part A Handbook and Support Documents for Students with Special Needs, Diocese of Armidale.

4. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Children of families who are suffering financial hardship and related inability (as opposed to unwillingness) to pay school fees fully or in part should not find this an obstacle to enrolment within the terms of the Policy: Diocesan School Fees.

5. BASES OF DISCRETION

5.1 In relation to the implementation of the general and particular principles outlined in 2.2, consideration also may be given, as local needs require, for the following reasons:

5.1.1 family situations necessitating a pastoral approach or requiring the exercise of compassion,

5.1.2 parents' intention with regard to their own and their children's search for "education in the faith",

5.1.3 the enrolment of siblings of children already attending the school,

5.1.4 family circumstances involving relocation.

5.2 Full fee-paying overseas students may be enrolled in Catholic schools after the needs of local students who are eligible for enrolment have been met. Full fee paying overseas students are enrolled in accordance with the requirements of the Catholic Education Commission NSW, which are available from the Catholic Schools Office.

6. APPEALS

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified and given reasons for the rejected application by the School Principal and advised that they may appeal to the Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools. (See Appendix 1 "Procedures for Appeal").