

Annual School Report

Primary



2016



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

About This Report

St John's Catholic Primary School, Dapto is registered by the Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) and managed by Catholic Education, Diocese of Wollongong (CEDoW). The CEDoW is the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual School Report to the Community for this year provides the 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 regarding School Review & Improvement initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school's Action Plans.

Accordingly, the Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the school community and the CEDoW. This Report has been approved by CEDoW to ensure compliance with all the BOSTES NSW requirements for Registration.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. Following its submission to the BOSTES, the Report will be presented to the parent body and be available on the school's website by 30 June 2016.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school:

St John's Catholic Primary School
PO Box 161
Dapto NSW 2530

Phone: (02) 42614611
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Parish Priest: Rev Francis Tran
Principal: Vicki Attenborough
Date: 16 December 2016

Vision Statement

Encountering Christ through a love of learning, love of others and service to all.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal's Message

This will be my last principal's message, as I will have retired from Catholic Education by the time this Report goes to print. After thirty-eight wonderful years of teaching, I have spent fourteen of those years as Principal and the last six years as Principal of St John's Catholic Primary School in Dapto.

I take great pride in presenting, for the last time, the 2016 Annual School Report which outlines the numerous and diverse achievements of students, staff, parents and our whole school community which contribute to ensuring an outstanding learning environment for all. Students feel happy, secure and well supported in this school where every person is encouraged to strive for their personal best in whatever pursuit they encounter.

St John's School enjoys a very positive, well-deserved reputation in the wider community, which is reflected in steadily increasing enrolments. True partnerships exist which enhance relationships between staff, parents and the broader community to create a truly great school.

I would like to recognise the deep commitment and enthusiasm of parents who support the school in so many ways.

To the fabulous teaching, support and administrative staff, thank you for your professionalism and dedication to constantly seeking to improve the learning, emotional, cultural and physical outcomes of our students.

The future continues to look bright for St John's Catholic Primary School, with a team of talented staff, a supportive school community, a fantastic Parish Priest and most importantly, the hand of Our Lord, Jesus Christ who continues to protect us and guide us into even more exciting things into the future.

Parent Involvement

Thank you to the various parents who have attended meetings during the year. The work of the Parents and Friends (P&F) Association is integral to the overall success of the wider St John's School community. In addition to the regular reports from the Principal, President and Treasurer, presentations by various guest speakers and other items of General Business occur.

Throughout the year, the P&F Association generously supported various projects including repairs and cover for the BBQ trailer; the purchase of four large marquees and two smaller marquees, all containing the school logo; school disco; Mother's and Father's Day stalls and the annual Spring Fair. The Association also hosted the Welcome BBQ for new Kindergarten students and families to the school.

Thanks must go to the 2016 Spring Fair coordinators for taking control of the Spring Fair this year, which was a huge success. Thanks also to the parent volunteers who assisted as stall coordinators.

Thank you to the P&F executive for their commitment, dedication and continuous effort to support and build the St John's community. The P&F could not function without the dedication of the Principal and Assistant Principal, so a big thank you to all.

At the end of the 2016 year we farewell our school Principal and on behalf of the P&F Presidents during her time, it has been a pleasure to work with her, we thank her for everything she has done and wish her all the best for the next stage of life's journey amongst family and friends.

Parents and Friends Association, President

Student Leadership

2016 has been an excellent year at St John's Dapto. For Year 6 it began with the Night of the Notables where all students chose an Australian person to research who had made a significant difference in the world. On the night it involved the students becoming the notable person where they were asked questions about the person they had researched. Families and students came to share in their great work. The students of Year 6 also engaged in an overnight excursion to Canberra. They visited many different sights of the Australian Capital Territory. A particular highlight was going to Parliament House and visiting Questacon.

During the year many other celebrations were held. These included: ANZAC Day, Grandparents' Day, Remembrance Day, All Souls Day and Ash Wednesday. These significant days were celebrated with many special liturgies in the church and in our school hall.

Some students from Stage 3 were involved in SPLICED (Strengthening Potential through Learning in Interactive Challenging Environments in the Diocese of Wollongong) in an online learning community. This year SPLICED involved finding issues in our world and trying to find a solution to that issue. Teams of students worked together to complete the 'Cry of the Earth' assessment and shared their research at Nazareth Catholic Primary School. Other students from Stage 3 participated in the da Vinci Academic Decathlon at Illawarra Christian School. They were involved in ten different activities and it was a great experience.

St John's had many fundraising opportunities, one of this year's included, Saving Chloe Saxby run by Year 3. Rainbow mufti clothes were worn to raise money for a girl who has Vanishing White Matter disease (VWM). This is a very severe and rare disease that is why we raised money to help find a cure.

This year St John's had three different sporting carnivals including cross country, athletics and swimming. Each of these carnivals was fun for the students and there was friendly rivalry across the different Houses. St John's have also participated in a number of gala days that are non-competitive events and showed the school's sportsmanship.

During the year the whole school community celebrated many other exciting events including Book Week and most importantly Mission Day where awareness was made of those in need around the world and \$4000 was raised for Catholic Mission. This year, St John's Catholic Primary School has been extremely fun for all staff and students.

School Leaders

School Profile

School Context

St John's Catholic Primary School is a Catholic systemic co-educational school located in Dapto. The school caters for students in Years K-6 and has a current enrolment of 607.

St John's is a Catholic systemic co-educational school located in Dapto. The school caters for students in Years K-6 and has a current enrolment of 588. The first Catholic Primary School in Dapto was established at West Dapto in 1839 when Fr Petre the Parish Priest, received Government authorisation to begin a school. Mr Hayes was the first teacher followed by the Sisters of St Joseph who arrived in 1880. The school was then known as St Joseph's School and remained at West Dapto until 1900. With the coming of rail to Dapto, Mary MacKillop, now known as St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, purchased a parcel of land in Jerematta Street, Dapto in January 1899. In 1900 she decided to move the convent and school closer to town and establish the school on its present site.

In 1965 the present site of classes, Years 4, 5 and 6 was a Secondary School for girls and the school was known as St Anne's College. By 1980 St Anne's catered for 220 girls in Years 7 to 10. The rapid growth of areas south of Wollongong required the building of a new coeducational High School at Albion Park. In 1983 St Anne's College closed and St John's was able to expand into the St Anne's buildings, thus occupying two sites.

Dapto is a rapidly growing area 15 minutes south of Wollongong and covers a wide range of socio economic groups from varied cultural backgrounds. St John's is a Catholic systemic co-education school catering for students from Kinder to Year 6. The school has 50 staff including members of the Leadership Team, classroom teachers, resource teachers, school support officers (SSO) and Office staff.

At present, Kindergarten, Years 1, 2 and 3 are located on the MacKillop Campus and Years 4, 5 and 6 are located on the Evangelist Campus. St John's School is an integral part of the Parish and the Parish Priest has an active role in the school caring for the spiritual and pastoral needs of the school community.

Student Enrolments

2016 enrolments	
Boys	300
Girls	307
Total	607
Indigenous	21
LBOTE	133

The Diocesan Primary Enrolment Policy and Procedures exists to assist schools in the equitable prioritising of enrolment applications and in order to ensure that the requirements of State and Commonwealth legislation are met. This documentation can be found on both the school website: www.sjddow.catholic.edu.au and the CEDoW website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. Changes were made to this Policy in 2016.

Student Attendance

2016 Attendance	Male	Female
Kinder	94.6%	94.4%
Year 1	94.1%	93.7%
Year 2	93.6%	93.1%
Year 3	93.3%	93.1%
Year 4	93.4%	92.4%
Year 5	93.6%	91.4%
Year 6	91.3%	92.7%
Whole school	93.5%	93.0%

Management of Student Non Attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are 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, monitors part or whole day absences. Non-attendance is managed electronically via SENTRAL and is the responsibility of the class teacher in the first instance.

It is an expectation that if a student is absent from school, a written note or message via SENTRAL's Parent Portal explaining the absence is provided to the class teacher. If an explanation for an absence is not received, a reminder note from the Principal requesting an explanation is sent to parents/guardians. If no written explanation is received then a "unexplained/unjustified" absence is documented.

In the event of a student having an excessive number of unexplained absences, contact with the parents/guardians is made by the Principal or representative to investigate the circumstances related to these absences. Office staff records partial student absences for late arrival and/or early departure electronically when presenting to the office with their parent/guardian on arrival or departure.

Parents requesting exemption from attending school for any period of time must complete a "Request for Exemption Application" prior to the leave being taken and obtain approval from the Principal. An exemption from attending school, if approved, is issued. This process is consistent with the CEO Diocese of Wollongong Student Attendance Policy and School Attendance Guidelines and Procedures (January 2015).

Full day and partial absences are documented on student reports each semester and awards are presented at the end of the year to students who have maintained a 100% attendance record.

St John's regularly advises parents of the importance of school attendance through the school Newsletter. Parents/Guardians are encouraged not to withdraw their children from school for family holidays and to try and arrange holidays during school holiday periods.

Staffing Profile

There are a total of 36 teachers and 14 support staff at St John's Catholic Primary School. This number includes 24 full-time, 12 part-time teachers.

Teacher Standards

Teacher qualifications fall into 1 of 2 categories for all teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum:

Teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR* guidelines	100%
A bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lacking formal teacher education	100%

*Australian Education Institution – National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition Staff

Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2016 was 93%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2015 to 2016 was 96%.

Professional Learning

During 2016 St John's Catholic Primary School personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through School Review and Improvement priorities.

These included:

A. St John's Catholic Primary School whole school development days involving 50 staff.

These days focused on:

- Staff Spirituality- Laudato Si
 - School Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB4L)
 - Running effective guided groups in Literacy and Numeracy
 - First Aid
- B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEDoW run courses:
- K-2 Pedagogy PD (RE Storytelling) (1 staff)
 - SPB4L Framework Overview (1 staff)
 - Lamplighter Days 2016 Cohort (4 staff)
 - Laudato Si Diocesan Colloquium (1 staff)
 - Primary Library Network Meeting- Day (1 staff)
 - Primary Finance and SSSO Network Day (1 staff)
 - Leading Indigenous Education Workshop (1 staff)
 - Behaviour Management and Personalised Learning Plans (1 staff)
 - Setting up your online classroom with DOW Cloud (2 staff)
 - REC Network Meeting (1 staff)

- Child Protection A and B Training (1 staff)
- Alight for the World (1 staff)
- Leading Curriculum Implementation HSIE (1 staff)
- REC and Liturgy Coordinators Overnight Retreat (1 staff)
- Reading Recovery (RR) Support teachers workshop (1 staff)
- Teaching Phonics and Phonemic Awareness (3 staff)
- RR Ongoing Professional Learning Group A (1 staff)
- The Successful Primary iPad Classroom (1 staff)
- Accreditation (Illawarra Region) (3 staff)
- Shining Lights Retreat 2016 Cohort (3 staff)
- 2016 World Youth Day Pilgrimage (1 staff)
- System Focus Day Primary (1 staff)
- Open to Learning Leadership (1 staff)
- Religious Literacy Assessment Review (1 staff)
- Understanding and Managing Behaviour (3 staff)
- Illawarra Primary and Secondary Early Career Teacher Day (1 staff)
- Religious Literacy Marking Day (1 staff)
- Transition to School Playgroup Workshop (1 staff)
- Assistant Principal's Overnight Retreat (1 staff)
- The Successful Primary iPad Classroom (1 staff)
- Assessment and Reporting Policy Implementation (2 staff)
- AP REC Network Day (2 staff)
- Oliver Updates (1 staff)
- Leading Libraries (1 staff)
- Working towards Accreditation at Proficient PD (1 staff)
- Teacher Training in Best Start (1 staff)
- MANSW Conference (8 staff)
- Transition to school workshop (2 staff)
- Literacy: What works and why? NSWI for Education research conference (1 staff)
- Visible Learning with John Hattie (4 staff)
- IEU Maintenance for Accreditation (1 staff)
- Work Hoarse Voice Care (1 staff)
- IEU Smarter Assessment (3 staff)
- Hitting the Mark through Working Mathematically (1 staff)
- Health and PE Network/Educational Gymnastics (2 staff)
- K-6 Physical Activity and Health Conference (1 staff)
- Leading in Digital Schools (2 staff)

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$520.

In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by CEDoW with an additional average expenditure per staff member of \$445.

Catholic Life & Religious Education

St John's Catholic Primary School has continued to work closely with our Parish and the wider community during 2016 to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. Our Parish Priest involves himself with school life to build positive relationships with the staff and children and to provide them with the opportunity to attend Mass in both class and whole school groups on a regular basis. Each class from Year 3 to Year 6 is also given the opportunity to attend the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The children are encouraged to become involved in the Sacramental Programs and Father has invited the students to join in children's liturgy at the Parish Mass on Sundays during the school Term. The Sacramental Program is Parish/school-based and the children from St John's join with other Catholic children from the Parish in workshop days and after school practices for each Sacrament. The school works closely with the catechists and the Parish Priest on these occasions.

On Saturday 4 June forty eight Year 6 children joined other children from the Parish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. On Saturday 17 September fifty eight children from St John's joined with other children from the Parish to receive Jesus for the very first time in the Sacrament of Eucharist. Fifty-two children from Years 2, 3 and 4, received the Sacrament of Penance on 17 November.

In addition to regular Masses, St John's celebrates the seasons of the Church year, along with significant feasts and events. Year Six students attended a Mass at All Saints Parish Church, at Shellharbour City, along with Year Six Students from other schools in our Region.

Each school day commences with Morning Prayer at assembly and parents are encouraged to participate. Staff members gather weekly to pray together. One staff development day is dedicated to the spiritual growth of the whole staff community. On 12 August staff participated in a reflection day at Sandon Point Surf Club to explore and deepen our understanding of the *Laudato Si*. Great care is taken to ensure that Religion lessons follow the curriculum set down by the Diocese, and that staff are suitably qualified to teach the children about their Catholic faith. This year, children from Years 5 and 6 participated in the Annual Christmas Art Competition and three students were selected as Finalists. One of these students had her work displayed in Sydney Archdiocese Christmas Story Art Exhibition

Seventy-four of our Year Four children completed the Religious Literacy Part A exam this year. The school community of St John's continues to reach out to those in need. Through Project Compassion during Lent, Catholic Missions in October and our Winter and Christmas St Vincent De Paul Appeals for our local poor, the children have raised \$7 668.

Religious Literacy Assessment

The Religious Literacy Assessment framework of *Knowing, Working with, Applying and Valuing the Tradition* informs and shapes assessment in RE across K-6 with a focussed system collection of data in Year 4.

The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully completed within schools across the diocese in 2016. The school cohort in 2016 consisted of 74 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 29 August 2016 and 78 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task was based on the Unit: *Mary, Mother of God: First Among the Saints* and was completed during the first five weeks of Term 3.

The performance of each student was described as developing, achieving or extending.

Students in Part A showed a high level of performance in their knowledge of the religious tradition. This high level of performance was particularly noticeable in their:

- knowledge of the Sacraments; and
- knowledge of the stories of the bible.

The students' responses showed a need for them to develop their capacity to work with and apply the religious tradition especially in their ability to:

- demonstrate their knowledge of the events of Lent and Easter.

Students in Part B displayed improvements in their ability to work with and apply their religious knowledge.

For Part A, 9.5 % of students were placed in the developing level, 63.5% in the achieving level and 27% were in the extending level.

For Part B, 2.7% of students were placed in the developing level, 54.7% in the achieving level and 42.7% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 6.8% of students were placed in the developing level, 65.8% in the achieving level and 27.4% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

School Review and Improvement

School Review and Improvement is an on-going process of self-evaluation measured against a commonly agreed set of criteria. It informs action planning at the school level to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. Above all, Catholic schools must be good schools with a strong learning orientation and a strong sense of purpose. In all aspects of improving and developing, schools should be learning-centred, constantly striving for excellence and have the student as their primary focus.

School Review and Improvement components reviewed and rated in 2016:

Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education

1.3 Catholic Life and Culture

Goal: To build a community that promotes, through action, stewardship and spirituality focusing on the Pope's Encyclical, Laudato Si and the Year of Mercy.

Key Area 2: Students and their Learning

2.1 Educational Potential

Goal: Effectively differentiate, set goals and provide feedback to gain evidence from Kindergarten to Year Six with a whole school approach.

Key Area 3: Pedagogy

3.2 Provision for the Diverse Needs of Learners

Goal: Cater for the diverse needs of students, through consistent monitoring, tracking and analysing of student data in informing student learning.

Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management

4.1 Recruitment, Selection and Retention of Staff

Goal: Develop a leadership capacity that is distributed and sustainable across the school.

4.5 Overall Compliance with Legislation and Other Requirements

Goal: Put in place structures to monitor and maintain continual compliance with all requirements.

Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities

5.2 Use of Resources and Space

Goal: Plan for the future growth and development of the school to cater for enrolment trends.

5.4 Financial Management

Goal: Develop financial literacy skills within the leadership team to make budgetary and stock control procedures more transparent.

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2017:

Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education

1.1 Vision and Mission

Goal: Social responsibility and Church teachings on environmental stewardship will guide school initiatives.

Key Area 2: Students and their Learning

2.1 Educational Potential

Goal: Consistent school wide expectations, programs and procedures will support student well-being.

Key Area 3: Pedagogy

3.3 Teaching Practices

Goal: A school-wide phonics program will enhance teacher pedagogy and improve student achievement in literacy.

Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management

4.3 An ethical workplace culture

Goal: An ethical workplace culture will exist where staff has a clear understanding of their expectations.

Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities

5.3 Environmental stewardship

Goal: The school community will accept a shared responsibility and embrace environmental stewardship initiatives.

Key Area 6: Parents, Partnership, Consultation and Communication

6.3 Linkages with the wider community

Goal: Professional links with local pre-schools and other organisations will benefit the learning experiences and achievements of students.

Key Area 7: Strategic Leadership and Management

7.2 Innovation, development and change

Goal: School initiatives and teacher knowledge and understanding will be supported by professional dialogue and readings.

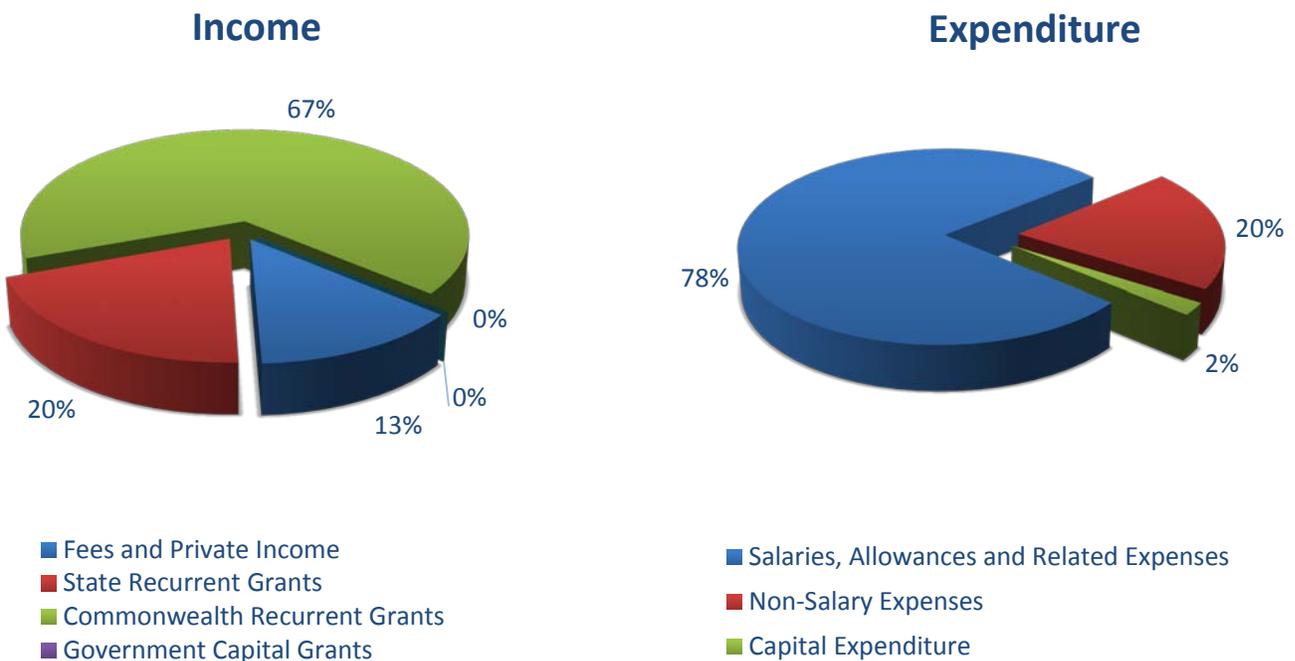
Financial Summary

Ongoing maintenance and repair works have again absorbed considerable funds at St John's and 2016 saw these works carried out with limited assistance of Parish School Enhancement and Debt Servicing Obligation (SEDSO) finances due to future Master Planning expenses incurred. Finances were also directed towards student/classroom computers and Information Technology (IT) equipment and licenses. The considerable financial contribution from the P&F Association to St John's enabled continued commitment in the purchasing of Library resources for both staff and students. Long awaited shade structures to both Evangelist and MacKillop Campuses were erected at the commencement of 2016 providing much needed shade areas to playgrounds/common areas for the students.

Numerous Grants were applied for and received throughout 2016 which included a Beverage Container Recycling Community Grant of \$2,516.75 and an Australian Commonwealth Sports Commission Grant of \$3 190.

The establishment of before and after school care in 2014, provided by PEAK on St John's premises, has continued to provide a small contribution toward school finances and with renegotiation of their contract due in January 2017 it is envisaged this successful provider of care to students will continue.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St John's Catholic Primary School, Dapto for the year ended 31 December 2016. This data is taken from the 2016 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education and Training.



Student Welfare

The overarching challenge of the school motto: *Love One Another* is central to the vision of St John's School and hence student welfare is of paramount importance.

The behaviour management program *School Wide Positive Behaviours For Learning (SPB4L)* continues to be implemented at St John's. The program focuses on establishing clear, consistent and supportive behaviour expectations for all students across all school settings. These expectations are explicitly taught and reinforced to encourage appropriate behaviour to support and promote student readiness for learning.

The SPB4L Committee, comprising of a teacher from each Grade, School Support Officers, school leadership and parent representation, has met regularly to discuss behaviour management needs within the school and monitor and support existing school-wide systems. Data regarding student behaviours in both classroom and non-classroom settings continues to be gathered, reviewed and analysed regularly and used to inform modifications to individual support plans or systems in order to more effectively encourage and support desired student behaviours.

Rewards are an important component of SPB4L. School ACE or Blue Awards have been presented to students from all classes each week, reinforcing positive behaviours that support learning. Playground awards have been awarded to students observed following the schools rules during recess and lunch on all playgrounds. Each week, two tags have been drawn from each Grade and winners received a canteen voucher.

Kids Club is a lunchtime-run program that focuses on supporting students with the development of positive social interaction skills in playground settings. Activities from the *Friendly School* program are used to assist students with developing greater self-awareness skills. This intervention has been very effective in assisting students with the development of their social interactions, the reduction of stress and anxiety and the management of peer-to-peer conflicts. Kids Club has taken place on both the MacKillop and Evangelist Campuses during two to three lunchtimes a week.

The support of CatholicCare continues to be invaluable to the students and families of St John's. A CatholicCare counsellor has worked with students and families for two days each week throughout the year. Kindergarten, Year 2 and Year 5 also took part in a six week Mindfulness Program presented by CatholicCare which was enjoyed by the students and presented them with many opportunities and strategies to assist the development of their self-awareness skills.

A Kindergarten Orientation program was conducted over a series of weeks that assisted both the parents and students of Kindergarten 2017 to become familiar with the school staff members, routines, expectations, grounds, facilities and each other. This was most beneficial and has helped to create a feeling of belonging for both the new students and their parents.

A Buddy Support Program was also implemented between the Kindergarten and Year 6 students. The Year 6 students worked with the Kindergarten students, meeting regularly to get to know each other and to share learning together. This relationship between the students was commenced during the 2015 Kindergarten Orientation period so that a bond was created prior to the Kindergarten student's commencement at St John's.

Mid way during Term 4 a program was undertaken whereby the Kindergarten students were transitioned to their new playgrounds for the 2017 year. This supportive endeavour has allowed for a smooth and safe transition to the new playground and has assisted with the reduction of anxiety within some students.

In a world so heavily driven by technology, the teaching of effective cyber safety is imperative. The students of Years 5 and 6 are involved with the 1:1 iPad program. These students were involved in a cyber safety workshop early in Term 1 to teach them safe practices whilst using technology and the Internet.

During Term 3, the students of Year 3 held a fundraiser to support a local girl suffering from a rare disease. The students worked tirelessly to promote awareness about the cause. They also organised a fundraising day, ran a raffle, sold wristbands and stickers and collected donations, raising a considerable sum of money to assist this special cause.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wollongong are committed to a safe and supportive environment. The principles, guidelines and procedures set out in the policy documents ***Maintaining Right Relationships*** is the framework for school leaders, students, staff, parents and the wider community to develop a safe and supportive environment. The Diocesan ***Complaints Handling Procedures*** forms an important element in the Diocese's commitment to ensuring safe and supportive environments for school communities. These documents can be found on the CEDoW website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to these Diocesan documents in 2016.

In compliance with the ***NSW Reform Act 1990***, Corporal Punishment is banned in all schools within the Diocese of Wollongong.

Access to all policies and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the school office.

Learning and Teaching

Curriculum and Pedagogy

A range of learning and teaching experiences were offered at St John's aimed to equip students for life-long learning while fulfilling Diocesan, State and National priorities. This aim was pursued in a variety of ways throughout the year.

Syllabus Implementation

St John's Catholic Primary School has continued to align all learning and teaching experiences with the Board of Studies NSW (BOS) Syllabus documents and the Diocese of Wollongong Religious Education Curriculum. Learning was outcomes based and facilitated within the context of the following Key Learning Areas: Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and Its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development Health and Physical Education. This year saw the implementation of the new NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum in History and Geography. Professional development in the areas of History and Geography has continued to be provided to all staff.

Assessment and Reporting

In 2016 Performance and Development Plan (PDP) goal setting meetings identified the need to continue the professional development around assessing individual student achievement through writing and reviewing interventions in Literacy and Numeracy.

Year Three and Year Five students participated in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). Data from NAPLAN was utilised within the school to address the learning needs of students, establish learning growth patterns and to inform learning achievement targets.

Baseline data was collected on all students from Kindergarten to Year 6. This involved students completing a series of reading and spelling assessments at the beginning of the year. This data was analysed and presented to staff showing the range of student growth in this areas. This has led to professional dialogue around the importance of consistent pedagogy in Literacy.

Learning progress was reported to parents formally and informally during the course of the year. At the end of Term Two and Term Four student achievement was reported to parents in context of an A-E grading report. The written report and accompanying parent teacher interviews were undertaken in the context of Commonwealth, State Government and Diocesan reporting guidelines. Kindergarten through to Year Six sent home student learning to keep parents involved in their child's learning progress.

Integration

Various forms of curriculum integration occurred across the school from Kindergarten to Year Six. Nominated aspects of Key Learning Areas (KLAs) were integrated together so as to make learning purposeful and connected for students. For example, in relation to Religious Literacy, Year Four were able to integrate key components of Religious Education with Creative Arts and English.

Technology Supporting Learning

A wide range of technology was used throughout the school to support learning. Twenty- two interactive whiteboards were utilised from Kindergarten to Year Six in all Key Learning Areas. The interactive whiteboards were used to introduce new concepts, consolidate learning and support learning intervention. One hundred and two laptops, forty-six iPads and twenty-five desktop computers were utilised across the school to enhance and support learning in various Key Learning Areas. A one to one

iPad program was implemented across Stage 3.

Literacy strategies

The development of Literacy has continued to be a priority across the school during 2016. The focus for literacy has included specific work around the areas of spelling, writing, phonics and phonemic awareness. This has involved all staff engaging in professional learning and implementation of new strategies for teaching and learning. A staff development day was presented with a focus on guided literacy groups. Staff members have continued to understand and implement aspects of the Diocesan English Guidelines that included whole class, individual and guided small group instruction in reading, writing, talking and listening. Further to this, all staff has been involved in extensive professional learning around the area of phonics and phonemic awareness. This has led to the implementation of a synthetic phonics program in K-2. A proposal was presented to and accepted by the Catholic Education Office to fund a full time teacher to continue the synthetic phonics program, as well as implement a reading intervention program in 2017. Reading Recovery continued to be a support for Year One students experiencing difficulty in their literacy development.

Numeracy strategies

In 2016, staff members have continued to implement Mathematics sessions that reflect the Diocesan Mathematics Guidelines. All teaching staff transferred their tracking and monitoring over to SENTRAL Continuum Tracker. This allowed staff to move students along the Numeracy Continuum using the electronic monitoring system. Staff used their monitoring data to help identify students at risk in various aspects on the Numeracy Continuum and have developed weekly numeracy interventions to provide support to students at risk. Professional learning was provided to staff 3-6 on using TOWN (Taking Off With Numeracy) as a baseline assessment to provide information on students' knowledge in the number strand. A staff development day was presented with a focus on guided numeracy groups. Staff members have continued to understand and implement aspects of the Diocesan Numeracy guidelines which included whole class, individual and guided small group instruction.

Cross Curriculum

Indigenous Education

The school continued to follow its Indigenous Education Plan, which specifically addressed ways in which the Diocesan Policy is being implemented. Indigenous Education was presented throughout the year with support from two Aboriginal Education Assistants across all classes. Many different perspectives were looked at across a number of Key Learning Areas including Religious Education, History and Creative Arts. Some areas of focus were on the meaning of National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) with the all students completing a hand die cut illustrating the theme "Songlines: The living narrative of our nation" and examining Aboriginal Artefacts. Indigenous Students received assistance on an individual basis from the appointed Aboriginal Education Assistants. This support was delivered within the context of the classroom and also in small groups focussing on Aboriginal culture and history.

St John's celebrated NAIDOC Week with a whole school liturgy, which included dance groups, the choir singing the Aboriginal Our Father and our indigenous students playing their didgeridoos. Harmony Day and Reconciliation Week were also celebrated. The Acknowledgement of Country Statement continued to be a feature of school assemblies and gatherings, this year being read by one of our Indigenous students and another plays his didgeridoo.

Meeting the needs of all students

Diversifying learning

A number of strategies and models of learning were utilised across the school to differentiate learning to meet the needs of students. In various forms teachers differentiated content, process and the learning environment. Teachers planned, implemented and reviewed Individual Intervention Plans for a range of learners in numeracy and literacy. These plans identified what the learner could do and where they needed to go in regards to the learning continuum. Weekly meetings were allocated to write and review individual interventions plans, which provided documentation for students at risk to support the MSPEC process.

Gifted Education

Gifted Education has continued to be a learning focus at St John's in 2016. There were twenty-six students across Stage Three that had the opportunity to participate in the Gifted Education initiative for students in Primary School across our Diocese. Strengthening Potential through Learning in Interactive Challenging Environments in the Diocese of Wollongong (SPLICED) provided the students with an opportunity to both access and engage in challenging units of work in a purpose-built online environment. Teams of students worked together to complete the 'Cry of the Earth' assessment and shared their research at Nazareth Catholic Primary School. Sixteen students from Stage 3 participated in the da Vinci Academic Decathlon at Illawarra Christian School. The students were provided with opportunities to participate in a range of higher order thinking disciplines.

Staff members have continued to use a variety of procedures and tools to identify gifted students. Data collected from both the identification process and teacher differentiation continues to be shared and tracked across Kindergarten to Year Six on Google drive.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

Sport

During 2016 a large number of students from the school participated in a variety of sports including:

- The annual Swimming Carnival, which was conducted at the end of 2015. Nineteen students were selected from the school carnival to represent the school at the 2016 Regional Diocesan Carnival, where St John's placed third overall. Five students represented the Diocese at the MacKillop Trials and five students then continued onto the NSW PSSA State Swimming Championships;
- The school's Cross Country Carnival that was held at the end of Term One. Following the school carnival twenty-one students represented the school at the Diocesan carnival. Four students were selected to represent the Diocese at the MacKillop Trials. One student was then selected to attend the Primary Schools Sports Association (PSSA) Cross Country Carnival;
- The school's Athletics carnival that was held in Term Two from which thirty-two students were selected to represent the school at the Regional Diocesan Carnival, where St John's came fifth overall. Twelve students were selected to participate in the Diocesan Selection Trials. One student was selected for the MacKillop Athletic Team;
- Students in Kinder and Year 1 participated in an AFL skills development program delivered by the AFL NSW Development officers funded through Sporting Schools grant for 4 weeks. Year Three to Year Six also participated in an AFL skills program two lessons delivered by the AFL NSW Development officers and four lessons facilitated by school staff;
- Forty-three school teams participated in the Diocesan Soccer, Basketball, Netball and Cricket Gala days;

- Twenty-six school teams participated in the AFL Paul Kelly Cup, Paul McGregor and Rod Wishart Shield Rugby League Competition and the NRL Catholic Schools Dragon Tag Gala Day.
- One student was selected to represent NSW MacKillop in the sports of hockey, then continuing on to represent at NSW PSSA Boys Hockey State Carnival.

Throughout 2016 three students represented the Diocese of Wollongong in the sports of rugby league, rugby union and hockey. Two students were awarded the Primary Sports Council Medallion at the Annual Diocesan Sports Awards.

Competitions

Thirty-three students from Year Four to Year Six participated in the International Competitions and Assessment for Schools in the areas of Mathematics, English, Writing and Science. A number of Merits, Credits and Distinctions were awarded to the students within each of the competitions.

Student Achievement

The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, projects and presentations. The school also participates in the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) for the purposes of diagnosing individual learning needs and reviewing whole class teaching programs. Information on student progress is communicated on a regular basis and external assessment results are discussed with parents on an individual basis annually.

NAPLAN

NAPLAN is implemented for students in Years 3 and 5 and the results provide valuable information about student achievements in Literacy and Numeracy. Analysis of the results is used at school level to support the enhancement of literacy and numeracy outcomes for all students.

In 2016 an area of strength identified was reading with sixty-one per cent of Year Three and thirty-three per cent of Year Five achieving the top two bands. Grammar and Punctuation was also identified as a strength for the Year Three cohort, with sixty-five per cent achieving a Band 5 or 6.

In Literacy, spelling has been identified in Year Five as one significant area for improvement. Nine per cent of the Year Five students achieved at or below the National Minimum Standards (NMS) in spelling. Spelling will continue to be a school wide focus for professional development in 2017 supported through the implementation of a synthetic phonics program.

In Numeracy, Data, Measurement, Space and Geometry was seen as an area of weakness, with nineteen per cent of students in year three and twenty per cent of students in year 5 in the lowest two bands. This area of Numeracy will be a school wide focus in 2017.

Student Achievement in Bands

Year 3 results are reported in Bands 1 to 6 with Band 6 representing the highest achievement and Year 5 results are reported in Bands 3 to 8 with Band 8 representing the highest achievement. Please Note: Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

NAPLAN 2016: % in Bands		YEAR 3			YEAR 5		
		Bands 1 and 2	Bands 3 and 4	Bands 5 and 6	Bands 3 and 4	Bands 5 and 6	Bands 7 and 8
Reading	School	3%	36%	61%	15%	51%	34%
	National	12%	37%	49%	16%	47%	35%
Writing	School	0%	43%	57%	11%	77%	12%
	National	6%	43%	49%	18%	63%	17%
Spelling	School	4%	43%	53%	21%	59%	20%
	National	12%	39%	46%	17%	51%	30%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	1%	34%	65%	20%	49%	31%
	National	10%	36%	53%	15%	47%	36%
Numeracy	School	10%	55%	35%	20%	57%	23%
	National	13%	49%	36%	17%	53%	28%

National Band Distributions are calculated by ACARA based on the total number of students in each cohort, including those who did not complete NAPLAN. School Band Distributions have therefore been calculated also using the total number of students in each cohort, including those who did not complete NAPLAN. As such, the total percentage across all Bands may not add up to 100% as the students who did not complete NAPLAN are not allocated a Band.

Student Achievement of National Minimum Standard

Students are considered to be achieving BELOW the National Minimum Standard (NMS) if they are in the lowest Band for each year (Band 1 in Year 3 and Band 3 in Year 5) or if they have been exempt from NAPLAN. Students in the second Band for each year (Band 2 in Year 3 and Band 4 in Year 5) are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.

NAPLAN 2016: % AT or ABOVE NMS		YEAR 3	YEAR 5
Reading	School	98%	86%
	National	95%	93%
Writing	School	98%	90%
	National	96%	93%
Spelling	School	98%	84%
	National	94%	93%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	98%	88%
	National	96%	94%
Numeracy	School	97%	89%
	National	96%	94%

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

Parents, students and staff were invited to complete online surveys that provide feedback on the school's performance in areas affecting learning, teaching and general functioning of the school. Information provided from these surveys assists the school with future planning.

Students

Over 75% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that they understand their rights and responsibilities at school and that their teacher encourages them to learn to the best of their ability. Over 80% agreed or strongly agreed that they are proud of their school.

Staff

Staff response to the survey indicated high levels of satisfaction in what St John's offers the students in understanding the Catholic faith; understanding their rights and responsibilities, striving to meet their individual learning needs and in creating a safe and supportive environment.

Parents

Fifty-eight families completed the survey. Over 80% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that the school helps their child to develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition. 71% agreed or strongly agreed that the teachers are genuinely interested in the welfare of their child. 78% agreed or strongly agreed that the school provides various opportunities for parents to become involved. Over 70% agreed or strongly agreed that the teachers are genuinely interested in the welfare of their child.

The main areas to be examined in 2017 will be the range of co-curricular activities that are offered to all students.



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