

***St John's  
Catholic Primary School  
Dapto***



***Annual School Report  
2011***

## About This Report

St John's Catholic Primary School, Dapto is registered by the NSW Board of Studies (BOS) and managed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Diocese of Wollongong. The CEO 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 Annual Action Plan.

Accordingly, the Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the school community and the CEO. This Report has been approved by Wollongong CEO to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration and Accreditation.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communications. Following its submission to the NSW Board of Studies, the Report will be presented to the Parent Body and be available on the school's website by 30 June 2012.

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

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**Parish Priest:** Fr Francis Tran

**Principal:** Mrs Vicki Attenborough

**Date:** 20 December 2011

## **Vision Statement**

Our Vision – “Encountering Christ through a love of learning,  
love of each other and service to all.”

## **Message from Key School Bodies**

### **Principal’s Message**

It is with great pride that I write this, my first report, as Principal of St John’s Catholic Primary School, Dapto. I am very conscious of the many people – Parish Priests, Josephite Sisters as well as lay leaders who have contributed to the magnificent history of this great school. The feeling of belonging and ownership is an indication of the sense of purpose people have given and found within the community of Dapto. As the school grows I trust that we continue to be a source of encouragement, strength and enlightenment for those who are called to learn and serve here at St John’s.

Life in school today is very hectic and on the whole schools do a fantastic job of working with and for people of varying backgrounds to develop their individual hopes, ambitions, desires and demands. In meeting these challenges I cannot speak too highly of the quality of the staff that exists at St John’s – the extra work they do, and enjoy doing, for the good of the students, and School and Parish community is outstanding.

The role of our Parish Priest is also most highly valued and we thank him for his interest in our school.

As the 2011 school year concludes, another chapter in the history of St John’s has been written. It is a history of which we are all very proud.

### **Parent Involvement**

We started the year off with a change of the guard, our long serving Principal had been transferred to Warrawong as we welcomed our new Principal from Albion Park. The Annual General Meeting was held in February and joining me on the executive were four parents of St John’s students. In addition there were approximately 25 other parents putting their hand up to be involved in various committees. Throughout the year, the Parents and Friends Association (P&F) were involved in many fundraising and social events such as Kinder Welcome BBQ, Fathers’ Golf Day, Dinner/Dance, Orientation Day, Spring Fair and many more. This year the Spring Fair raised just under \$40,000, a great effort by all involved. The P&F approved the staff wish list for literacy and technology resources as well as ongoing support for the Kindergarten interactive playground. In closing, I would like to thank our Parish Priest, Principal and staff, the P&F executive and all parents and friends of St John’s Catholic School and Parish community for their continued support throughout the year.

*Parents and Friends Association, President*

## Student Leadership

2011 has been a great year for St John's Dapto and as Year 6 student leaders we have experienced a range of events such as Prayer and Conversation with the Bishop and many school liturgies such as ANZAC Day, Ash Wednesday, Remembrance Day and Mother's Day, which has brought our school closer together. We have many opportunities at this school such as the Science Fair, Maths Olympiad and Gala Days which help us get involved in many new exciting days that help bring the Diocese closer. We have also had many fun things that have been prepared such as the NED Show, which taught the children about their self-esteem and to believe in themselves so they can do almost everything. Our most major school event, which happens every year, is the Spring Fair. We receive most of our funding from it and the money goes straight to the school to be spent on resources that the children use for their projects and presentations. Also this year we had Bunning's come to the school to teach us about growing vegetables in our garden and how to care for them. Year 6 also have buddies where they help introduce Kindergarten students to the school.

*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 574.

The School was founded in 1839 at West Dapto. The Sisters of St Joseph taught in the school from 1880 under the direction of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. In 1900 the school and convent were moved to the present site.

At present Kindergarten, Years 1, 2 and 3 are located on the Werowi Campus and Year 4 and Middle School Stage 3 (Years 5 & 6) on the Jerematta 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.

Students are grouped by age cohort into 22 classes from K-6. Students continue their education at St Joseph's Catholic High, Corpus Christi Catholic High School, Edmund Rice College and St Mary Star of the Sea College, Dapto High School, Kanahooka High School or Berkeley Sports High School.

### Student Enrolments

2011	Boys	Girls	Total	Indigenous	LBOTE
	275	299	574	5	46

The Diocesan 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.siddow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.siddow.catholic.edu.au) and the CEO website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.dow.catholic.edu.au). No changes were made to this Diocesan Policy in 2011.

### Student Attendance

2011	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
	93.0%	92.6%	94.2%	93.1%	94.5%	92.1%

### Management of Student Non Attendance

Daily attendance is entered electronically each morning by classroom teachers using the School Administration Software Program (SAS). In the case of a child’s late arrival and/or early leaving, families report to the office where these partial absences are updated and recorded on SAS by the administrative staff. Absences are monitored by the class teacher. If a child is absent for any reason, on his/her return to school a note is required explaining the reason to enable the class roll to be marked accurately. Class teachers follow up unexplained absences by sending a note to parents requesting an explanation. The Principal is notified of extended or recurring absences.

## Staffing Profile

There are a total of 35 teachers and 13 support staff at St John’s Catholic Primary School. This number includes 21 full-time, 14 part-time teachers.

### Teacher Standards

Teacher qualifications fall into 1 of 3 categories for all teaching staff responsible for delivering the curriculum:

Teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised by AEI - NOOSR*	100%
Have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia within AEI-NOOSR* guidelines but lack formal teacher qualifications	0%
Do not have qualifications as above but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context	0%

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

## **Teacher Attendance and Retention**

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2011 was 95.67%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2010 to 2011 was 98% with the appointment of a new Assistant Principal after 9 years.

## **Professional Learning**

During 2011, St John's personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through School Review & Improvement priorities.

These included:

A. St John's whole school staff development days involving 48 staff.

These days focused on:

- 2011 School Review and Improvement School Planning and Development and School Policy;
- Spirituality – 'Spirit Dream In Burning Hearts' Conference; and
- Australian Curriculum – 'Innovate Inspire Engage' Conference.

Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEO run courses included:

- Leadership formation including Principals/Assistant Principals Conference, Retreats, CEO Network meetings;
- Formation in Faith and Religious Education including Masters of Religious Education, Journey and Berekah;
- School Review and Improvement Planning Days;
- Technologies for Learning;
- Leaders of Literacy and Numeracy;
- Focus on Literacy and Numeracy;
- Focus on Grammar, Persuasive Texts;
- Focus on Phonological Awareness;
- Leading Learning Technologies (Primary);
- Pedagogies in Dynamic Learning Environment;
- PDHPE Resource Workshop Early Stage 1 / Stage 1;
- Improving Learning Outcomes for Students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder;
- Oliver Intermediate Training;
- New Translation of the Missal for Teachers;
- Smartboard Training;
- Primary Data & SMART refresher course;
- Focus on Reading;
- SAS2000 Finance & Administration;
- SSO Certificate 3 in School Support Services;
- Lane Clark Foundation Seminar;

- Tony Atwood – Autism; and
- Mental Health and Wellbeing of Young People.

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$258. In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by the Catholic Education Office with an additional average expenditure per staff Member of \$426.

## **Catholic Life & Religious Education**

St John's Catholic Primary School has continued to work closely with the Parish and the wider community during 2011 to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. Our new Parish Priest, Fr Francis Tran, works closely with the school to provide the children with the opportunity to attend Mass in both class and whole school groups on a regular basis. The children are encouraged to become involved in the Sacramental Programs within the Parish on weekends.

In addition to regular Masses, St John's celebrates the seasons of the Church year, along with significant feasts and events. This year our Year Six students attended a Prayer and Gathering with Bishop Peter Ingham at St Pius X Unanderra. These special occasions are held in regions throughout the Wollongong Diocese. Our school celebrated Holy Week, the Ascension, Pentecost, ANZAC Day, the feast day of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, Grandparents' Day, Marian Feasts, Mission Week, All Saints/All Souls Day and Remembrance Day. On these occasions the whole school attends Mass together, or we assemble for a prayer celebration.

Each school day commences with Morning Prayer on assembly and every Monday classes are responsible for leading Morning Prayer around the message of Sunday's Gospel. Parents are present at these times. Staff members also gather weekly to pray together. Staff members are encouraged to attend spirituality courses offered by our Diocese. Seven of our staff took advantage of this opportunity in 2011. One staff development day is dedicated to the spiritual growth of staff members. This year our whole staff participated in the Spirit Dreaming Conference held at Homebush on 27 May as our spirituality day. Six of our staff continued additional conference events over the weekend.

Great care is taken to ensure that Religious Education lessons follow the curriculum set down by our Diocese and that staff are suitably qualified to teach the children about their Catholic faith. This year we began focusing on developing story telling in Religious Education from Year 3 to Year 6. Seventy-eight of our Year 4 children completed the Religious Literacy exam this year. Samples of work completed in Religious Education are published each Term in our Religious Education Newsletter and sent home to parents.

The Sacramental Programs are Parish 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 Parish Priest on these occasions.

Sixty- six of our children from Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 received the Sacrament of Penance for the first time, on 5 May, 2011 and 75 of our Year 6 children joined other children from the Parish

to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, celebrated by Bishop Ingham, on Wednesday 20 and Thursday 21 July, 2011. On the feast of Christ the King, 21 November 2011, 51 of our children joined 14 children from the Parish to receive Jesus for the first time in Holy Communion.

The school community of St John's continues to reach out to those in need. Through Project Compassion during Lent, Mission Week in October and our Winter and Christmas Appeals for our local poor, the children have raised a considerable amount of money to support Caritas, Catholic Missions and St Vincent de Paul. Our Catholic Missions donation in Term 4 totalled \$1,775.

In 2012, St John's will strive to continue to witness the values of Jesus Christ and to provide an environment where learning is centred on these values. We will focus on embedding our new Mission and Vision Statements into the culture and life of our school. It is our intention to involve all key stakeholders in this endeavour so as to ensure that as many community members as possible will be aware of, and motivated by, the vital elements of these statements.

### **Religious Literacy Assessment**

The Religious Literacy Assessment Program for Year 4 students was successfully completed within schools across the diocese in 2011. The school cohort in 2011 consisted of 71 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on Monday 29 August, 2011.

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

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

- demonstrate an understanding of an image from the scriptures; and
- recall the events of Holy Week.

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:

- recall and identify the Ten Commandments and their guiding principles; and
- identify and match scripture to the liturgical season.

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

For Part A, 14.10 % of students were placed in the developing level, 66.20% in the achieving level and 19.70 % were in the extending level.

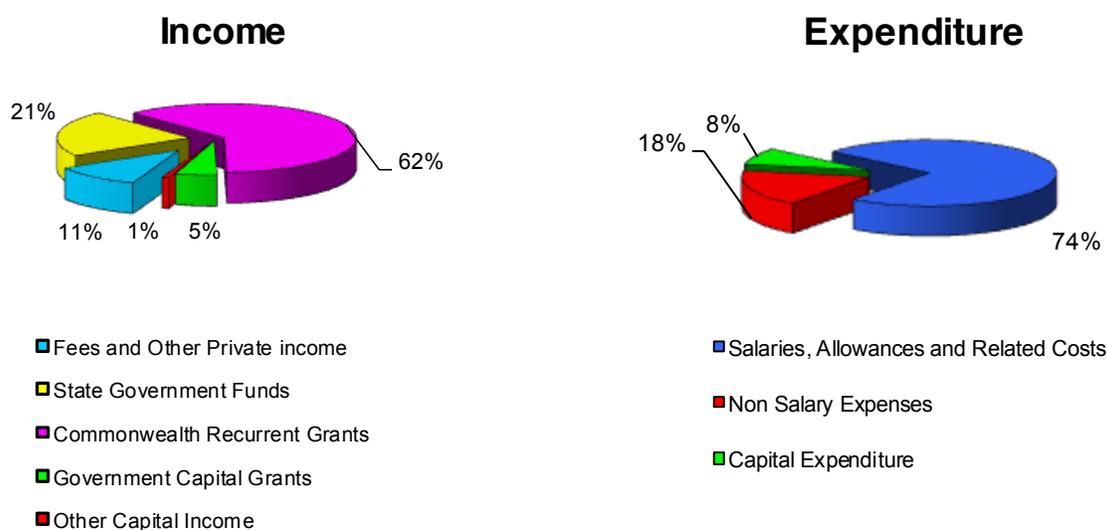
For Part B, 10.30% of students were placed in the developing level, 67.90% in the achieving level and 21.80% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 15.50 % of students were placed in the developing level, 70.40 % in the achieving level and 14.10 % were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

## Financial Summary

St John's Catholic Primary School has benefitted greatly by the 'Building the Education Revolution' (BER) Grants. This money allowed the School to build a new library and mini-hall, and refurbishment of the administration building. Funds have been set aside to assist with additional works due to be completed in January 2012. St John's Dapto Parents & Friends Association continues to support the school with the purchase of IT equipment and school resources.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St John's Catholic Primary School, Dapto for the year ended 31 December 2011. This data is taken from the 2011 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.



## Student Welfare

### Introduction

Welfare for all students continues to be a key priority at John's. The wide range of initiatives which focus on student welfare is grounded within the context of the school's Vision Statement and within the school motto, 'Love one another'.

## Pastoral Care

The School Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning Program [SPB4L] has been implemented during 2011. The Program will be running within the school for the next 5 years and aims at promoting high functioning behaviours which assist with student learning. While promoting these behaviours the Program also aims at decreasing problematic behaviours which hinder learning. The SPB4L Program allowed for the revision of school rules as well as the launch of the school's new rules, Be Safe, Be Responsible and Be Respectful. The Program is administered by a staff committee, which includes a parent representative and Education Officers from the Catholic Education office.

A Kindergarten Transition Program was established for students during 2011. The Transition Program complemented the Kindergarten Orientation Program and provided support for 10 students with special needs.

The Seasons for Growth Program was available during the year for students who have experienced grief through death or separation. Three accredited staff members facilitated the Program, which involved 23 students from Stage 2 and Stage 3.

The Everyday Peace Makers Program was implemented within the four Year 2 classes during the year. The Program enabled students to learn about their own emotions so that they are able to deal effectively with the emotions of others when establishing and maintaining friendships.

Year 6 student leaders have continued during the year to assist and guide younger students while in the playground at Recess and Lunchtime. Teams of up to 6 senior students support students in the Kindergarten and Year 2 playgrounds.

Through the support of CatholicCare, the school provides a counselling service for students and their families.

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*** and ***Safe Work Environment*** are 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 Catholic Education Office website: [www.dow.catholic.edu.au](http://www.dow.catholic.edu.au). No changes were made to these Diocesan documents in 2011.

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

## Introduction

St John's Catholic Primary School supports the notion that effective learning and teaching in a Catholic school is a purposeful process that integrates the faith, cognitive, moral, emotional, social, aesthetic and civil learning needs of all. St John's aims to provide authentic life giving learning experiences within the context of a rich learning environment for all students.

## Curriculum & Pedagogy

### *Syllabus Implementation*

St John's Catholic Primary School aligns all learning and teaching experiences with the New South Wales Board of Studies Syllabus documents and the Diocese of Wollongong Religious Education Curriculum. Learning is outcomes based and is 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.

### *Assessment and Reporting*

A wide range of assessment strategies are utilised on a daily basis within each class so as to monitor student progress. Assessment of learning and assessment for learning is planned collaboratively by teachers within each Stage and Grade area. These assessment tasks are implemented consistently across a Stage or Grade so as to determine whether students have met learning goals. Student achievement levels are also used by teachers to inform planning and programming.

Year 3 and Year 5 students participate in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy [NAPLAN]. Data from NAPLAN is utilised within the school to address the learning needs of students, establish learning growth patterns and inform learning achievement targets. Whole school and Stage based learning initiatives such as the 2012 Stage 2 Focus on Reading Program are implemented following the analysis of NAPLAN data.

Learning progress is reported to parents formally and informally during the course of the year. At the end of Term 2 and Term 4 student achievement is reported to parents in the context of an A-E grading Report. The written report and accompanying parent teacher interviews are undertaken in the context of Commonwealth and State Government and Diocesan reporting guidelines.

### *Integration*

Various forms of curriculum integration occur across the school from Kindergarten to Year 6. Nominated aspects of Key Learning Areas are integrated together so as to make learning purposeful and connected for students. For example, in relation to Religious Literacy Year 4 were able to integrate key components of Religious Education with Creative Arts and English,

Stage 3 were able to integrate key components of Science and Technology, Mathematics and English in relation to a study of recycling and disposable rubbish.

### *Technology Supporting Learning*

A wide range of technology is used throughout the school to support learning. Eleven interactive whiteboards are utilised from Year 3 to Year 6 in all Key Learning Areas. The interactive whiteboards are used to introduce new concepts, consolidate learning and support learning intervention. Eighty-eight laptops are utilised across the school to enhance and support learning in various Key Learning Areas. The laptops are used by students for research purposes, enrichment tasks, and communication and for the presentation of new learning. Various types of digital cameras along with a range of web based resources are used by students to assist with multi-media presentations.

### **Cross Curriculum**

#### *Literacy Strategies*

A range of literacy strategies are incorporated into all Key Learning Areas but are primarily centred within the context of the English Block. Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 class teachers have focused on aspects of phonological awareness when planning and implementing English blocks. This has been supported by extended professional learning opportunities. Guided writing, guided reading and critical literacy groups have been key focus areas in integrated learning experiences during the course of 2011. Each Grade regularly sets learning goals which relate to key aspects of core learning in relation to literacy development. The goals are used to monitor student progress and to organise specific learning intervention. The learning intervention is implemented in a variety of ways across the school. Expertise from Reading Recovery teachers along with other staff is utilised in Early Stage 1 and Stage 1, to target Kindergarten and Year 2 students who have demonstrated lower levels of learning gain in relation to literacy skills. School Support Officers and class teachers collaborate regularly so as to implement literacy intervention for all students in need across the school.

Selected teachers have started a professional learning program focusing on comprehension which develops reading for learning skills. This particular program will be fully implemented in 2012 in Stage 2 and Stage 3 but has already commenced in 2011 in an introductory manner.

#### *Numeracy Strategies*

The further development of numeracy skills has been an on-going priority across the school during 2011. Each teacher continues to focus on the implementation of quality Mathematics Sessions which incorporate clearly defined elements including: Number Sense, Introduction, Consolidation and Reflection. Each of the Mathematics Sessions is given further depth and direction by the Diocesan Learning and Teaching Framework [DLTF]. In initial planning and programming teachers utilise aspects of the DLTF and ensure that key aspects are focused on so as to guide the effective pedagogy during the Mathematics sessions. Consistent Mathematics Program templates have been created to support each of the session components and nominated DLTF elements.

Stage1 and Stage 3 classes are grouped at various times during any given week into enrichment and mathematical ability groupings. The groupings are fluid which allows for the movement of students between groups depending on the learning need.

All teachers continue to set numeracy learning goals for the students. Collaboratively designed cross Grade assessment tasks are utilised to determine specific learning intervention and enrichment for nominated students.

#### *Indigenous*

An indigenous perspective is catered for in a variety of ways within a number of Key Learning Areas across the school. Elements of Indigenous spirituality are presented to students within literature which is utilised in guided reading and shared reading experiences. Links are also made within Religious Education programs in particular the Creation unit in Year 4. National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee [NAIDOC] week is acknowledged within the school with a variety of learning experiences in each of the classes. A number of students participated in the NAIDOC week school initiatives competition, which promoted friendship and cultural diversity.

#### *Multicultural*

Year 3 classes participate in weekly half hour Italian lessons. The lessons are prepared and presented by a current Year 3 teacher. The program is language based with a cultural study component

#### *Environmental*

Stage 3 students participated in an extensive audit of safe school based disposable rubbish. The audit process involved the students monitoring and recording the amount of recyclable waste and non-recyclable clean waste generated from the school. Following strict hygiene guidelines the students recorded details over several weeks. Following the analysis of the gathered data the students reported the key findings and recommendations to a whole school Assembly.

Stage 2 and Stage 3 students have been involved in the preparation and ongoing maintenance of a school vegetable garden. This project was linked to Science and Technology and to one of the 2011 School Review and Improvement initiatives focusing on Environmental Stewardship.

### **Meeting the needs of all students**

#### *Diverse Learning Needs*

A number of strategies and models of learning are utilised across the school to differentiate learning to meet the needs of students. In various forms teachers differentiate content, process and the learning environment. Models such as Gardiner's Multiple Intelligences, Lane Clarke's Thinking Process, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy and Gallagher and Ascher's Model of Questioning support the various aspects of learning differentiation.

#### *Gifted Education*

Two staff members from the school are members of the Diocesan Gifted and Talented Network group. The staff members have attended several professional learning days focusing

on the newly formed Diocesan Policy and framework for Gifted Education. The policy and support documents include: a model for Gifted Education which is based on Gagne's differential model of giftedness and talent, a process for identification of gifted learners and models of intervention to support the gifted learner.

The school has commenced with the process of identifying gifted learners.

### *Special Education Needs*

During the course of 2011 the school attracted Student with a Disability [SWD] funding from the Commonwealth Government for 29 special needs students. Three students attracted further Supplementary funding provided by the Wollongong Diocese. The students were eligible to access the funding due to a range of needs including intellectual disability, Autism, mental health and expressive and receptive language disorders.

Individual Education Plans were formed for each of the students. The Individual plans recorded adjustments to the curriculum and individual goals in areas including social, emotional and academic learning. Each of the individual plans was formulated in collaboration with the parents of each student.

### *Self Directed Learning*

Elements of self-directed learning are evident in some Stages within the school. The development of skills for learning, which equips a student for aspects of self-directed learning, is more common place. The learning skills focus on a student's ability to make decisions about their learning, their ability to apply themselves to the learning, the ability to learn cooperatively with others, the development of time management skills and the overall development of self control so as to take responsibility of their own learning.

Aspects of the individual learning task within the Year 4 Religious Literacy Assessment involved student choice and self-direction as did the Stage 3 Inquiry based learning unit on the building of a sustainable garden. Participants in the University of Wollongong Science Fair and The Australasian Mathematical Olympiad were also provided with learning opportunities that involved student self-direction.

## **Expanding Learning Opportunities**

### *Competitions*

A number of students from the school entered the NAIDOC Week School Initiatives Competition. One student was awarded the Prime Ministers medal. The student's entry was one of a small number of national winners from a total number of 116,000 entries. During a special school Assembly the student received the Prime Minister's medal from the Executive Director of NAIDOC Week School Initiatives and the NAIDOC Director of Social Wellbeing. The student's winning entry, which depicts native flora and fauna, has been on display in Parliament House, Canberra.

Thirty five students participated in the International Competitions and Assessment for Schools in the areas of Mathematics, English, Spelling and Writing. A number of Credits and Distinctions were awarded to the students within each of the competitions.

Stage 3 students were involved in the annual University of Wollongong Science Fair. The students planned then implemented a variety of Science experiments. Results and findings were presented at the Science Fair. Each group of students were required to display their work and were expected to be able to discuss with the judges the results and key findings.

Students from Stage 3 participated in the Australasian Problem Solving Mathematical Olympiad. The competition allowed teams of students to solve 5 problematic mathematical questions over a period of 5 months. The Mathematical Olympiad aims at developing major problem solving strategies and to foster creativity and ingenuity and to strengthen intuition.

A number of students participated in the Diocese of Wollongong Christmas Art competition. Students were asked to depict an aspect of the Christian Christmas story using paint as the main medium. One child received a highly commended certificate.

### *Sport*

During 2011 a large number of students from the school participated in a wide variety of sports. The annual Swimming Carnival was conducted at the beginning of the year. A squad of 34 students were selected from the school carnival to represent the school at the Regional Diocesan Carnival. Six students were selected to represent the Region at the Diocesan Carnival and a further 3 students were selected to represent the Diocese at the MacKillop Trials. Two students were selected to represent the MacKillop Team at the NSW All Schools Swimming Carnival.

The school's Cross Country Carnival was held at the end of Term 1. Following the school carnival 40 students represented the school at the Diocesan carnival. One student was selected to represent the Diocese at the MacKillop Trials.

The school's Athletics carnival was held at the end of Term 2 from which 44 students were selected to represent the school at the Regional Diocesan Carnival. Ten students were selected to participate in the Diocesan Time Trials. Two students were selected for the MacKillop Athletic Team.

Eighteen school teams participated in the annual Paul M<sup>c</sup>Gregor and Rod Wishart Shield Rugby League Competition. Following this, 3 school teams were selected to represent the Southern Region and participate in the NSW All Schools Rugby League Carnival.

The school participated in the annual Diocesan Rugby Union competition. Two students were selected from this competition to represent the Diocese.

The school competed in the state wide Mark Taylor Shield cricket competition resulting in making the final 16 teams in NSW.

One student represented the NSW PSSA All Schools Tennis Team and 1 student was selected to represent the NSW MacKillop Team in Diving.

Four students were selected in the Diocesan Softball Team and 1 student was selected to represent the NSW MacKillop Softball Team.

Three students represented the school in the Arndell Inter-schools Equestrian carnival. A large number of students participated during the year in Netball, Basketball and Soccer gala days.

### *Debating*

Elements of Debating are treated throughout the school. The key focus primarily centres on the preparation and presentation of persuasive texts. Stage 2 and Stage 3 classes have had opportunities to debate given topics by incorporating the components of Exposition and Discussion in oral presentations. Eight teachers participated in 3 professional learning sessions focusing on preparing and writing persuasive texts.

## **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**

The NAPLAN was introduced for students in Years 3 and 5 in May 2008. NAPLAN replaces the previous State-based Basic Skills Test 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.

#### **Year 3**

Ninety students participated in Year 3 NAPLAN assessments in 2011.

The school achieved above the State in terms of overall literacy in Year 3. The strongest performance reported was 75% of students were placed in Bands 5 and 6 for Writing. This was followed by 60% in Reading.

In Numeracy, 39% were placed in the highest bands with the school performing above the state.

#### **Year 5**

Fifty-nine students participated in Year 5 NAPLAN assessments in 2011.

The school performed just below the state in overall Literacy. The strongest performance reported was 42% of students were placed in the highest bands 7 and 8 for Grammar and Punctuation.

In Numeracy, the majority of students were placed in the middle bands 5 and 6. There has been less than expected student growth in Year 5 across Literacy and Numeracy.

Analysis of the NAPLAN data enabled the school to set targets and determine our focus for 2012.

The focus for Literacy at St John's will be to provide Stage 2 and Stage 3 teaching staff with professional development to enhance the teaching of reading comprehension strategies.

The focus for Numeracy at St John's will be to continue to develop the implementation of daily quality Mathematical sessions within each class and to continue the K-6 focus on mathematical questioning and decoding skills.

### Student Achievement in Bands

The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) assesses aspects of Literacy and Numeracy in Years 3 and 5. It provides 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. 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 2011: % 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%	37%	60%	18%	69%	15%
	National	15%	39%	45%	21%	49%	29%
Writing	School	1%	25%	75%	7%	79%	15%
	National	8%	44%	46%	18%	57%	23%
Spelling	School	6%	48%	46%	13%	63%	25%
	National	15%	42%	41%	20%	53%	26%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	7%	42%	50%	13%	46%	42%
	National	14%	36%	48%	17%	46%	35%
Numeracy	School	10%	51%	39%	19%	67%	15%
	National	14%	51%	33%	17%	56%	25%

## 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) represent students who are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other Bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.

NAPLAN 2011: % AT or ABOVE NMS		YEAR 3	YEAR 5
Reading	School	100%	93%
	National	94%	92%
Writing	School	100%	98%
	National	95%	92%
Spelling	School	100%	96%
	National	93%	91%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	97%	96%
	National	93%	92%
Numeracy	School	99%	95%
	National	96%	94%

## Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

Parents, students (Years 4, 5 & 6) and staff were invited to complete surveys which 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.

### Parents

Surveys indicated very strongly that St John's helps their child in developing a knowledge and understanding of Catholic tradition; provides a safe and supportive environment; teachers being genuinely interested in the welfare of their child; offers a range of co-curricular activities; effectively communicates information regarding activities and events; and also provides various opportunities for parents to become involved with the school. Although survey's revealed slightly less attention is given in areas such as challenging each child to maximise their learning; teacher's meeting child's individual learning needs and providing appropriate information about a child's progress, these areas still reported strong results in the education of their child and general functioning of the school.

## **Students**

Students in Years 4, 5 and 6 were given the opportunity to respond to the surveys and the findings revealed significant strengths in all areas surveyed. The majority of students either strongly agreed or agreed that they were proud of their school; that the school helps them in understanding the Catholic faith; their teacher encourages them to learn to the best of their ability; they understand their rights and responsibilities at school; that they feel safe at school; if they had a problem there are people who they could approach for help; and that there are sporting and other activities in which they can become involved.

## **Staff**

Staff response to the survey indicated high levels of satisfaction in all areas especially where the school helps students to develop a knowledge and understanding about Catholic tradition, understanding their rights and responsibilities and are challenged to maximise their learning outcomes. Staff members believe that St John's provides a safe and supportive environment, provides appropriate information to parents about student progress and that the school strives to meet the individual learning needs of students.

## **School Review and Improvement**

School Review and Improvement is an ongoing 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 2011:**

- Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education
  - 1.1 Vision and Mission
- Key Area 2: Students and their Learning
  - 2.5 Pastoral Care
- Key Area 3: Pedagogy
  - 3.4 Planning, Programming and Evaluation
  - 3.7 Professional Learning

- Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities

5.1 ICT Resources

5.3 Environmental Stewardship

**School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2012:**

- Key Area 1: Catholic Life and Religious Education
  - 1.3 Catholic Life and Culture
- Key Area 2: Students and their Learning
  - 2.1 Educational potential
- Key Area 3: Pedagogy
  - 3.2 Provision for the diverse needs of learners
  - 3.3 Teaching practices
- Key Area 4: Human Resources Leadership and Management
  - 4.2 Professional development of staff
- Key Area 5: Resources, Finance and Facilities
  - 5.4 Financial management
- Key Area 7: Strategic Leadership and Management
  - 7.2 Innovation, development and change

