



2014

Annual Report

*Mater Dei Catholic Primary School, Wagga
Wagga*

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The School

A school community where strong partnerships exist continues to be a key feature of our school. To have committed teachers, students who thrive on challenge and interested parents and a most supportive Parish Priest means we have the environment to maximise learning for all in our care.

Our school population is at virtual capacity with 405 students in our two-stream school. It also means we are continuing to develop resources and facilities. The opening of our new Creative Learning Space this year highlights this. The support of our school community and the Sacred Heart Parish in facilitating such growth has been greatly appreciated. It is with pleasure that I present our 2014 Annual Report for Mater Dei Catholic Primary School.

Catholic Identity

A highlight of our year was the launch of our renewed Vision & Mission Statement. In short our vision reads: "Mater Dei Catholic Primary School is a faith centred community that nurtures and inspires." It then goes on to expand our focus in the four key words of that statement: faith, community, inspire & nurture.

The launch was most reverent & powerful with staff, students, clergy, parents and CSO personnel in attendance. We now will use this as the focus of all we do in our school.

Faith, Story & Witness was a key focus for our staff. The aim of this Diocesan initiative was for each school to develop "their own story" and share this with staff. Seeking out key personnel in our school's history was a key component with Alan Bowyer (Foundation Principal), Father Plunkett (Parish Priest when school founded) & Sue Bradley (inaugural & current staff member) were all interviewed & videoed which gave us all a great insight into the history of our school. A spiritual renewal day was held on this topic, looking at our Story as well as looking at our role as a Catholic school moving forward.

One of our main goals is to provide opportunities for those in our school community to continue their faith development. We have worked closely with Father Bernie and the Koorngal Parish in achieving this. Sacramental programs have again been a focus. The students and teachers put a lot of time and effort into preparation for these sacraments and were joined by family and friends to celebrate these special occasions.

A desire to have students develop close links with the Sacred Heart Parish has seen the continuation of school-led Parish Masses. This has given the opportunity for primary classes to take responsibility for leading five of the 5.30pm Masses in Terms Two and Three. It also provided a good opportunity for families of our school to support the classes leading the Masses. MDCC and Sacred Heart Primary School shared this responsibility for Sunday evening Masses.

Class Masses and Liturgies are held regularly in our school and allow individual classes to take on responsibility for the planning of such occasions which are strongly supported by parents and grandparents. We have continued the celebration of a combined Mass between our Primary School and Mater Dei Catholic College on the Feast of the Assumption to recognise her patronage of both schools.

The pastoral component in our community continues to grow through the work of our Pastoral Care Co-ordinator, Lisa Simpson. Lisa has co-ordinated support to families in need with visits, meals and through other means.

Lisa has also assisted with our REC in the establishment of a "Minnie Vinnies" group in our school which has allowed these children to support those in the wider community. Visits to Nursing Homes and Retirement Villages were the major focus for students.

In developing student's global awareness and empathy for those less fortunate, significant amounts of money were raised through their involvement in the Missions fundraising, project compassion and other charitable events throughout the year.

A Message from key School Bodies

P&F President's Report

I am delighted to present the Mater Dei Primary School Parents & Friends President's report for the 2014 school year.

2014 was another big, positive year for the Mater Dei community, full of celebrations and achievements, building openings, social events, families joining our community for the first time and families leaving after many years of contributing into our community.

The P&F would like to thank every community member for their contributions to our school.

I am continually amazed at the support that the school receives from parents and friends each and every day. The willingness for people to assist in the classrooms and office, to volunteer time and effort for specific tasks and to work together for large events like the school fete reminds me that we have a generous community of capacity, working towards the benefit of the students.

2014 saw a number of events come to fruition that had been started in previous years. The opening of the Creative Learning Space in November was the completion of a long process from idea to completions, and was a targeted project for P&F fundraising in previous years. The launch of the schools new vision and mission statements was a process that was supported and contributed to by P&F members over a couple of school years.

This highlights the purpose of the P&F focusing beyond an individual school year and working with the school and school council towards future goals.

The P&F hosted two very informative parent forums in 2014, focusing on writing and Cyber Safety. These forums provide time for dedication to a particular area that is important in the role as parents and careers of Mater Dei students. I thank the staff for their contributions and preparation in hosting the writing forum and Ang Cook for persisting with chasing the organisers of the Cyber Safety programs.

Fundraising is one of the ways in which the P&F support the school community, working with the school and school council to identify projects and areas that funds raised can best help the community. In 2014 the major fundraiser was the school fete, an event combining a wonderful community day with raising funds. I thank the many, many people who helped make the fete such a success, particularly the group that organised the individual stalls. The slight rain didn't hamper

an amazing day, with funds raised being used to increase technology in classrooms.

The P&F were able to provide funds for specific resource requests, including new books for the library to support the new curriculum, sets of sporting socks for school representative team and proposals for more technology in the classroom. This is in addition to funds transferred to the school council.

A big thank you to Carmen Coates for her continued work in the P&F run uniform shop. This is a beneficial and well run function of the school community that assists parents and the school.

The stewardship and vision of the school council has seen visible changes at the school in 2014, with the painting of the school being an obvious example. I thank the school council for their continued work on the governance of the school facilities and management.

The student disco hosted by the P&F was an enjoyable social event for the students, focusing a P&F event purely for the students. It was another example of an event where many helpers made for an enjoyable night for all. Thanks to all community members who supported this night for the students.

The annual welcome evening for kinder and new parents hosted by the P&F is a wonderful initiative, with the workload shared between many in our community. I thank everyone involved in preparing and supporting this event.

The role of president in my first year has been greatly assisted by the re-elected office bearers in 2014. I thank Angela Cook, Melissa Molloy, James Baker and Scott Boyle for their support whilst finding my feet in 2014. I am very thankful to have had the opportunity to work with you all in 2014, working with the dedicated and enthusiastic P&F members to the benefit of the school and community.

Your commitment to the school community in accepting formal office bearer positions is appreciated. I also thank their families for allowing the time you dedicate to this role.

I would also like to thank Lisa Simpson, the school pastoral care worker, for the work that she did in supporting the P&F and implementing many P&F initiatives, with a lot of that occurring as a member of the P&F.

A special thank you to the staff of Mater Dei Primary for allowing the P&F to work so closely with the school. The attendance of many staff members to the P&F meetings always brings important perspective when discussing issues. I thank Danny, Margie and all staff members who attend meetings when they are not parents at the school.

A thank you to the families that left Mater Dei Primary at the end of 2014. Many of the families have had long associations with the school, and as such the P&F. The collective hours that have been invested in the school would be too great to count, but your contributions to the school have provided the facilities and community that new families can now enjoy and build on.

In 2015 I am looking forward to the P&F continuing the support of the school and the school council, with funds raised being targeted towards specific projects and causes. The P&F will continue to provide a forum for discussion around any issue raised by parents, friends or the school, and work towards the common goal of assisting the education of the students and maintaining our strong community.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT FROM SCHOOL COUNCIL

Firstly I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow board members for their efforts throughout 2014, it has certainly been a pleasure to be part of such a great team. To Danny, Margi and Sue for the leadership and tireless efforts to make the school a better place for our children to learn and grow.

Throughout 2014 there were a number of projects identified and undertaken by the board as priorities for the school, these included:

-The building completion and opening of our Creative Arts room, a huge thank you to Danny, Jo Carrol and Peter Hurst.

-The development of a Building Maintenance Programme, thank you to Peter Hurst.

-Landscaping project at the front of the school.

-The repainting of the entire school.

-The introduction of the school app, thank you to Paul Irvine.

-The continued maintenance of the school including camera, structural and plumbing work.

-The evolving and improving accounting reports, thank you to Col Levy to name a few.

Priorities for 2015 will include:

-School signage.

-Traffic flow issues with school drop off and pick up.

-Evaluation of the school energy costs.

-Finishing the maintenance assessment of the school.

Once again thank you to all the board and to Danny and his staff for their support throughout the year and I look forward to another great year at Mater Dei.

Regards,

Andrew Mcleod

Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

We were delighted with the student's results in the NAPLAN testing conducted for Year 3 and Year 5 students. Our student cohort achieved outcomes above the state average in every component. Whilst these results are most satisfying, we will carefully analyse feedback to assist with future learning and teaching. Parents can refer to the "Myschool" website for greater detail.

Professional Learning

The focus of our Professional Development in 2014 was clearly based around three different areas. The implementation of the English syllabus was a major focus with Mike Murray from the PETAA association working with our staff on programming for the new syllabus. Improving writing in our school became a priority with a "Writing" team to provide direction and appropriate PD. Bev Derewianka was invited to school to work with staff on how to most effectively teach grammar as part of the writing process. The Literacy continuum was introduced to teachers. This allowed us to plot children to give us an indication as to where the students in our class were at on the continuum but also provided a focus as to what we had to do with them to move them forward. Our writing team led several other session at teachers meetings in supporting teachers in becoming more effective with the teaching of writing.

Inquiry learning has become the focus of what we do in our school. This basis for on-going learning follows a cycle around effective learning & continual reflection on our teaching & the needs of our students.

Towards the end of the year, Maths became a focus with the implementation of the new Maths syllabus in 2015. Deanery days were held for all teachers looking at new components of the curriculum. Two members of our staff, Tim Lawler & Beck Bailey-Brown, were also part of this team but then led our staff through PD on programming & teacher practice while incorporating the new syllabus.

As mentioned earlier our staff also undertook PD in Religious Education through the day on "Faith, Story & Witness".

Teaching Staff

The NSW government requires that this report detail the number of teachers in each of the following categories:

A) have teaching qualifications from a recognised higher education institution within Australia

B) have qualifications from a recognised higher education institution within Australia but no formal teacher education qualifications

C) have relevant successful teaching experience and appropriate knowledge but no formal teacher qualifications.

A	B	C	TOTAL
25	0	0	25

Workforce Composition

Our school staff consists of a Principal, assistant Principal, twelve permanent full-time teachers, ten part-time teachers, two teacher assistants and five support staff. All of these personnel have the appropriate qualifications and clearance screening required to fulfil their duties in our school.

Student Attendance

Student attendance rates for each Year level and the whole school

Year	Attendance %
Kinder	95%
Year 1	95%
Year 2	95%
Year 3	95%
Year 4	96%
Year 5	95%
Year 6	94%

Student Non-Attendance

Teachers are provided with absentee slips. If no explanation of an absence has been provided to the teacher after a two week period, an "explanation of absence" form is distributed to the parent.

Should there be more than five unexplained absences, contact is then made by the Principal with the family.

Should there be regular absences by students, contact is made with parents to discuss that situation.

Should students be going to be absent beyond six school days, parents are now to apply for Principal exemption by completing appropriate forms.

Enrolment Policy

Mater Dei School has developed its enrolment policy in alignment with the Diocesan Enrolment Guidelines. It is clearly outlined in our school prospectus, enrolment brochure and website. In short, our school has a commitment in the first instance to siblings of existing students who meet readiness & age requirements, then Catholic families who reside in our zone and are active parishioners of Sacred Heart Koorngal. Active, non-zoned parishioners are then considered. Catholic families residing in our zone where children are of appropriate age and readiness are the next to be offered enrolment. Should vacancies allow, offering of places can then be made to Catholic families in our Parish and then other Parishes, where necessary. Non-Catholic families are most welcome to apply but need to understand that Catholic families will have first priority in placement.

Diocesan Enrolment policy can be accessed through the following link:
<http://cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm>

Characteristics of the Student Body

Boys	Girls	Indig'	LOTE*	TOTAL
189	216	4	2	405

**Language background Other Than English*

Structure of Classes

Classes are divided into the seven different grades, with Kindergarten to Year 6 all being double-streamed. The maximum class size at the school is 30 students.

School Policies

Discipline /Student Welfare/Complaints & Grievances

Our school is committed to the development of the whole person: body, spirit, heart and mind.

In 2014 we reviewed our School Welfare Policy that encompasses discipline, student welfare, complaints & grievances.

In accordance with the policy we aim to establish a community of care through:

- welcoming and including students and their families
- respecting the dignity and uniqueness of each student
- providing a safe, secure & stimulating environment conducive to learning
- ensuring fairness & justice within appropriate discipline structures
- promoting self-esteem and critical thinking in students
- processes that allow parents to express their concerns or grievances

Changes to School Policies

Most policies are current. All school policies were reviewed and updated this year as part of our preparation for School Registration. All of these policies can be accessed via the Teacher's Drive on our school network. A hard copy of all policies is also kept in the School Office.

Improvement Targets

A common focus across our school is to improve the capacity of students in writing. A number of strategies have been incorporated to achieve this, particularly quality PD for teachers. (outlined in Professional Development section). Grade planning meetings every three weeks in place of Teachers meetings will focus completely on planning for writing. Such meetings also align nicely with our on-going strategy to develop a Professional Learning Community. The opportunity to collaborate closely with our colleagues in learning, planning and sharing are key elements of this.

Readiness for implementation of the new Maths syllabus has seen a number of PD opportunities for staff.

The development of our "School Story" as part of the Diocesan focus on Faith, Witness & Story has been a major achievement. This was incorporated in a Spiritual renewal day with all staff.

The School Council has had a focus on developing an on-going maintenance program within the school. Significant amounts of work was done on storm water and sewerage issues, the majority of our school had a paint "makeover" and signage and landscaping work certainly added to the aesthetic component of our school surrounds.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Reaching out to others both within and outside our school community continues to be a focus. A number of initiatives including fundraisers for third world countries, providing outgrown shoes for disadvantaged schools in our region and continued development of our links with retirement villages have borne witness to our focus. Specific programs of education & support to “Little Paths”, “Angels for the Forgotten” & our school sponsored child were included.

The role of the Pastoral Care co-ordinator continues to show the benefits such a role will bring. Aside of supporting families in need in our school community, a number of student initiatives have already begun. One such initiative has been our Mini Vinnies group within the school. The purpose of this group is outreach to the wider community and included visits to Retirement Villages and Nursing Homes.

The school has continued the “One in Spirit” award which, each fortnight, recognises a student who is demonstrating the values promoted by the School. We distribute each week one merit award and one “You Can Do It” award to each class for students who show strong academic effort, social or environmental awareness or the qualities sought through the “You Can Do It” program. Guest speakers have spoken to students throughout the year, focusing on the different “keys” of the YCDI program.

Cyber-safety workshops were held for students, staff and parents to better inform us of the safe and respectful use of the internet and other communication devices.

Our Student Council continues to give our student body a voice in matters concerning our school. Representatives from classes meet regularly with the Principal to discuss pertinent matters.

Community Satisfaction

The following information has been provided to the school. It has been a valuable gauge for determining the level of satisfaction the community has with our school.

Parents

My child (son or daughter) is usually happy at Mater Dei

<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
75%	25%	%	%

Students

I am usually happy at Mater Dei.

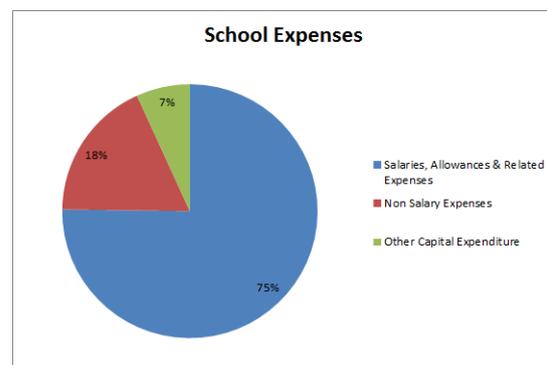
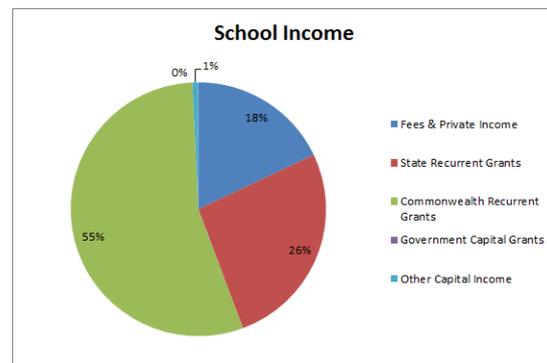
<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
60%	40%	%	%

Staff

I am usually happy at Mater Dei

<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
80%	20%	%	%

Financial Statement Summary



About This Report

This report has been compiled by the Principal with the assistance of appropriate school and Diocesan personnel and encompasses educational and associated activities of our school community in 2014.