



2014

Annual Report

St Michael's Primary School, Coolamon

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The School

This report is an indication of the Year 2014 at St Michael's Primary School, Coolamon. St Michael's is a rural school with a population of 108 students situated 40km north of Wagga Wagga. St Michael's provides quality education to Catholic and non-Catholic children from Coolamon and surrounding districts.

St Michael's is a learning community operating under our Vision and in the belief that students need a focused, purposeful, challenging and supportive teaching environment for learning to take place.

Catholic Identity

St Michael's is a Catholic Primary School whose values are centred on Christ and living Gospel values according to Church teaching. Students at St Michael's learn about living the Catholic faith while respecting the faith traditions of others.

St Michael's follows the Diocesan "Sharing our Story" syllabus in Religious Education lessons which are conducted daily.

This year students have participated in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Each of these ceremonies was a holy and spiritual event which students participated in with great reverence and sincerity.

Similarly the numerous School Masses that were celebrated throughout the year saw the highest levels of respect demonstrated by our students who participated with enthusiasm. Our Advent and Easter Liturgies were reverent and moving ceremonies.

Throughout the year the School participated in various fund raising endeavours for the Missions and other charities such as St Vincent de Paul. These included multi-days as well as Masses where food and other goods were donated by the school community. Additionally we participated in fund raisers such as Project Compassion which also raised student awareness of the welfare of less fortunate people and groups around the world.

The school is an integral part of the Parish as the Parish is an essential part of the School. We have a very good relationship with our Parish Priest, Fr Doug George, who is very supportive of the school and its initiatives.

A Message from key School Bodies

The school council is an integral part of how our School operates and helps in various decision making processes. The school council was chaired by Mr Tony Donoghue and consisted of 10 members from our school community. Meetings are held monthly with the AGM held in November. We encourage everybody who wants to have an interest in the education of their children to participate in the running of the school through the various opportunities available to them, be this on the School Council, P&F or other more informal avenues such as working bees, reading in classrooms etc.

P&F

This body is chaired by Brett Delahunty and meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. This is an important part of the school that not only helps with fundraising but also endeavours to develop a social and caring community. The P&F have continued with the fundraising that is required for the school to remain in a financial position. With a large number of varied fundraising ideas the P&F has been successful both in terms of attendance as well as financially. Such fundraising events have included bulb sales, pie drives and street raffles. The job of the P&F is made easier with the willingness of our close knit school community to support the school.

Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

Students in Year 3 and Year 5 at St Michael's Primary School participated in National Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) Testing in 2014.

Our overall results in Literacy and Numeracy for Year 3 and Year 5 met or exceeded National Minimum Standards and were at or above National and Diocesan Averages. As a result of examining trend data and growth patterns provided through this NAPLAN testing, St Michael's will be placing an emphasis on professional development in the areas of teaching of reading, spelling, grammar and punctuation.

St Michael's will also be implementing the new National Maths Syllabus in 2015. Linked to this implementation of First Steps Maths resources in order to maintain and improve

levels of student growth in these areas. The area of Problem Solving in Maths was also identified as an area of continued emphasis.

Professional Learning

During 2014 staff at St Michael's engaged in a range of Professional Learning experiences. All staff were in Professional Learning Experiences around understanding and implementing the new Mathematics syllabus for the National Curriculum.

St Michael's teaching staff continued to implement the First Steps approach to Writing and Mathematics and this included Professional Learning through revisiting and revising various aspects of utilising this resource. Professional Development around the teaching of Problem Solving in Mathematics was also conducted. Additionally, all staff engaged with Professional Learning around the implementation of the Australian Syllabus for English which was adopted in 2014.

Professional Learning was also continued in embedding the concept of Restorative Practices within the school. These practices are underpinned by the central idea that the best ways for decisions to be made, solutions reached and conflict resolved is through establishing positive relationships, mutual respect and reflective practice.

St Michael's also conducted Professional Learning through the Catholic School's Office's "Faith, Story, Witness" initiative. Through this Professional Development staff were given the opportunity to reflect on the impact of their own faith, as well as the faith history within the school, on the education of our students.

Teaching Staff

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

- A) having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines, or
- B) having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lacking formal teacher education qualifications.

A	B	TOTAL
9		9

Workforce Composition

There were 4 full-time teachers employed at St Michael's in 2014. Of these teachers 2 were female and 2 were male. Additionally 5 part-time female teachers were employed. Four of these part-time positions were 0.5 FTE and the remaining position was 0.45 FTE.

A female clerical assistant was employed for 30 hours a week also.

Student Attendance

Student attendance rates for each Year level and the whole school

Year	Attendance %
Kinder	92%
Year 1	96%
Year 2	96%
Year 3	93%
Year 4	94%
Year 5	95%
Year 6	94%

Student Non-Attendance

Class rolls are taken daily at St Michael's. It is expected that the school be notified of any absences, partial absences, early pick up or lateness. An unexplained absence of more than 5 days is followed up by the School Principal. Within each fortnight parents are asked to explain any unexplained absences recorded by the class teacher in the class roll. All absence notes are kept by the teacher and archived by the secretary at the end of each school year. All roles are kept up to date electronically through the roll marking system provided by the Catholic Schools Office of Wagga Wagga.

Enrolment Policy

The accepted practice for enrolment at St Michael's school is to give preference to children of Catholic parents who wish to enroll their child at the school.

This practice does not exclude the children of any parents being enrolled at the school.

The accepted practice is to enroll children who turn five (5) years of age by June 1st.

Children whose birth date is between June 1st, and July 31st may be enrolled after discussion with the Principal and counseling concerning the difficulties that may be experienced by such children. The possibility of the child being asked to repeat a grade should also be explained at this time. If the parents wish to enroll their child they are asked to sign a form indicating the steps that have been followed.

Children with special needs, e.g. deaf, partially sighted, or with other handicaps, may be enrolled, but only following careful discussion between parents, Principal and the Special Services consultant of the Diocese of Wagga. Enrolment will depend on the meeting of all aspects of the Diocesan Policy for enrolment of these children.

The Public Health (Amendment) Act 1992 requires that the school obtain from parents enrolling children in our school an IMMUNISATION CERTIFICATE. This Certificate will document the Vaccine-preventable diseases that the child has been immunised against. Any child whose parents do not provide a certificate will be deemed as being unimmunised and must be excluded from school should an outbreak of any of the vaccine-preventable diseases, for which they are not immunised, occurs.

The full text of the Enrolment policy can be accessed at the front desk of the school or via the [school website](#).

Characteristics of the Student Body

Boys	Girls	Indig'	LOTE*	TOTAL
57	58			115

Structure of Classes

St Michael's had a K/1, a Year 1/2, a Year 3/4, a Year 5 and a Year 6 class in 2014.

School Policies

Student Welfare

St Michael's has developed numerous policies relating to student welfare. These include Pastoral Care and Behaviour, Child Protection, Student Safety, Supervision and Sun Safe Policies. St Michael's School community believes that effective Student Welfare Policies are essential if we are to truly reflect the ideals expressed in the School's vision

and be able to achieve the educational aims of the school.

Discipline

The School Discipline Policy at St Michael's Primary School aims to provide a safe, caring and supportive learning and teaching environment. The policy helps students to demonstrate responsible behavior and a sense of self worth as well as respect and consideration for the feelings, rights and property of others. It also aims to maximize opportunities for teaching and learning.

Complaints and Grievances

The school has adopted an approach to resolving complaints and grievances that is based on procedural fairness. It recognizes that parents/caregivers and students must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory way.

Parents/students with a complaint are encouraged in the first instance to contact their class teacher. If the need then arises contact with the Principal and the Catholic Schools Office may be appropriate.

Our school follows the Catholic Schools Office Complaints and Grievances Policy which can be found on the [CSO Website](#).

Anti-Bullying

St Michael's has a strong policy of non-tolerance of bullying and recognises that bullying can take many forms. It outlines numerous strategies used to deter bullying and all of these strategies are based on the Catholic notion of Reconciliation and Growth and are designed to raise awareness of and reduce the amount of bullying.

Changes to School Policies

The Enrolment, Discipline, Student Welfare, Anti-Bullying and Complaints and Grievances policies are unchanged from the previous year. Their full text can be accessed at school in the front office or via [our website](#). Additionally Catholic Schools Office Policies can be found on the [CSO Website](#).

Improvement Targets

During 2014 teachers implemented and used the new English Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum for the first time after undergoing

Professional Development in its use during the previous year. During the year teachers were able to demonstrate increasing confidence and ability to use this syllabus as they became more familiar with it. Professional Development for staff in 2014 was concerned with preparing them for the introduction of the new Australian Maths Curriculum which will be adopted in 2015. Additionally the school, in response to analysis of data provided through NAPLAN testing, carried out professional development around the teaching of Punctuation and Grammar and its application to writing and reading.

During 2014 St Michael's, in partnership with Charles Sturt University, conducted a very successful "Enriching Vocabulary Project" involving our staff and students. This project was designed to assist students to improve vocabulary skills and then apply this to all learning areas and specifically that of English. Staff from St Michael's were also involved in attending Numeracy collegiality groups with staff from other schools across the diocese, allowing for sharing of best teaching practice and also to gain feedback and advice around best teaching in maths.

The school once again participated in the Best Start Program which allowed for the collection of comprehensive data about our Kindergarten students so as to allow us to best meet their learning needs from day 1. 2014 also saw the school construct a mosaic in the school grounds depicting a goanna which is a symbol of the Wiradjuri people who were the original custodians of the land on which the school is situated. This mosaic has added a point of cultural and artistic interest to our school playground. Towards the end of 2013, the school was successful in applying for a Heritage Grant through the Coolamon Shire in order to allow renovation and restoration work to be completed on the timber windows at the front of the school that are in a serious state of disrepair due to prolonged exposure to the elements. This work was carried out during Term 1 2014 with great improvement to the front façade of the school. Additionally, a great deal of landscaping and gardening was completed across the front of the school, resulting in a vast improvement to the appearance and street appeal of St Michael's.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

In 2014 St Michael's continued to embed Restorative Practice within the policies and practices of the school. These practices seek to develop good relationships and restore a sense of community.

St Michael's also endorses the Diocesan facilitated "Making Jesus Real" program which teaches students concepts and skills around respect for self as well as each other and the need to be responsible community members.

St Michael's also continued its longstanding tradition of strongly supporting the local community with heavy involvement in the ANZAC Day March, visiting the local aged care facility to perform songs and interact with senior citizens, participating in the annual RSL Essay Writing Competition and participating in the annual CWA Poster Competition involving the study of another country and culture.

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 {school name here}

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
80%	20%	0%	0%

Students

I am usually happy at {school name here}.

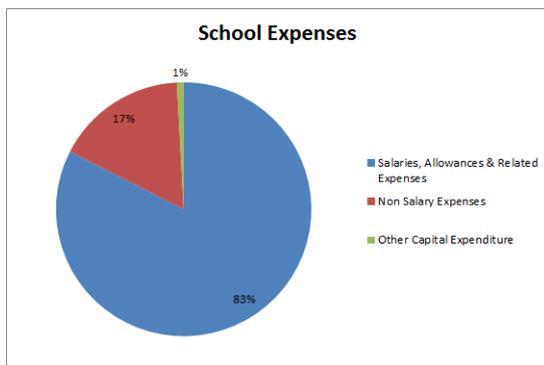
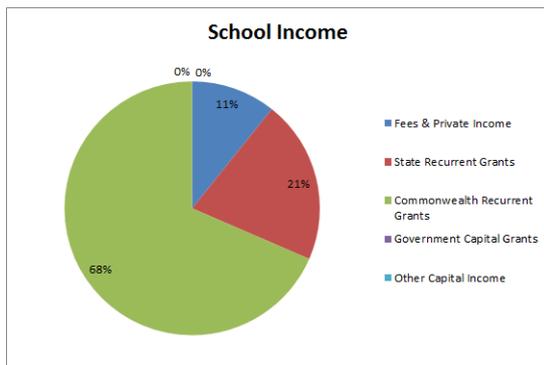
Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
50%	44%	4%	2%

Staff

I am usually happy at {school name here}

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40%	60%	0%	0%

Financial Statement Summary



About This Report

This report was written with the purpose of reflecting upon and reporting on the 2014 school year. It informs the community of where the school is headed in future years as well as highlights and achievements within the school community. Whilst I, as Principal, have prepared and written the report, this has been done in consultation with the school community. I would like to thank this community (students, families, parish and staff) for the continued support of St Michael's School.

Yours Sincerely

Brendan Flanagan
(Principal)