

Annual School Report

2015



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

About This Report

St Mary's Star of the Sea, Milton 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 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 Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School

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Parish Priest: Father David Anthony Davies

Principal: Nicole Van Ingen

Date: 7 December 2015

Vision Statement

“Help One Another as We Grow in the Love of God”

Our mission is to provide an environment where children, staff and parents are educated in an atmosphere of Catholic traditions while living out Christian values.

Message from Key School Bodies

Principal's Message

2015 has been an exceptional year of teamwork and community engagement for St Mary's community. A MoneySmart School, St Mary's held a significant event each Term for students to experience budgeting, shopping, saving and selling. The biennial school Fete was held as a marvellous community event with \$11,000 raised on a glorious spring day. A celebration of the diverse and unique culture of the Milton-Ulladulla District was held on 16th November with the launch of the “Cooking with MUD” St Mary's community cookbook, in which every family contributed a recipe. Students in Year 2 and Year 5 were the first NSW Primary School students to participate in the “Surf Groms” program through a Federal Sporting School's Grant. It was great to have a number of dads involved in this initiative.

Parent Involvement

The culmination of so many hands and hearts this year has brought the St Mary's school community and spirit to a new level. While there has been a large sum of money raised, none would have been possible without the dedication and tireless work from many. The Parents and Friends' Association 2015 has been humbled and overwhelmed by the school and wider community's generosity. Every moment of hard work has been made invaluable by the smiles, laughs and joy of the children. We are all excited for 2016, the upgrade to the playground and another profitable, fun and exciting year.

Parents and Friends Association, President

Student Leadership

Over the course of the year, the St Mary's school community has celebrated many events both within the school grounds and within the local community. Some of these events have been events specific to the Milton-Ulladulla community, whilst others have been special days that are part of national or global initiatives.

We have been involved in visiting Sarah Claydon (a local nursing home) to spread good cheer to the residents there, playing instruments and singing at the Ulladulla carols as well as the Blessing of the Fleet and several other local events. We once again hosted the Annual Shoalhaven Bush Poetry competition and achieved great success. We were also involved with local Public Speaking and Debating competitions and managed to win the debating section. We actively participate in Milton Show, entering several events both individually and as class groups. We have been involved in many sporting events including basketball, soccer, touch football, swimming, athletics and cross country.

At a national level, we have been involved in ANZAC Day celebrations and marches, as well as fundraising for St Vincent de Paul. We have been part of the First Lego League competition and have also participated in Cyber Safety webinars with students across the country.

Internationally, all of us have been part of the Hour of Code which is a global computer programming event that millions of students from around the world participate in. Along with this, we have also raised money

to fund a program which teaches people in Fiji to grow their own fresh produce and become a sustainable community. We have also raised money for a school in Madagascar, helping them to have fresh running water.

2015 Student Leaders

School Profile

School Context

St Mary's Star of the Sea is a Catholic systemic co-educational school located in Milton. The school caters for students in years K-6 and has a current enrolment of 138.

St Mary's Star of the Sea Primary School is a coeducational Catholic Primary School, which operates under the guidance of the Catholic Education Office of the Diocese of Wollongong. With Christ as our model, our aim is to assist the parents and the parish in the provision of quality Catholic learning and teaching. We strive to provide an environment which will foster sound teaching and learning, and encourage all our students to develop to their full potential. As a learning community, we are committed to making St Mary's Star of the Sea a place where values such as love, reconciliation and compassion are evident and where hope is real and practised. We are a single stream Catholic school serving families from Vincentia in the north to Kioloa in the south. The school vision, 'Help One Another as we Grow in the Love of God' is consistently reflected in the care and support staff provide for the school community and the strong emphasis it places on Catholic identity and traditions. Students are encouraged to support Caritas and Catholic Mission. Due reverence is given to National Days of Recognition. The school provides opportunities for students to grow and develop intellectually and educationally. Renewal of the curriculum and a review of national testing National assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results have placed our focus on the development and monitoring of literacy and numeracy skills. The school's integrated units of work for all Stages has helped to ensure the provision of engaging, diversifying and quality learning experiences for all students to achieve specific outcomes. A range of curriculum opportunities are provided which reflect an awareness of the individual learning and pastoral needs of the students. All students are encouraged to participate in a diverse range of educationally based competitions.

Student Enrolments as at August 2015 census

2015 enrolments	
Boys	70
Girls	72
Total	142
Indigenous	8
LBOTE	17

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.sosmdow.catholic.edu.au and the CEDoW website: www.dow.catholic.edu.au. No changes were made to this Policy in 2015.

Student Attendance

2015 Attendance	Male	Female
Kinder	88.3%	92.6%
Year 1	91.4%	88.1%
Year 2	93.2%	89.4%
Year 3	89.6%	90.1%
Year 4	93.2%	94.1%
Year 5	91.4%	92.5%
Year 6	87.8%	92.5%
Whole school	91.0%	91.2%

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, monitor part or whole day absences.

In accordance with the school's attendance policy and CEDoW guidelines, student attendance is monitored and recorded daily. Two week's duration is given for non-attendance to be finalised. All absences require an electronic notification or a written note sent with the child upon their return to school. Any notifications not given within two weeks of an absence are contacted in writing by the Senior School Support Officer (SSSO). The Principal makes phone, face to face or written contact with parents/carers if absences remain unexplained or lengthy.

Staffing Profile

There are a total of 14 teachers and 7 support staff at St Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School. This number includes 8 full-time, 6 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	0%

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

Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2015 was 96.2%. This does not include planned leave such as Maternity or Long Service Leave. The teacher retention rate from 2014 to 2015 was 81%.

Professional Learning

During 2015 St Mary's star of the sea personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes, particularly through School Review & Improvement priorities. These included:

- A. St Mary's Star of the Sea whole school development days involving 18 staff. These days focused on:
 - Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)/Emergency Care/Anaphylaxis
 - Epilepsy
 - Enneagram Training
 - Sentral training
 - SALT Training
 - Australian Curriculum

- B. Other professional learning activities provided at school level including CEDoW run courses:
 - Lamplighters (5)
 - Shining Lights (5)
 - Writing (3)
 - Science Australian Curriculum (1)
 - History and Geography Australian Curriculum (1)
 - MSPEC (2)
 - SPB4L (4)

The average expenditure by the school on professional learning per staff member was \$120. In addition, professional learning opportunities were provided by CEDoW with an additional average expenditure per staff member of \$1941.

Catholic Life & Religious Education

St. Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School has continued to develop as an integral part of the Milton, Ulladulla and Sussex Inlet Parish, under the pastoral leadership of Father David Anthony Davies. The school continues to support families in the faith development of the children entrusted to its care. Central to this work is a promotion of Parish life including whole school Masses and seasonal liturgies of the Parish. The school supports a significant number of Parish initiatives throughout the year including the opportunity to celebrate the Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation. This year students have also had the opportunity to lead fortnightly school Masses throughout the year; this has been an excellent opportunity to link the students' class learning with the life of the church.

Students have opportunities for liturgical celebration to complement the Religious Education syllabus taught in all classrooms. During the opening school Mass at the beginning of the year we asked for God's blessing on the school community and presented leadership badges. Students play a key role in the Parish Liturgical celebrations. The Ash Wednesday Liturgy and the Easter Passion plays are celebrated as a whole school.

In Term 3, the Year 6 students of St. Mary's attended the Year Mass with Bishop Peter Ingham. They joined the following schools at St. Paul's Catholic Primary School, Albion Park:

- St. Michael's Catholic Primary School, Nowra
- Ss. Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School, Kiama
- Stella Maris Catholic Primary School, Shellharbour
- Nazareth Catholic Primary School, Shellharbour City

In Term 3, St. Mary's students celebrated their Feast Day on September 8th, The Feast Day of 'The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary'. They were joined with students from St. Michael's Primary School and St. John's High School, Nowra.

In Term 4 a Graduation Liturgy was held for the outgoing Year 6 students. This was coupled with a candle ceremony in which Year 6 students passed the 'light of leadership' onto the Year 5 students who will lead the school in 2016. Other significant events celebrated include: Grandparent's Day Liturgy celebrated in Catholic School's Week, Mother's Day Liturgy, Father's Day Liturgy, ANZAC Day Liturgy, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop Feast Day and Remembrance Day Prayer Service.

The school has a rich prayer life. Each day starts with the whole school joining together to say our School Prayer. On Tuesday morning the staff joins together for prayer. Within the classroom students have the opportunity for formal and informal prayers of praise, thanksgiving, sorrow and petition. The Religious Education Coordinator attended the REC and Liturgy Coordinators Conference - Catholic Mission Conference in Sydney.

A significant number of staff have been involved with the Lamplighter and Shining Lights Spirituality Days. This is a spiritual journey which will continue for the staff for the next two years. Beginning teachers have also been supported with the attendance at spirituality days for beginning teachers.

The school has a strong culture of social justice. All classes have Caritas boxes, Catholic Mission boxes and St Vincent De Paul Boxes provided for their sacred space. Students learn about the work of Caritas, Catholic Mission and St. Vincent de Paul. The St. Mary's community's generosity is evident when these are collected. Our donations included:

- Caritas (\$407)
- Catholic Mission (\$200)

- St. Vincent de Paul (\$500)
- Sr. Anna Warlow (\$180)
- Relay for Life (\$177)

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 2015. The school cohort in 2015 consisted of 18 Year 4 students who sat the Religious Literacy Assessment Workbook (Part A) on 24 August 2015 and 19 completed the Extended Task (Part B). The Extended Task was based on the Unit: *One With God's Creation* and was completed during the first half 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 describing Jesus' actions in the story 'Feeding of the five thousand'.
- Ability to identify the prayer which contains 'Blessed are you among women and blessed be the fruit of your womb, Jesus'.
- Ability to identify what the symbol of fire represents in the story of Pentecost.
- Recollection and sequencing of the events of the story, 'Feeding of the Five Thousand'.

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:

- Identify the symbols for Baptism
- Identify the colours used for Easter and Christmas
- Correctly sequence the parts of the Mass
- Identify the many ways we pray

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

For Part A, 11.80% of students were placed in the developing level, 82.40% in the achieving level and 5.90% were in the extending level.

For Part B, 5% of students were placed in the developing level, 65% in the achieving level and 30% were in the extending level.

Combining Parts A and B, 11.80% of students were placed in the developing level, 64.70% in the achieving level and 23.50% were in the extending level for Religious Literacy.

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 2015

- **Key Area 1- Catholic Life and Religious Education**

- 1.1 Vision and Mission

- Goal: The prayer experience for staff, students and parents of St Mary's school is rich, deep and diverse.

- **Key Area 2- Students and their Learning**

- 2.1 Educational Potential

- Goal: Diverse learning needs of highly achieving students are acknowledged and catered for by staff at the school.

- 2.3 Reporting Student Achievement

- Goal: Sentral Data Management and Reporting System is updated quarterly based on evidence of student's achievement.

- **Key Area 3-Pedagogy**

- 3.4 Planning, Programming and Evaluation

- Goal: Regular Stage meetings are held, with Leadership Team members supporting collaborative planning and developing a culture of a professional learning community.

- 3.5 Assessment

- Goal: A comprehensive Assessment Schedule is agreed practise amongst staff. This information is stored in student files to allow seamless transition from year to year

- **Key Area 4- Human Resources Leadership and Management**

- 4.5 Overall Compliance with Legislation and other Requirements

- Goal: Staff are aware of their individual and collective accountability for meeting compliance. Matters of compliance are reviewed and outcomes recorded.

- **Key Area 5- Resources, Finances and Facilities**

- 5.1 ICT Resources

- Goal: A 3 year cycle of purchase, maintain, audit and replace will enter its second cycle. The school budgets effectively for sufficient ICT resources for 2015 whole class ICT lessons, with a specialist teacher.

- **Key Area 6- Parents, Partnerships, Consultation and Communication**

- 6.1 Parent Involvement

- Goal: An Orientation Program is given to parents and volunteers outlining codes of conduct, arena of safety and general Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) issues.

- **Key Area 7- Strategic Leadership and Management**

- 7.1 Planning for Improvement

Goal: St Mary's Leadership Team shares clearly articulated goals for the strategic development of teaching, learning and faith with staff, students, parents, parish and the wider community.

School Review and Improvement components to be reviewed and rated in 2016:

- **Key Area 1- Catholic Life and Religious Education**

- 1.2 Religious Education

- Goal: Teachers have the knowledge and qualifications to engage each class in a rich, deep task in Religious Education once during the year (similar to Religious Assessment Task Part B)

- **Key Area 2- Students and their Learning**

- 2.2 Rights and Responsibilities

- Goal: A comprehensive, evidence based framework of social emotional learning will be taught in K-6 in 2016.

- **Key Area 3-Pedagogy**

- 3.6 School Climate, Learning Environment and Relationships

- Goal: School leadership will be distributive and shared by those who have skill and qualifications in specialist areas.

- **Key Area 4- Human Resources Leadership and Management**

- 4.4 Succession Planning

- Goal: Specialist Teachers in Information Communication Technology (ICT), Special Needs and Music will begin induction into the school.

- **Key Area 5- Resources, Finances and Facilities**

- 5.4 Financial Management

- Goal: The school has an accurate budget which provides a safe, modern and clean learning environment for the school community.

- **Key Area 6- Parents, Partnerships, Consultation and Communication**

- 6.2 Reporting to the Community

- Goal: School utilises many avenues for disseminating information to the community.

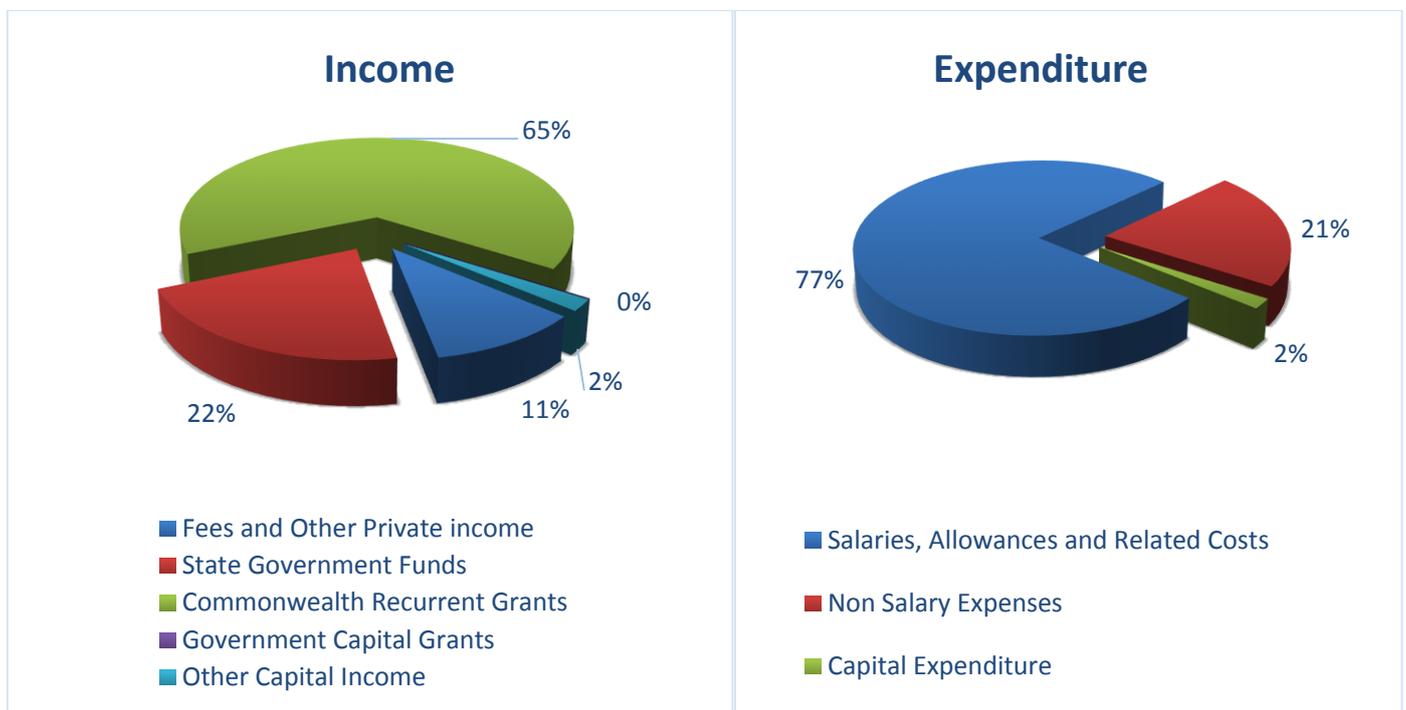
In summary, 2016 the School Review and Improvement process will see St Mary's refine their planning and delivery of quality Catholic Education by closely tying their budgetary priorities to their improvement priorities. The Leadership Team of St Mary's will expand to include a number of specialist teachers who have informal leadership roles in the school. Staffing for 2016 has a strong focus on succession planning with new teachers being 'value added' employees who have additional qualifications in areas such as ICT, Music, Drama and Special Education. A focus on social and emotional learning for 2016 aims to improve student's educational outcomes, by ensuring the wellbeing of the whole person.

Financial Summary

Major Expenditure for 2015 included:

- 2 filtered water coolers for student use;
- 2 class sets of desks and chairs;
- 3 iPads to support 1 to 1 iPad use in Kinder;
- 2 laptops for Leadership Team Members;
- \$3000 St Vincent De Paul Grant used for Ukulele community project, uniform shop vouchers, sponsorship of school camps and purchase of 5 iPads for 2016 Kindergarten cohort.

The following graphs reflect the aggregated income and expenditure for St Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School, Milton for the year ended 31 December 2015. This data is taken from the 2015 financial return to the Australian Government, Department of Education and Training.



Student Welfare

The Student Welfare Policy is based on the Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Framework for Systemic Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wollongong. The policy reflects the vision and mission of the Catholic Church and is characterised by safety, trust and respect. This is reinforced through School Wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPB4L) which clearly states the rights, rules and responsibilities of all members of the school community and is discussed at school gatherings. The aim is to increase appropriate student behaviour and build a continuum of support for all students. This includes all staff and students knowing the school rules:

- Care for Ourselves
- Care for Others
- Care for Our School
- Care for Our Learning

All students have a positive behaviour sticker book. This book will be kept until students complete Year 6. There are four levels of achievement in recognition of positive behaviours. Students are awarded stickers to recognise their achievements in following the school rules. Students are acknowledged for their achievements with awards at school assemblies.

Leadership and Life Education Programs as well as class Personal Development programs further enhance promotion of respect and responsibility.

St. Mary's Primary School has access to a CatholicCare counsellor three times a month for those students in need. The Diocesan policy MSPEC (Managing Students Pastoral and Educational Concerns) provides a clearly articulated approach to the response and management of concerns pertaining to students that manifest themselves in any or all of the following:

- Behaviours of concern, extreme or persistent problem behaviour;
- Poor or underestimated educational outcomes;
- Identified or emerging special needs;
- Known or suspected pastoral needs;
- Indicators or disclosures of harm, abuse or ill treatment;
- Indicators of lack of inappropriate physical, social or psychological development; and
- Risk to self, peers, staff or others.

The MSPEC Team comprises of the Principal and another member of the Leadership Team. The MSPEC Team meets every Thursday morning with a class teacher to provide extra support to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to meet the social, emotional and academic needs of individual students. Each Term every class teacher has the opportunity to meet with the MSPEC Team.

St. Mary's Primary School has purchased a Building Friendly School's Program to support social and emotional learning. This aligns with the SPB4L initiative and was taught as a whole school as part of the Personal Development program in Term 2. During Term 4 the incoming Kindergarten students undertake a transition to school process. This comprises three play sessions and an Orientation Day. A buddies program is fostered between Year 5 and Kindergarten students and Year 6 and Year 1 students.

To assist with student welfare at St. Mary's a generous donation of \$2 000 per year is made from St. Vincent de Paul. This money is used for families in need to assist with the costs of school uniforms, excursions, plays/performances and other school expenses.

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 Diocesan 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 2015.

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. Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School is a learning community where each child is valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. At St. Mary's we continually focus on and encourage each child to live our motto 'Help One Another'. Learning is viewed as a lifelong process and is seen as the core business of the school.

St. Mary's was invited to participate in a State Action Plan initiative that focussed on writing this year. The Principal and two teachers were involved in professional development days on writing, led by the Wollongong CEDoW. To build capacity within the staff on writing we implemented the following:

- Staff meetings on Spelling
- Dalwood professional development
- Principal's writing challenge
- Allocated money to publish the students writing in a book

St Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School continued sustainability of Focus On Reading and TOWN (Taking Off With Numeracy) with a Literacy and Numeracy Agreement. Teachers engage in professional dialogue about the data of quality assessments and how this identifies student's needs to guide quality teaching and learning.

Curriculum & Pedagogy

The school provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the BOSTES Syllabuses Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Human Society and its Environment, Science and Technology, Creative Arts, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. In addition, the school implements the Religious Education curriculum requirements of the CEDoW.

The assessment and reporting process at St. Mary's Star of the Sea reflects the Australian Government requirements whereby parents are provided with two written reports annually. Each report provides information about student progress relative to specific standards labelled A-E, from Year 1 to Year 6. Kindergarten reports on all KLAs to the specific standards labelled basic, sound and thorough. The Wollongong Diocese adopted a new reporting system using Sentral. Teachers update the Continuum Tracker in Sentral for each individual student for their achievements in literacy and numeracy on a regular basis. The National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) Tests for Year 3 and Year 5, Best

Start in Kindergarten, TOWN assessments and Year 4 Religious Literacy Assessments are important tools used to provide feedback and guide teaching.

An important aspect of the schools Catholic identity is that we provide tuition for the students for the preparation for the Sacrament of Penance, First Eucharist and Confirmation.

St. Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School is committed to using technology in supporting learning. All classrooms, music room, library and hall have either a smart board or a data projector. All classrooms have access to computers and laptops. One to one iPads are used in K-2.

Cross Curriculum

Literacy continues to be a high priority at St. Mary's. The staff are committed to explicitly teach the 'Super Six' comprehension strategies of Focus on Reading. This improves the student's comprehension skills by using the techniques of Visualising, Summarising, Monitoring, Questioning, Predicting and Making Connections.

Upgrading of classroom reading resources continued this year with a focus on guided readers and home readers in Early Stage One and Stage One. We received a significant amount of desktop computers by donation, in which were distributed throughout the school in K-6 classrooms.

In each classroom the essential components of an effective Numeracy session is evident. Each maths lesson includes the following in sequential order: Number Sense, Learning Intent, Introduction, Consolidation, Guided Groups and Reflection. Students are plotted on the continuum to identify students at risk and those who need extension.

Our Indigenous community is recognised at assemblies with 'Welcome to Country' said by Indigenous students. A local Aboriginal elder is invited to school liturgies to commence with an 'Acknowledgement of Country'. The Aboriginal flag is raised daily with the Australian and School flags. An indigenous sacred space is set at the entrance of the school. For NAIDOC Week this year all classes dedicated a Focus On Reading lesson sequence to further their knowledge on Aboriginal culture. A local indigenous artist came to St. Mary's throughout Term 3 to paint Indigenous murals with the students.

Meeting the needs of all students

Diversifying learning

Twenty students were administered the SLOSSON in 2015. Six students were identified as "Beyond Highly Superior" with two of those accessing the services of a Diocesan Educational Psychologist in order to better meet their needs in the classroom. Class programs were monitored for evidence of differentiation in all Subjects of the Curriculum. Student work samples were observed for evidence of differentiation of tasks based on individual need.

Gifted Education

The University of NSW International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) testing was strongly supported by students and their parents in 2015, with up to 20 students participating in some topics. Credits and distinctions were achieved in each ICAS test. Results and participation were acknowledged and celebrated at whole school assemblies.

Stretching Potential Through Learning in Interactive and Challenging Environments in the Diocese of Wollongong (SPLICED) was strongly supported in English, Creative Arts, Maths and Science topics in 2015. Three students from St Mary's were invited to participate in workshops for the St Therese of Avila publication. First Lego League was offered for the second year at St Mary's. A second kit was purchased to

support more complex designs and to allow for a larger group to participate. Ten students were part of the “Genius Team” who competed in Wollongong in November, 2015.

Maths Olympiad was offered for the first time in 2015. Six students formally registered and participated in the program with another two students joining the group informally to complete the tasks part way through the year. One student was awarded a medallion for being in the top 20% of participants nationally. Shorebirds art and creative writing program sponsored by the local council which enables students gifted in art and writing to work with professional artists and writers on a collaborative piece of work.

Special Education needs

The Learning Support Team for 2015 changed its name to the MSPEC Team in the second half of the year. The MSPEC Team looks at the needs of the whole child: academically, socially, emotionally and behaviourally. A number of referrals were made for additional support from the Diocese once a quality framework of intervention had been formulated and undertaken for a period of at least six months.

The Catholic Education Commission Tool for Identifying and documenting the support of additional needs was used by classroom teachers for the first time in 2015.

Expanding Learning Opportunities

Competitions in 2015 included:

1. ICAS Competitions
2. Principal’s Writing Challenge
3. Escape Art Fest Writing Competition
4. Milton Show Pottery
5. Milton Show Infants Poster
6. Shoalhaven Eisteddfod Verse Speaking
7. Shoalhaven Eisteddfod Junior and Senior Choir
8. Shoalhaven Interschool Chess Competition

Sport in 2015 included:

1. Being the first primary school in NSW to offer surfing lessons as part of the PE program.
2. Athletics
3. Cross Country
4. Swimming
5. Soccer Gala Day
6. Basketball Gala Day
7. Netball Gala Day

Debating

1. Winners of debate between Ulladulla Public School and St Mary’s
2. Winners of District Debating Championship between Milton Public School and St Mary’s
3. Winner of Year 3 Public Speaking Competition

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.

2015 saw St Mary's begin a significant upwards shift in NAPLAN achievement. Quality teaching and learning was a whole school focus in Spelling and Mathematics.

Staff attended an in-service on the need to specifically teach phonemic awareness and spelling strategies. An agreed practice of when and how to collect baseline data was drawn up and staff have met quarterly to discuss growth and analyse results in spelling. There was a significant improvement in spelling in 2015 NAPLAN with 61% year 5 students achieving or exceeding expected growth.

Support from the Diocese with the MoneySmart Initiative as well as the Taking Off With Numeracy (TOWN) in-service for teachers has shown an improvement in the results of students in 2015 with 78% year 5 students achieving or exceeding their expected growth.

The Focus on Reading and Literature Circles in-service for teachers continues to see improvement in student outcomes. 84% of year 5 students achieved or exceeded their expected growth.

Areas of focus in teaching and learning in 2016 and beyond include spelling, grammar and punctuation. The school is keen to continue to work with highly performing students to ensure that we see growth and expected achievement levels met or exceeded.

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 2015: % 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	0%	33%	67%	16%	37%	47%
	National	13%	39%	48%	20%	47%	33%
Writing	School	0%	7%	93%	0%	79%	21%
	National	9%	44%	47%	19%	62%	19%
Spelling	School	0%	47%	53%	11%	63%	26%
	National	16%	43%	41%	17%	50%	33%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	0%	27%	73%	16%	37%	47%
	National	13%	35%	52%	18%	46%	36%
Numeracy	School	7%	47%	47%	6%	56%	39%
	National	17%	49%	34%	18%	55%	28%

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 2015: % AT or ABOVE NMS		YEAR 3	YEAR 5
Reading	School	100%	100%
	National	95%	93%
Writing	School	100%	100%
	National	96%	92%
Spelling	School	100%	100%
	National	93%	93%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	100%	95%
	National	95%	93%
Numeracy	School	100%	100%
	National	94%	95%

Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

2015 was the year of the Principals appraisal. A great deal of feedback was collected from the students, parents, staff and parish members for this process.

Noted feedback throughout the year has been:

- Cold, filtered water taps for students to access;
- High profile of school in the community which is very positive;
- Climate of collegiality and professionalism amongst staff;
- Growing relationship between St Mary's community and St John's community;
- Significant growth and achievements to be celebrated in NAPLAN 2015;
- Significantly more pathways of learning expanded in 2015 to include specialist: Music, Art, PE and ICT lessons;
- Successful Fete raising \$12,000 and providing an excellent community event;
- Participation in Harbour Christmas Carols as the only local school this year;
- Community engagement with instigation of surfing lessons;
- Community project with the publishing and launch of district cookbook "Cooking in MUD- Milton Ulladulla District";
- Hosting various community groups on the School grounds, such as Noah's Ark Early Intervention Centre;
- Increasing numbers of students and their families attending weekend Masses and supporting school Masses monthly; and
- Greater consistency of school leadership with retention of members of Leadership Team



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