



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

Annual School Report to the Community 2015



St Mary's Primary School Batlow

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Principal

Mrs Christine Baron

Section One: Message from Key Groups in our Community

Principal's Message

St Mary's Primary School prides itself on being a warm, welcoming and inclusive school. Being a small school, enables staff, students and parents to be very connected within the school context as well as the local community. 2015 has been an exciting year for St Mary's with many additional school improvements to enhance the school learning and aesthetic environment. The school was fortunate to receive additional funding from a community member who passed away which enabled the building of a new outside court play area for students. This together with the purchase of individual lockers for students and the repainting of many older buildings and outside seating areas has enhanced the school profile. The continued use of iPads as a teaching and learning resource across all learning areas has continued to improve student engagement and provide students at St Mary's with another learning tool to support literacy and numeracy development. Literacy has continued to be a major focus for 2015, with special emphasis on developing the literacy block K-6. Support through the COSA project has enabled staff and students to focus particularly on improving spelling especially in writing.

Parent Body Message

The Community Council would like to acknowledge and thank the hardworking staff of St Mary's for all their efforts throughout the school year. The Community Council has remained focused on providing the students of St Mary's with as many opportunities to develop their learning experiences through the availability of relevant resources, with efforts continuing to ensure all students are capable of achieving in their educational goals. Much work has been completed around the school to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the grounds including re-painting and replacement of seating, three new flag poles and replacing the tanbark around the children's playground. Money has also been spent on purchasing quality resources for classroom teaching and learning and contemporary classroom furniture. The Community Council would also like to recognise the significant efforts of parents and friends in volunteering their time for various activities throughout the year.

Student Body Message

Year 6 are all invited to become school leaders. We have to apply for our leadership areas at the beginning of the school year. Last year we took up the leadership roles of Media Mogul, Sport Specialist and Hospitality Host. We are also given the responsibility of caring for our Kindergarten buddy. We enjoyed this responsibility, particularly by ensuring our buddies were happy and safe on the playground. We really enjoyed peer reading time when we got to spend quality time reading and discussing books with our Kindergarten buddy.

Other activities included attending regular leadership meetings where we were able to discuss openly anything about the school that we felt needed to be addressed such as ways to improve our school, ways to support those less fortunate than ourselves with an important focus always on 'how to lead well'. One of the projects we were most proud of was our "Paying it Forward" community program. We raised enough money by hosting an out of uniform day to pay for 20 free cups of coffee/tea to community members. This was well received by locals. We were proud of our efforts to raise money for charities such as Caritas and St Vincent De Paul.

Year 6 leaders

Section Two: School Features

St Mary's Primary School is a Catholic systemic Co-educational School located in Batlow.

St Mary's is a Catholic Primary School located in Batlow. The school caters for students in Kindergarten - Year 6, and has a current enrolment of 54 students.

Students attending this school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities consisting of 26 male and 28 female students; 14 indigenous students; and 3 Language Background other than English (LBOTE). We also cater for students with disabilities.

The school employs 12 staff comprising of 4 full time teachers, 3 part-time teachers and 5 non-teaching staff, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including Learning Support Assistant, Aboriginal Education Worker and Office Administration .

St Mary's has a strong sense of history, established in 1923 by the Sisters of St Joseph's. The Josephite tradition still remains a focus within the school today, despite the departure of the sisters many years ago. The school and parish are closely linked especially through the Sacramental programs.

St Mary's has strong links to the St Mary's Church and parish. During 2015, the absence of a resident priest in the area meant that liturgy became a regular feature each Sunday. Parishioners and school families supported the weekly liturgy ensuring that the church still remained a viable part of our school and community.

The school vision statement was introduced in 2015. This statement was endorsed by the school community and identifies St Mary's as part of the local community.

Continued involvement in community events such as Batlow Daycare, Apple Blossom Festival, Anzac Day etc are of utmost importance to the school community. The St Mary's Community Council played a pivotal role in supporting the school with fundraising efforts to enable a one to one iPad program from Kindergarten through to Year 6 and other resources particularly apps, classroom readers and continued improvements to the playground and school maintenance. The students have also been involved in many sporting opportunities such as Footsteps Dance, Tennis, and mobile Gymnastics program as well as representation at Western Region and Archdiocesan events. Students were also represented in the Small Schools Swimming and Relay events. Several excursions throughout the year, funded mainly through the ORSS program enabled the Upper Primary students to experience four days in Melbourne/Ballarat while Years 2-6 visited the Canberra Airport and experienced a cruise on Lake Burley Griffin to further enhance HSIE and Science units . The Sporting Schools Funding enabled students to experience sporting activities such as gymnastics, tennis and a dance program.

St Mary's is proud of it's continuing tradition of providing a quality education to the Batlow community since 1923.

The school's website can be found at www.stmarysbatlow@.nsw.edu.au

Section Three: Catholic Identity and Faith Formation

Our school follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*.

Religious Life & Religious Education

Our St Mary's Vision and Mission statement 'Branch Out, Blossom and Grow at St Mary's' underpins the Catholic ethos of our school community. Branch out and aspire to achieve your best, Blossom an enthusiasm for learning, Grow in gentleness and compassion like our Patron Saint Mary. It encompasses the rich symbolism of the community of Batlow and the students' sense of pride and commitment to their local community. It also embraces Mary the Mother of God as our school's patron saint.

St Mary's Primary School Batlow follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*. St Mary's Catholic Primary School is proud to proclaim its Catholic identity to the community and the Catholic culture of the school has continued to grow.

At St Mary's we aim to integrate the school's Religious Education program into the whole curriculum to ensure that the children come to follow Jesus in the Catholic tradition, developing values and attitudes that could be described as essentially Catholic. Meaningful lessons in Religious Education are part of the school day and Gospel values and attitudes permeate all aspects of school life.

This year has seen a change in our Parish life as we no longer have a priest available to celebrate school Masses with us. Therefore school liturgies have become an integral part of our school life. There have been a number of occasions at which we have been able to share and celebrate with the school and parish community including the Opening School Liturgy, Ash Wednesday Liturgy, Stations of the Cross, Saint Mary of the Cross Liturgy, St Mary's Feast Day Liturgy and the Year 6 Thanksgiving Liturgy at the end of the year. Participation in whole school Liturgies and Assemblies have added to the Catholic life of the school.

Once a week, the whole school gathers to pray together and reflect. We have used this time for the focus on and integration of Making Jesus Rea (MJR). From MJR we have introduced elements into our Pastoral Care Policy and these are modelled and shared through our prayer gathering. It is also a valued opportunity to model the importance of prayer and reflection in our own personal lives.

St Mary's School supports the Parish Sacramental Programs and plays a pivotal role in ensuring sacramental programs are an important part of school RE programs and celebrations.

The children raised funds for Caritas, Catholic Missions and St Vincent de Paul and donated to the needy families within our own community. All students visited the local nursing home throughout the year where they sing songs and share their work with the residents. We joined St Joseph's Adelong to share in their Feast Day celebrations and in turn they joined us for our Feast Day celebrations.

Section Four: Student Profile

Student Enrolment

The School caters for students in Kindergarten to Year 6. Students attending this School come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. The following information describes the student profile for 2015:

Girls	Boys	LBOTE*	Total Students
27	27	1	54

* Language Background Other than English

Enrolment Policy

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn has established an *Enrolment Policy for Catholic Schools*. The Catholic Education Office monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements.

Information about enrolling in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn may be accessed at the [Catholic Education Office](#) website.

Student Attendance Rates

The average student attendance rate for 2015 was 90.69%. Attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group	
Kindergarten	92%
Year 1	92%
Year 2	93%
Year 3	91%
Year 4	89%
Year 5	85%
Year 6	93%

Managing Student Non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The School, in partnership with parents, is 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.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the School community;
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance;
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance;
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the

- consequences of unsatisfactory attendance;
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented;
 - documented plans are developed to address the needs of students whose attendance is identified as being of concern;
 - the Catholic Education Office designated School Services Officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom School strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

Section Five: Staffing Profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2015:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
6	3	9

* This number includes 4 full-time teachers and 2 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are Indigenous	10%
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Professional Learning

Staff at St Mary's are highly professional and dedicated to their profession of educating young students. All staff have been involved in professional learning during the year. The staff value these opportunities to develop their skills and understandings to support best practice . Professional learning has included whole staff days, subject specific professional development courses, meetings, twilight and conferences. The main content of the PD days was as follows: First Aid/CPR/Anaphylaxis, Cultural Competency, Spirituality Day, Literacy, Numeracy, DDA modules plus UbD programming.

Teacher Qualifications

All teachers are qualified as required by the relevant authorities.

Section Six: Academic Profile

NAPLAN results for Year 3 and Year 5 indicated positive improvements across Literacy and Numeracy. Year 5 students had most pleasing results with growth indicated across reading, writing, spelling, grammar and numeracy for individual students. Year 3 results were also pleasing with most students achieving results in the middle and higher bands and very little representation in the lower bands. It was particularly pleasing to note growth in spelling and writing for both Years 3 & 5 as these have been areas targeted for improvement.

Section Seven: School Review and Improvement

Each year, the School develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the School's Strategic Plan and informed by the Internal School Review process. The School engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the Regional Consultant.

Key Improvements Achieved in 2015

St Mary's school prioritised literacy as an area for improvement during 2015. With the support of our Collaborating on Student Achievement (COSA) project, spelling was targeted with an intense focus on targeting spelling strategies in teaching programs and looking at developing spelling in writing. Baseline data was collected and graphed throughout the year by our COSA key person. Basing spelling on specific strategies rather than using spelling based programs was a key target. Continuous collection and mapping of data, reflected a positive improvement by the conclusion of the school year across all grade levels.

Other areas for improvement included updating school policies and procedures particularly in regard to the Welfare and Discipline policy as well as other policies. Student Well Being became an important component of the school program and will be an area to be developed in the future

Priority Key Improvements for 2016

Key Improvement for 2016:

Literacy will continue to be a focus in 2016. A whole school approach to developing inquiry based Literacy Blocks K-6 will be the main target. With the support of COSA, teacher practice including explicit teaching and sustained silent opportunities for reading and writing are a key priority. Saturating classrooms with books that students have high access to is a priority for success. Developing guided reading sessions that target and support the inquiry will be essential to improving outcomes. Targeting resources and professional development opportunities will also be of utmost importance.

Other target areas include developing a more effective model for the use of iPads in the key areas of literacy and numeracy to enhance teaching and learning opportunities. The SIP Co-ordinator will consider the SAMR model and develop a school approach that maximises student learning.

Student Well Being will also be targeted through the introduction of the Kids Matter program to help and support students with mental health and behavioural issues. Kids Matter will be embedded through the school to promote a culture of wellbeing where all students can learn successfully.

Section Eight: School Policies

Student Welfare Policy

The aim of the St Mary's Pastoral Care Policy is to ensure a consistent, caring and positive approach to behaviour management, ensuring everyone is treated with dignity and respect and to value each person as an individual. With Jesus Christ as our model, we aim to develop a truly Christian community that endeavours to give witness to Gospel Values and lives out our school vision statement, Branch Out, Blossom and Grow at St Mary's'. We believe that as a staff, we are committed to modelling responsible behaviour to the students in our care and dealing with them at all times in a fair and consistent manner. The school implements support structures and programs which prioritise and address the identified needs of individual students or the school as a whole. The school's policy has incorporated the values of the 'Making Jesus Real' Program that encourages exemplary behaviour modelled on the person of Jesus Christ. Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. In addition we do not sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons to enforce discipline at our school.

The full text of the School's Student Welfare Policy may be accessed on the School's website or at the Administration office.

Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

The Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn Catholic Education Office has established a *Complaints Policy* which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the Archdiocese. The rationale for the policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of our contemporary world. The Catholic Education Office (CEO) monitors the implementation of this policy.

The full text of the *Complaints Policy* may be accessed on the Catholic Education website at <https://cg.catholic.edu.au>.

The St Mary's Complaints and Grievance Policy is based on procedural fairness and recognises that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory environment. Any concerns raised are responded to promptly and fairly and confidentiality is always maintained.

The school follows the Catholic Education policy as listed on the CE website and a full text of the school policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

Section Nine: Community Satisfaction

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the School has used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the School from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

The level of parent satisfaction is high at St Mary's School. Parents value the education their children are receiving and as a whole are interested and supportive. Comments reflected that the school is committed in its approach to 'inclusive' education that staff deal appropriately with behaviour especially in developing skills to make life long changes.

Parents believe the teachers are very enthusiastic in their approach to teaching, they are committed educators providing a stimulating and safe environment and that the school sets high standards for the children while developing a home and school partnership.

Parents also appreciated the time staff spent in giving constructive ideas to assist parents at home with developing essential skills with their child. The support parents give to the fundraising activities with the St Mary's Community Council is also very high. Parents feel they have some opportunities to be involved in the school's activities, and overall, are very satisfied with the education of their children.

Parents appreciate the opportunity to be involved in parent education programs and commend the school on continuing to provide opportunities for them.

Student Satisfaction

The majority of students at St Mary's are satisfied with their education. Most feel welcomed and valued by their class teacher and feel that their teacher is providing a varied and engaging curriculum within a safe and secure classroom environment. Students believe the one to one iPad program has been very effective in helping them learn and feel it adds a more interesting and engaging aspect to their education.

Students believe their teachers are well organised and enthusiastic in their approach to teaching. They believe their teachers are caring and understanding. St. Mary's students feel confident and encouraged to participate in all school activities. Student comments indicated that the majority of students are happy at school and are proud to be a member of St Mary's Primary School.

Students in Year 6 are appreciative of the opportunity to be involved in leading the school. They particularly enjoying being responsible for their Kindergarten buddy and their area of leadership. The students enjoy the opportunity to meet regularly and be involved in some school based decisions.

Students are also appreciative of the wonderful opportunities for excursions that are provided

Teacher Satisfaction

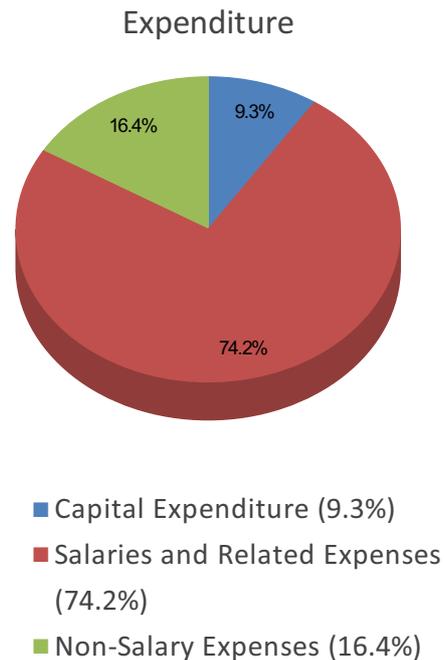
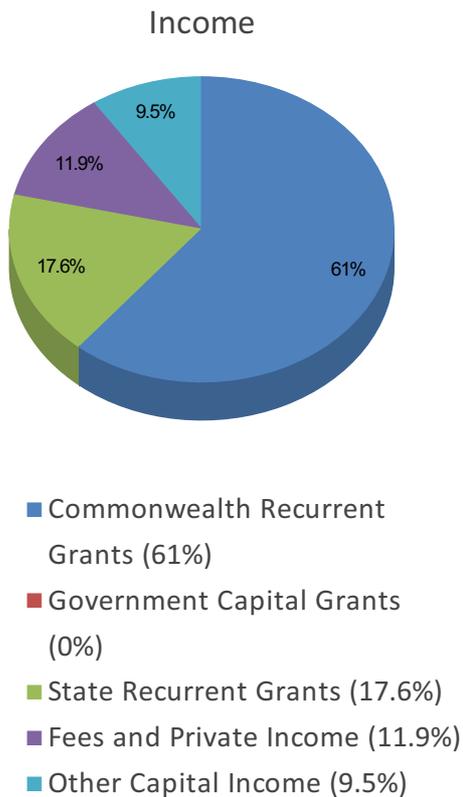
Teachers at St. Mary's School feel valued and respected by colleagues, parents and students. Teachers feel they have a safe and proactive work environment where the opportunity for professional development is readily available.

Teachers feel they set a good example to their students within a climate that is conducive to learning. They are committed to the school and their role is considered important. They believe their workplace has a positive ethos, where leadership is valued and effective in the school, they have input into some aspects of school decisions and overall the school is managed well.

Staff are very appreciative of the many opportunities to develop their professionalism as well as the opportunities provided to share these with staff by leading staff meetings.

Teachers feel parents value the opportunities provided to support parents in educating their children and that parents are positive in feedback and make the most of these opportunities. Teachers feel parents also value the open communication policy provided by the school.

Section Ten: Financial Statement



RECURRENT and CAPITAL INCOME	
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants ¹	\$569,627
Government Capital Grants ²	\$0
State Recurrent Grants ³	\$164,765
Fees and Private Income ⁴	\$111,015
Other Capital Income ⁵	\$88,850
Total Income	\$934,257

RECURRENT and CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Capital Expenditure ⁶	\$88,850
Salaries and Related Expenses ⁷	\$705,906
Non-Salary Expenses ⁸	\$156,012
Total Expenditure	\$950,768

Notes

1. Commonwealth Recurrent Grants includes recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.
2. Government Capital Grants includes all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State Governments.
3. State Recurrent Grants includes recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.
4. Fees and Private Income include Archdiocesan and school based fees, excursions and other private income.
5. Other Capital Income includes building levy fees and capital donations used to fund Capital Expenditure.
6. Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on School Buildings, and Furniture

and Equipment.

7. Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.
8. Non-Salary Expenses include all other Non-Salary Recurrent Expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.