

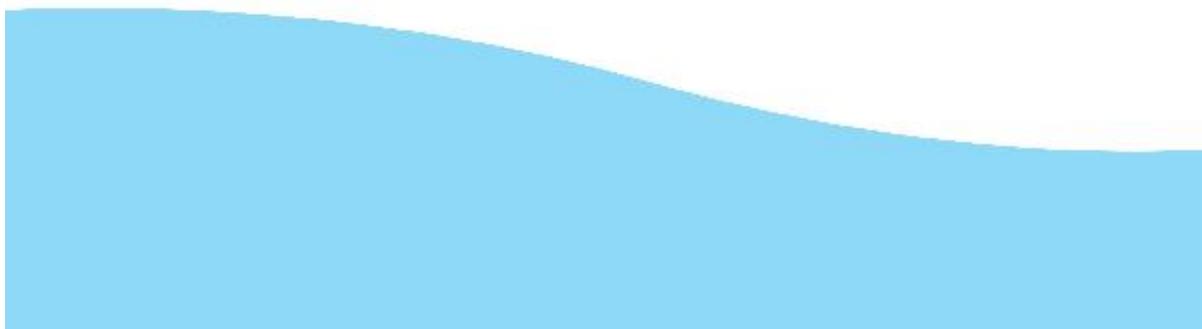


Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Batlow, NSW

2013 School Report to the Community



SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Address:	Selwyn St Batlow NSW 2730
Principal:	Mrs Chris Baron
Parish Priest / School Chaplain:	Sr Carmel Piffero
School Board / Council Chair:	Mr Brenton Hotham
Telephone:	02 69491270
Fax:	69491732
Email:	office.stmarysbatlow@cg.catholic.edu.au
Website:	www.stmarysbatlow.nsw.edu.au

This report was prepared by:

Mrs Chris Baron

PRINCIPAL

MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Principal's Message

2013 has been an exciting year for St Mary's as we celebrate our 90th birthday. St Mary's was first established in 1923 by the Sisters of St Joseph's with a total enrolment of eight students. The students have enjoyed participating in stories about the schools history and celebrating this special milestone. While education has changed over the past 90 years, literacy and numeracy have continued to be a major focus this year, with the teaching of explicit practices and strategies. Technology also continues to enhance students learning particularly with our 'LIFE' platform that engages students in a variety of rich learning experiences. We look forward to building on these experiences in 2014.

School Council Message

The newly appointed Community Council for 2013, have endeavoured to represent the parent body in a productive and meaningful manner, through the governing of school operations.

The Community Council remains focused on ensuring the learning experiences of students at St Mary's are attentive to growth and development within a positive, caring environment.

A continued collaborative approach within the school decision making processes will hopefully lead to new and exciting initiatives in 2014, for students of St Mary's.

The Community Council would like to recognise the significant efforts of parents in volunteering their time for various activities throughout the year.

Brenton Hotham

Chair

Student Representative's Message

We were proud to be the school leaders of St Mary's this year. We were given the leadership responsibilities of Media Mogul and Hospitality Hosts and were presented with our leadership badges at the Opening School Mass. Our first responsibility was to help our Kindergarten buddies settle into school life. We also organised some fun days such as St Patrick's Day, a Footy Day etc and our main focus was to raise money for the Missions and St Judes School in Africa. We were also proud to represent our school at events such as Anzac day and Pioneers Night and attend the Installation Mass of our new Archbishop as well as lead our schools 90th birthday celebrations.

Bree and Lachlan

Year 6

SCHOOL FEATURES

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 34 students.

Students attending this school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities consisting of 17 male and 17 female students with 2 indigenous students.

The school employs 7 staff comprising 5 teachers and 3 non-teaching staff, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including Learning Support Assistant, Office Administration and school cleaner.

St Mary's Primary School is excited to be celebrating its 90th birthday this year! St Mary's was first established in 1923 by the Sisters of St Joseph and has proudly continued the Josephite service of educating the Batlow community over the past 90 years. St Mary's has a rich history of families whose parents, grandparents or relatives have attended the school in the past and this year has given the school community a real sense of a community that is valued and appreciated. A sense of service to community events such as Batlow Daycare, Apple Blossom Festival, Anzac Day still continue to play an important role in school life.

The St Mary's Community Council has continued to work hard and support the school with fundraising efforts to upgrade the playground area and school furniture. Numeracy and Literacy is a main focus with active listening, student engagement and continuous assessment set as targeted areas. The students have also been involved in many sporting opportunities such as 'Footsteps Dance', Boorowa Touch and Netball carnival, table tennis, netball and cricket 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 Country Area Program (CAP) enabled the Upper Primary students to experience three days in Canberra while a whole school excursion to Canberra to the National Theatre for the Infants and to see the Canberra 100 years centenary exhibition for the Primary students, further enhanced HSIE units. The Active After School Community Program has continued to flourish with many students taking the opportunity to actively participate in this government funded program. Students have also had the opportunity to be involved in group music tuition provided by a local music tutor.

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

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Mary's School 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.

The spiritual and prayer life of the school has brought staff, students and parents together with the St Mary's parish to share and celebrate on many occasions. These experiences have included the Opening School Mass, Ash Wednesday Mass, Holy Thursday Mass, K, 1 and 2 Class Mass, 90th Birthday Celebratory Mass and the Year 6 Thanksgiving Mass 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, teachers gathered to pray together and reflect. The school staff participated in a Spirituality Day in Term 4 focusing on Christian Meditation which was an authentic way of showing our commitment as Catholic school educators. Also in term 4 St Mary's hosted the Western Region Religious Education Coordinators meeting. Two staff members participated in the Clergy, Principal and Religious Education Coordinator day in Canberra where Dr Dan White presented a very interesting keynote address on the challenges of new evangelisation in Catholic schools.

School support of the Parish Sacramental Programs continued. All the teachers worked to support the three Sacramental Programs for Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation which included student retreat days in preparation for each sacrament.

The biggest event in the year for our school was the 90th Birthday Celebratory Mass and lunch. The sisters of St Joseph, who taught at St Mary's in the past travelled back to Batlow for the occasion. They were presented with a plaque during the Mass for their contributions to the school.

During term 4 the students in Year 6 represented the school community at the Installation Mass of the new Archbishop, Christopher Prowse. This was held at the St Christopher's Cathedral in Canberra and it gave the students the opportunity to meet the new Archbishop. St Mary's School, through the leadership of the Year 6 students, continue to support the Catholic charitable organisations. 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. The students sang Christmas carols to the residents and invited them to the school's annual school play.

Ms Jane Roche

REC

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT - NAPLAN

Students in **Years 3 and 5** sat the *National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)* in May this year. NAPLAN assessment results provide valuable information about student achievements in Literacy and Numeracy. An analysis of these results assists school planning and is used to support teaching and learning programs.

School and National Mean Scale Scores

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	419	416	411	428	397
School	467	414	425	448	400

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	502	478	494	501	486
School	507	515	510	517	491

Proportion of students at or above the National Minimum Standard

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	95%	95%	94%	95%	96%
School	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	96%	92%	93%	95%	93%
School	86%	100%	100%	100%	86%

Proportion of students in each Achievement Band

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Band 6	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Band 5	67%	67%	67%	67%	33%
Band 4	0%	0%	0%	33%	33%
Band 3	0%	33%	33%	0%	33%
Band 2	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Band 1	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Band 8	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%
Band 7	43%	0%	57%	57%	14%
Band 6	14%	72%	0%	29%	58%
Band 5	29%	14%	43%	14%	14%
Band 4	14%	0%	0%	0%	14%
Band 3	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

The above tables show the proportion of students above the National Minimum Standard was an excellent result for Year 3 and very pleasing in Year 5. It is also very good to note that Year 3 was well represented in the top two bands and there were no students in the bottom two bands. Year 5 also had very little representation in the bottom two bands and evenly distributed results though the higher bands. This is testament to the fact that the initiatives employed over the last few years

are taking effect and students results are showing improvement. A number of initiatives have impacted on these results including the focus on explicit teaching strategies in both literacy and numeracy and the impact of the Numeracy Intervention Program. NAPLAN results will be further analysed to inform and guide the direction for future improvements particularly in the areas of Spelling and Writing with an emphasis on moving the top students into the top two bands, particularly for Writing and Numeracy. Growth for Year 5 was also excellent with all students recording positive growth across all subject areas.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Enrolment Policy

In enrolling students we are directed by the Archdiocesan Enrolment Policy which can be found on the Annual Report page of the school's website or on the Catholic Education Office website at <http://www.ceog.catholic.edu.au/parents/Pages/GeneralPolicies.aspx>

To be accepted for enrolment in Kindergarten at St. Mary's Catholic School a child must turn five years of age by April 30th of the year of enrolment. An Open Day is held during Term 2 each year, where all eligible children and their families are invited to the school for an information and classroom familiarisation visit. Enrolment forms are handed out with a due date given. Consecutive orientation days are offered during Term 4, for all new Kindergarten students due to begin the following year. This provides an opportunity for students to familiarise themselves with the school environment. For new families wishing to enrol in other classes, an appointment may be made with the Principal and/or class teacher/s together with the family members to find out any relevant information, obtain a school information package and/or tour the school.

Attendance Policy

St Mary's School Attendance Policy is aligned to the Canberra Goulburn Catholic Education Office Policy "Attendance at Schools (NSW)" Jan 2013.

Procedures

- Class teachers record daily absences in a class roll according to guidelines at the commencement of each school day.
- Parents are encouraged to provide a written explanation of a student's absence.
- If a written explanation is not forthcoming within two weeks of the student's return to school, the class teacher issues a formal reminder.
- The Principal reviews all class rolls at the end of each term.
- The Principal will contact parents or guardians if records indicate a non-compliance with Compulsory School Attendance Legislation.
- The Principal and school staff will endeavour to assist families who may be experiencing difficulty with complying to regulations.

Absences

Any absence is to be explained in writing, upon the child's return. No child is allowed to leave the school grounds without written or in-person notification. Parents are required to sign a register located in the front office before taking the student during school hours.

When parents plan to exclude their children from school for reasons other than sickness or unforeseen events i.e. funerals, the parent or caregiver is required to complete an Application for Student Exemption Form. A certificate of exemption will then be issued. Forms are available from the school office.

Pastoral Care and Fair Discipline Policy

The aim of the St Mary's Pastoral Care and Fair Discipline 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 as expressed in our school motto 'Peace, Love & Joy'. 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 involves a merit system that encourages exemplary behaviour in the in five areas of playground, class, community, religion and environment. Students are awarded with merit cards for displaying appropriate behaviour in any of the five areas. When three merits in any one area have been collected the students are presented with a certificate. When five certificates in each area have been collected the students will be presented with a Principal's Award. The aim of the policy is to ensure a consistent, caring and positive approach to behaviour. The principles of Restorative Justice are embedded in the school's Pastoral Care and Fair Discipline Policy.

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 St Mary's Pastoral Care and Fair Discipline Policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

The school 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. A full text of the school policy is available on the school website or from the Front Office.

PRIORITIES AND TARGETS

2014, will see St Mary's student move towards a more integrated approach to learning through technology. Ipads will be distributed to each child from Kindergarten through to Year 6 and these together with our continued focus on numeracy and literacy strategies will give our students a valuable tool to engage in learning while opening new and exciting opportunities to learn.

With the implementation of the new Australian curriculum, literacy will be our major priority. Staff will continue to focus on the strategies of First Steps Reading and Writing and the Gradual Release of Responsibility. E-readers and IT programs such as Reading Eggs and Reading Eggspress will be used

in conjunction with reading programs to cater for differentiation and engaging students in learning. Higher order thinking skills in reading ie inferring, connecting and applying will continue to be targeted particularly with the gifted and talented students. Spelling will follow the First Steps approach with more explicit emphasis on spelling rules and strategies.

The Numeracy Intervention Program will also be continued in 2014 and this will allow us to target students experiencing difficulty in Mathematics. 'Working like a Mathematician' strategies will also be continued across the primary classes. Enquiry learning will continue to be developed in the areas of HSIE and Science and Technology which will allow staff to develop more creative and challenging programs that engage students and see them work towards their best potential.

In the area of IT, the LIFE platform will continue to be developed and utilised as a tool for learning not only at school but at home as well. The Outer Regional School Support funding will be utilised to provide the students with the best possible opportunities to integrate IT and creative skills into classroom programs. The students will continue to be included in local initiatives and experience opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable in remote country areas. This funding also assists with costs towards excursions and other cultural and sporting experiences.

The 2014 year will bring exciting new initiatives as well as challenges and together with the high quality teaching expertise of staff members will provide wonderful learning opportunities for students at St Mary's Batlow!