

St John's Parish Primary School, Cobar Annual School Report 2015



School Contact Details

P.O. Box 83

Cobar NSW 2835

Street Address: 2-4 Prince St, Cobar

principal.cobar@wf.catholic.edu.au

www.cobar.catholic.edu.au/

@St

02 68362195

Principal

Renee Matheson



St John's Parish Primary School Annual School Report to the
Community 2015

ABOUT THIS REPORT

St John's Parish Primary School, Cobar is registered by the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) and managed by the Catholic Education Office (CEO), Diocese of Wilcannia Forbes. The CEO is the 'approved authority' for The Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual St John's Parish Primary School Report 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 outlines information regarding the St John's Parish Primary School Review and Improvement initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the school community during the year. It also details the achievements arising from the St John's Parish Primary School annual planning.

Accordingly, the Report demonstrates accountability to regulatory bodies, the St John's Parish Primary School community and the Catholic Education Office. It complements and is supplementary to school newsletters and other regular communication.

Following its submission to the NSW BOSTES, the Report will be presented to the Parent Body and will be available on the St John's Parish Primary School website by 30 June 2016.



MESSAGE FROM KEY GROUPS IN OUR COMMUNITY

Principal's Message

2015 has been a memorable and emotional year. There has been a mixture of emotions throughout the year as we challenged ourselves with new pedagogy, grieved the passing of a staff member, and built our overall enrolment population to unseen numbers for some years.

I am very proud to be the Principal of St John's Parish Primary School in 2015. My appreciation for all the staff, students and parents of this amazing St John's community is overwhelming. It is a pleasure to be a part of this dynamic learning environment.

I certify that information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's progress, achievements and areas for development.

Renee Matheson
Principal

Bishop Columba's Message

Dear friends, as 2015 comes to a close I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff, children and parents of St John's Parish Primary School for their hard work and commitment over the last year. St John's is a Catholic School. Pope Francis has been reminding Catholics that they need to be welcoming to all and to reach out to all. We as a Church need to make sure that we let all people know that they have a place in the Church, a home in the Church. We do this by loving our neighbour unconditionally and this love can lead people to God. I am happy to say that I think St John's is on the 'same page' as Pope Francis. May it continue to be a place where the love of God is lived out by prayer, care, concern and dedication. God Bless, and may you all have a happy and blessed Christmas.

Parent Body Message (P & F)

As a parent of St John's for a number of years, it is a pleasure to see all the positive changes at the school. The introduction of chrome books, genius hour and 'Skoolbag' are just some of the innovative changes brought about by the Principal. It's so exciting to know that St John's is at the forefront of a new way to deliver education, and our children are part of that. What they are experiencing in their classrooms is something few schools in NSW have been able to introduce - thank you St John's for embracing these new concepts and improving the way learning is delivered.



Student Body Message

This year has been a very enjoyable year. We have enjoyed Genius Hour as well as the other interesting traditional subjects such as English, Spelling and Mathematics.

During Genius Hour, it has been all about trial and error. Ask anyone in our school and I guarantee they will say they love Genius Hour. Apart from Genius Hour, everyone has absolutely loved the new topics and addition of the Chromebooks.

The students and the staff create a welcoming atmosphere and make St John's, St John's.

SCHOOL FEATURES

St John's Parish Primary School is a Catholic Systemic co-educational school located in Cobar. The school caters for students in Kindergarten to Year Six and has a current enrolment of 145 students.

St John's Parish Primary School is part of a long tradition of Catholic education in Cobar. The first catholic school in Cobar was established in 1884. Over the years since then, lay men and women, religious sisters from the Sisters of Mercy (McAuley) and St Joseph (MacKillop) congregations have provided quality catholic education in Cobar. The school's patron saint, St John the Apostle, is acknowledged in our school pledge, and McAuley and MacKillop are the names of our School's Sporting Houses. As a Catholic School our concern for personal and spiritual development is extended to all.

Some of our achievements this year were:

1. Principal and Assistant Principal attended the **Future Schools Conference** in Sydney. This conference challenged our perspectives of education. We both returned with great enthusiasm and ideas to share with staff on how to transform the learning for all our students. This conference initiated many of our curriculum transformations.
2. **Mathematics** has definitely been a focus in 2015 and the professional development we have received is making definite changes to our teaching programmes. Professional development in the Mathematics Assessment Interview (MAI) and Extended Mathematical Understanding (EMU) is continuing to build the capacity of all our staff in teaching Mathematics. The emphasis on teaching Maths has focused on the students working through problems, playing games using hands on materials and moving away from rote learning. This Mathematics journey will continue into 2016.



3. **School library transformation** – Two classroom teachers nominated to take on the school library responsibilities in 2015. This role receives nil support - financially or via release from classroom teaching. These teachers have created a modern learning space, with the support of staff, and their work has truly transformed this learning environment. The space is now used more effectively and in a variety of ways i.e. reading groups, a lunchtime club, EMU groups, for classroom teacher release and staff meetings. This modern learning space concept will hopefully extend to our other classrooms in the future.
4. **Genius Hour** - We are currently progressing through our third term of Genius Hour and the projects completed have been phenomenal. Genius Hour is a movement that allows students to explore their own passions and encourages creativity in the classroom. It provides students with a choice in what they learn during a set period of time at school. This new way of learning is challenging, particularly for teachers, as we hand over traditional teaching methods, and help our students learn independently.
5. **St John's Bazaar** - a wonderful example of our school community all coming together to fundraise for our special school. The Parents & Friends worked tirelessly and introduced new ideas for this annual event. A lot of money was raised and it was also a fabulous social event for our parish and school community.
6. **Differentiation in the classroom** - St John's is striving to cater for the learning and emotional needs of each individual. A variety of teaching methods are being used to differentiate for our learners such as SCRATCH (visual computer programming), cooking, gymnastics, school excursions, EMU groups, morning reading, Ministry Groups, Making Jesus Real and Kids Club.

NAIDOC Day Report 2015

On Friday, 17th July, Term 3, St John's Parish Primary School Cobar celebrated its National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Day.

The day began with a Welcome to Country and official flag raising ceremony which was conducted by a local traditional owner. After the flag raising, a whole school Mass was attended by all students, parents and teachers from St John's.

Our Aboriginal Education Worker planned a very comprehensive day which reflected the 2015 theme '**We all stand on sacred ground, learn, respect and celebrate**' wonderfully. She



St John's Parish Primary School Annual School Report to the Community 2015

connected St John's with the local Aboriginal elders and community members. We hope relationships built on the day will continue into the future. Parents, staff and students all commented positively on our NAIDOC celebrations.

Information Technology

This year saw the introduction of one-to-one devices in the classroom. Every student in Years One to Five was allocated a Chromebook. Year Six students were allocated re-imaged Netbooks and a class 'bank' of Netbooks was allocated to the Kindergarten classroom. All teaching and support staff were also given Chromebooks to use.

As a result of this wide-spread use of devices throughout the school, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) was integrated into almost every facet of the school. Students were able to gain easy access to the internet and use a range of rich learning resources. The school signed up to Studyladder, Reading Eggs and Mathletics. These online resources offered engaging and differentiated content which matched the student's ability. Students were able to use these resources at home to further consolidate skills and lessons covered during class.

This year, the Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese 'went Google', with the full implementation of the Google Apps for Education. Staff at St Johns' access Google Calendars, Google Sites, Gmail and Google Drive on a daily basis. St. John's teachers have integrated ICT into their entire pedagogy. Planning, Teaching, Assessing and Reviewing teaching programs has gone totally 'digital'. Teachers are keen to collaborate digitally with one another and their students using previously unheard of strategies. St John's staff are very forward thinking in their implementation of ICT and have been used by the Wilcannia-Forbes CEO as exemplars on a number of occasions, including being at the forefront for developing a Diocesan-wide framework for digital programming.

St. John's staff engaged in a number of professional learning sessions to ensure that the transition was as smooth as possible. The staff participated in a professional learning day with a Google Certified Teacher and Trainer and Microsoft Master Educator who took us through useful tools to implement in the classroom. Additional learning opportunities were available to the staff through Atomic Learning (an online self-paced video training application) and afternoon staff meetings run by the school's ICT teacher and the IT Administrator for Wilcannia-Forbes. Teaching and Support Staff were also released from the classroom to take part in personalised ICT learning with the school ICT teacher.

The implementation of the One-to-One device program has opened up exciting possibilities for teaching and learning. Next year will see the introduction of touchscreen Chromebooks for the Year One students and a bank of touch-screen Chromebooks allocated to the Kindergarten



classes. Students will have continued access to Reading Eggs and Mathletics, as well as the use of the online resource for Sound Waves (a whole school spelling programme).

Student Leadership

Each member of Year 6 is included in the Leadership Program and is acknowledged by being inducted at a whole school mass at the beginning of the school year. During the whole school mass, students recite the leadership pledge, receive a copy of the school vision statement and receive their leadership badge from the Principal. Parents are officially invited to come to the mass and share in morning tea afterwards. Students then sign the leadership pledge, as do their parents. All St John's Year 6 students participated in a cluster leadership retreat hosted in Cobar this year, with Year 6 students from St Joseph's Nyngan, St Ignatius' Bourke and St Patrick's Brewarrina also participating.

Year 6 leaders implement the Making Jesus Real programme. Students are responsible for the Kinder Buddy programme, organising assembly, sports activities and the canteen. Year 6 students work in a leadership team within Ministry Groups to promote leadership skills. These groups are: Christian Ministry, Environmental & Sport and Communication. Our leadership programme helps to teach each child what it really means to be a leader, how a leader should act and the importance of being given a privileged position. Our Ministry Group programme is unique to St John's.

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
76	69	15	145

* Language Background Other than English



Enrolment Policy

Our school follows the Enrolment Policy and the Guidelines for Enrolment of Students with Special Needs that states:

- Catholic schools contribute to the mission of the Wilcannia Forbes Diocese by educating and forming students in Catholic discipleship by offering them experiences of following Jesus as members of the Catholic community. Catholic schools have traditionally aimed to support Catholic parents in their role of educating their children in the faith.
- At least 75% of the children enrolled should be baptised Catholics. Variations to this can be made in each parish by the Parish Priest and Principal.
- The decision to enrol a student with a disability will depend on an appraisal of a number of factors including: the student's support needs in areas such as curriculum, mobility, social skills, personal care and communication; the expressed desires of parents and caregivers; and the capacity of the school to provide the level of support services required. Appraisals will involve Catholic Education Office personnel, parents or caregivers and may include documentation from medical practitioners, other health and education professionals and the advice of experts in the field of the particular disability.
- Children must be aged five by 30 April of the year of enrolment before being enrolled in Kindergarten. In exceptional cases acceleration to each level of schooling will be considered.

Student Attendance Profile

Our school follows the Catholic Education Office's Guidelines and Procedures for the Management of Student Attendance to reflect amendments to the NSW Education Act. These procedures are located on The Catholic Education Office intranet.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2015 was **91.5%**.

School attendance rates aggregated by year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance Rates by Year Group	
Kindergarten	92%
Year 1	90.5%
Year 2	91%
Year 3	91%
Year 4	91%
Year 5	92%
Year 6	91.5%



St John's Parish Primary School Annual School Report to the Community 2015

The attendance rate at St John's is consistent with previous years with absences usually occurring during the winter's cold and flu season.

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, monitors part or whole day absences.

- The class roll is electronically marked daily using approved codes. Absences are carefully recorded.
- An explanation of absences is to be provided for the class teacher by parents/carers.
- In the event of an explanation not being provided, teachers report the matter to the Principal.
- Unexplained absences are followed up by the Principal in consultation with the school consultant. Resolution of attendance difficulties may require a range of school based strategies including:
 - telephone contact with parents;
 - student and parent interviews;
 - reviewing the appropriateness of the student's educational program;
 - development of a school based attendance improvement plan;
 - support from school based personnel.
- If school based interventions prove unsuccessful then the school may make referral to the Director of Schools who advises the Catholic Education Commission.
- Absences are recorded on the student's report at the end of each semester.
- Each fortnight the Principal validates an Official Record of Attendance for each class. These records are kept for 7 years.

STAFFING PROFILE

In 2015 the staff profile consisted of:

Total Teaching Staff*	Total Non-Teaching Staff	Combined Total
11	8	19

*This number includes 8 full-time teachers and 3 part-time teachers.

Percentage of staff who are indigenous	5%
--	----



Professional Learning

Professional learning opportunities are highly valued and sought by all members of St John's Parish Primary School staff. During 2015 school personnel undertook a range of professional learning activities related to improving student outcomes.

The school held five whole school development days this year with the areas of focus as follows:

Term 1	Day 1 ICT -Chromebook training (Google)
Term 2	Day 2 HSIE- <i>Geography K-6 Syllabus</i>
Term 3	Day 3 Religious Education - Spirituality day facilitated by the Bishop of Wilcannia Forbes Day 4 A creative community with a cause, Modern Education – 21 st Century Learning
Term 4	Day 5 English-Spelling & Information Technology

Other professional learning activities provided:

Maths Assessment, Genius Hour, Early Learning Continuum Software APST (Standards) - Twilight Staff Meeting, Agreed Practices - Running Records & Reading Eggs, Learning Intentions/Success Criteria, Case Management, Extended Mathematics Understanding (EMU), Restorative Practices, Mathematics Assessment Interviews, Computer Coding, What Great Schools Do- John Hattie, Religious Education, Sound Waves (Whole School Spelling Approach), Linking Google Forms to Technology, Data Walls, LIVE, LIFE WELL @ SCHOOL, Primary connections-Science.

Teacher Standards

The following table sets out the number of teachers who fall into each of the three categories determined by the Board of Studies:

Teacher Qualifications		Number of Teachers
1	Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	11
2	Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.	
3	Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.	



Teacher Attendance and Retention

The average daily teacher attendance rate for 2015 was 96.42% This does not include planned leave such as maternity or long service leave. The teacher retention rate from 2014 to 2015 was 80%.

CATHOLIC LIFE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Catholic Schools have a unique role in the evangelising and educating mission of the Church. As a key ministry of parishes and the Diocese, Catholic schools encourage and support parents in their responsibility for the faith formation of their children. This formation is supported by prayer and opportunities to participate in the life, mission and liturgy of the broader Catholic community.

This year students have been involved in a number of Liturgical Life experiences. 2015 has been a very busy year at St John's Parish Primary School. The year began with the induction of the Year 6 leaders at a Mass. The Year 6 students formed their Ministry Groups from that point.

The Sacramental program began in March with Reconciliation, continued through to May with Eucharist and finished in June with Confirmation. It was pleasing to see so many students making their Sacraments this year. The sacramental lessons were held at St John's during and after school. The students were confirmed by the Bishop of the Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

St John's celebrated Catholic Schools Week by launching it with Science and Maths activities from the new curriculum. Parents and friends were invited to stay and join in while the students rotated to different teachers for Science and Maths lessons. The week continued with a Stage 2 visit to the preschool to read books to the younger children, lunch on the lawn and snow cones with family and friends, a parent Chromebook presentation, a visit from the Director of Schools in the Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese, Ride to School day and finally completing the week with a Liturgy organised by Mini-Vinnies.

In August this year St John's farewelled their Parish Priest who returned to his home overseas. He has been missed immensely by the staff and students at our school.

Students in Year 6 in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes undertake the Sydney Archdiocesan Religious Education Test annually. The test consists of fifty multiple choice questions. Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education. Twelve students participated in the test with one student



receiving a distinction, five a credit and six participation awards. Our school's average result (as a mark out of 50) was 23.6.

This year was the introduction of the Year 4 online Religious Literacy test which from 2016 will replace the Year 6 Religious Education test.

Students in Year 4 in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes undertake an online Religious Literacy Assessment. The test consists of 35 multiple choice questions that are drawn from the seven strands of the Religion Program, *Sharing Our Story: God, Jesus, Church, Scripture, Sacraments and Christian Life*. The questions related to their learning in Religion up to and including Year 4. While the questions were not the same for each student, the assessment was of equal difficulty overall. Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education. Our school's average result (as a mark out of 35) was 18.4.

CURRICULUM

The school provides an educational program based on, and taught in accordance with the NSW BOSTES syllabuses for primary education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. In addition, the school implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Education Office, Wilcannia-Forbes.

Staff members are committed to continuous improvement of teaching and learning in all facets of the curriculum.

At St John's we cater for the diverse range of student needs across all Key Learning Areas.

We provide support to students with special needs utilising both the classroom teacher and the Special Education Teacher and allocated support staff. Individual Education Plans are designed by relevant parties to meet student's specific needs. Students are provided with appropriate support and relevant goals to facilitate success for each child.

Students identified as gifted and/or talented are provided with differentiated activities either within their classrooms, in a higher graded class, or in a group of like-minded students working on project based activities. This year, a group of students were provided with opportunities to learn visual computer programming using SCRATCH.

The needs of Indigenous students are catered for by the Aboriginal Education Worker, in collaboration with the classroom teacher. All stakeholders, including the student, work



together to create a Personalised Learning Plan which directs the student's learning. Students are offered opportunities to connect with their local and wider community with excursions to relevant locations and incursions providing them with rich learning experiences. This year Indigenous students created animations to connect with NAIDOC celebrations with help from Barnardo's and D'lux Media Company.

Technology at St John's uses a one-to-one device structure which provides students with instant access to a computer when necessary. This also allows students alternative ways to express and consolidate their learning. Students are becoming responsible digital citizens as they are provided with key skills regarding responsible use when using such technology. Students use the Google Apps suite to create, collaborate and share across all Key Learning Areas and all grades.

Students at St John's take part in excursions which are included to support and enhance the learning that happens in the classrooms. Excursions occur across all grades and include trips to local businesses, other schools, important landmarks, zoos, Canberra and Ballarat. These excursions provide the students with authentic, rich learning experiences to enhance the learning programme offered in the classroom.

Physical education is a vital part of the curriculum at St John's where the students are provided with a diverse range of activities to cater for their needs. Students take part in weekly sport and fitness lessons as well as lessons provided by outside agencies. This year all students from Kindergarten to Year 6 took part in a specialised gymnastics program delivered by a qualified gymnastics instructor.

At St John's we deliver a curriculum that is both relevant and holistic in the endeavour to meet all students' needs.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Students in Years 3 and 5 sat the National Assessment Program in 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.

The information provided shows the percentages of students who achieved particular skill bands compared with state performance, and the percentage of students who achieved at or above national minimum standards. Student results are reported in six skill bands as noted in the table. Literacy is reported in four content strands (components): Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation. Numeracy is reported as a single content strand.



Year 3 results are reported in Bands 1 to 6 with Band 6 representing the highest achievement. Band 1 in Year 3 represents students who are achieving BELOW the National Minimum Standard (NMS) in each aspect of NAPLAN. Band 2 in Year 3 represents students who are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.

Year 3 band distributions and % of students at or above national minimum:

		Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	School	9.5	9.5	23.8	14.3	19	23.8	91%
	State	4.3	5.7	19	21	19.5	30.5	96%
Writing	School	0	13.6	27.3	22.7	36.4	0	100%
	State	1.8	4.3	16.4	23	38.5	15.9	98%
Spelling	School	0	13.6	27.3	13.6	27.3	18.2	100%
	State	4	9.6	18.4	20.8	20.1	27.1	96%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	9.1	4.5	18.2	31.8	18.2	18.2	90.8%
	State	4.1	7.3	12.6	23.6	20.4	32.1	96%
Numeracy	School	9.1	13.6	4.5	40.9	4.5	27.3	90.9
	State	4.4	12.6	21.1	23.8	19.3	18.8	96

In the 2015 NAPLAN results, 86% of our Year 3 students achieved above the NMS in Grammar and Punctuation, 81% in Reading, 86 % in Writing and 77% in Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation.

Year 5 results are reported in Bands 3 to 8 with Band 8 representing the highest achievement. Band 3 in Year 5 represents students who are achieving BELOW the National Minimum Standard (NMS) in each aspect of NAPLAN. Band 4 in Year 5 represents students who are achieving AT the NMS. Students in all other bands are achieving ABOVE the NMS.



Year 5 band distributions and % of students at or above national minimum:

		Band 3 (-)	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8 (+)	% at or above national minimum
Reading	School	4.6	15	20.7	21.8	20.5	17.5	95%
	State	11.8	11.8	41.2	17.6	11.8	5.9	88%
Writing	School	11.8	5.9	47.1	29.4	5.9	0	88%
	State	5.8	8.7	32.6	31.5	15.2	6.2	94%
Spelling	School	5.9	17.6	35.3	29.4	5.9	5.9	94%
	State	4.5	10.4	20	25.2	27	12.9	96%
Grammar & Punctuation	School	5.9	11.8	41.2	29.4	5.9	5.0	94%
	State	4.5	10.4	20	25.2	27	12.9	96%
Numeracy	School	5.9	23.5	47.1	17.6	5.9	0	94%
	State	3	15.3	25.3	25.6	16.6	14.1	97%

There was individual growth for all students from Year 5 in Reading, Grammar and Punctuation and Numeracy. 81% of all our students were above the NMS in Reading, 82% in Writing and Grammar & Punctuation, 77% in Spelling and 71% in Numeracy.

Due to small class sizes and that 19% of Year 3 and 5 students speak English as a second language (ESL), it's very important for our staff to look beyond trend data and to look at individual students. Staff need to look at where the majority of our students are placed within the bands and then analyse the test questions and responses to determine future direction.

PASTORAL CARE AND WELLBEING

Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes are committed to safe and supportive school environments. Our school is guided by relevant policies, procedures and guidelines that are found on the Catholic Education Office Intranet.



Student Welfare Policy

The Pastoral Care Policy is based on the Mission of the Catholic Church and reflects the values of respect and forgiveness. It aims to foster in students self-discipline and respect for the dignity and worth of self and others. It aims to develop students' understanding of their rights and their corresponding responsibilities to respect and protect the rights of others.

The full text of the School's Pastoral Care Policy may be accessed on the school's website or at the administration office.

Discipline Policy

The school expressly prohibits the administration of corporal punishment by school persons and non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the school.

This year modifications were made to this policy. These included a review of our current strategies for positive behaviour. The Staff at St John's Parish Primary School acknowledge the importance of recognising student achievement and rewarding students who make appropriate behaviour choices using a positive approach to behaviour modification. Staff use a variety of reinforcers, both formal and informal, to do this. We also updated our current practice of reflection sheets for minor and major incidents through the use of digital forms. Technology has ensured we are able to communicate behaviour incidents with parents and the entire teaching staff, including the Principal, more effectively.

Our policy is based on the theory of Restorative Practices. Restorative Practices offers teachers, parents and students a way of working together to build and maintain healthy relationships. Important to this process is the understanding that incidents of harm can be regarded as opportunities for learning, and in this way, learning and healing can be an outcome.

The full text of the School's Behaviour Management Policy may be accessed on the school's website or at the administration office.

Anti-Bullying Policy

Our school rejects all forms of bullying and strives to develop a school community that respects the dignity of each person by promoting human rights, human dignity, social justice and peace. This year no modifications were made to this policy when it was reviewed.

All members of the school community are expected to contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.



When an incident of bullying occurs, the procedures outlined in the policy are followed.

The full text of the School's Anti-Bullying Policy may be accessed on the school's website or at the administration office.

Complaints and Grievances

The diocesan Resolution of Complaints Policy (*CEO Intranet*) forms an important element in the Diocese's commitment to ensuring a safe and supportive environment for school communities.

St John's Parish Primary School follows these procedures.

Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

It is the primary responsibility of the Principal to ensure systems are in place to promote and support the health and wellbeing of students when at school or involved in school activities.

Learning and wellbeing are inextricably linked - students learn best when their wellbeing is optimised, and they develop a strong sense of wellbeing when they experience success in learning. St John's staff and students are supported through the implementation of the Behaviour Management Policy, Making Jesus Real, Restorative Practices, Positive Partnerships and Kids Matter.

St John's daily practices to promote respect and responsibility are:

Year 6 Leadership programme, the Student Representative Committee (SRC), Genius Hour, Mini-Vinnies, school garden, daily sport, daily Kids Club, our fortnightly Making Jesus Real focus, open classrooms, small class sizes and a positive environment. Students are encouraged to attend mass weekly and volunteer as altar servers, readers and welcomers to support our parish. Each class visits our local aged care facility each term. Each class also prepares and presents an assembly item each term for our community. Our staff and students use a variety of flexible learning spaces and procedures such as flexible use of student desks, lessons outside and reflection/meditation during the day.

During the year, as part of the cyclical improvement process, our school community has reviewed the following policies:



Anti-Bullying, Student Leadership, Complaints and Grievances, English, Maintenance Policy, Child Protection, WHS, Critical Incident, Excursions, Code of Conduct, Behaviour Management, Homework, Communication, Attendance and St John's Guidelines and procedures for Running Records. The Assessment policy was reviewed and edited, with reference to improvements in Digital Technology.

We formulated new school policies for a range of agreed practices for our school community:

- Infant Tracking of Literacy Continuum
- Success Criteria & Learning Intentions
- Classroom checklists
- NAPLAN
- Success Criteria and Learning Intentions
- School Uniforms

Access to all policies and guidelines can be obtained by contacting the school office.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

St John's Parish Primary School is committed to continuous improvement. System-wide processes support a culture of self-review and self-improvement to assist the school in achieving improved learning outcomes and life opportunities for students. Each year the school develops an improvement plan (Framework for Strategic Planning) which identifies aspects for improvement and development. A wide range of data informs development of the plan. In collaboration with the Consultant the school engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation aiming at all times for quality, improvement and accountability.

Key Improvements Achieved in 2015

The staff of St John's Parish Primary School have focused on four strategic goals in 2015.

To beautify our outside school environment, in particular the third playing level of St John's.

Our school grounds and gardens are maintained by our paid school groundsman and many parent volunteers. Our School Representative Council designed and maintained a school garden bed with funds raised by the students.

A quote and design to resurface our current basketball and netball courts was sourced by our local Shire Council. The Parents and Friends group have committed to supporting this endeavour and it should be completed over the Christmas school holiday period. A worm farm



was established by a Genius Hour working group which uses the food scraps collected from Crunch and Sip. Each fortnight each class cleaned up a section of the school to ensure that the school looked its best at all times. We have outside school display boards that are updated by volunteers and our Making Jesus Real board is changed each fortnight to reflect our school's focus.

To build our Catholic identity as St John's Catholic Primary School.

Our school has acknowledged our Catholic identity with an annual Catherine McAuley award and a weekly Making Jesus Real Merit award. This year, at the St John's annual presentation ceremony, the inaugural Making Jesus Real award for each class was presented to a student who had a positive attitude towards life and was ready for the challenges of everyday life.

Our school connected with our local parish through school masses, the Parish Council, altar serving and farewelling our Parish Priest. We connected with the local community by visiting residents of the local aged care facility and participating in Outback Arts competitions, Men's Shed-Christmas Tree displays, ANZAC Day March and local Cobar Show displays. There was staff and student involvement in sport and charity organisations. Our Mini Vinnies group visited St Therese's school, Wilcannia, collected and donated items for the St Vincent de Paul Christmas drive and met regularly to work with each other to do the work of Jesus Christ in Cobar. This year we have provided many opportunities for parents and the community to connect with our school through breakfasts for Mother's and Father's Day, a Kinder parent meeting, a school uniform meeting, open classrooms, technology, a parent information meeting, and our school Book Fair.

The staff spent a spiritual formation day with the Bishop of the Wilcannia-Forbes Diocese.

This strategic goal will continue to be an ongoing and important focus for our Catholic school.

To invest in professional learning with a focus on modern education-21st Century Learning

Many opportunities for professional development focusing on 21st century learning occurred during 2015. There was a focus on information technology (in particular Google Docs and Apps), the high yield strategies of using learning intentions and success criteria, computer coding, Genius Hour and digital practices. Stage meetings were scheduled fortnightly for teachers to discuss and plan for classroom learning. Professional development days were provided for all classroom teachers to improve their digital literacy. The staff and parent community are committed to continue to keep this priority area on the agenda.



To monitor student growth in literacy and numeracy levels in particular Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation and Numeracy.

A range of resources and strategies were used to track and monitor student growth at St John's. Staff engaged in professional development in the use of the ELK tracking site and the Literacy and Numeracy Continuum K-10. To track and plot student progress, Google Sheets and Forms and SMART Data were all undertaken. Data walls for reading and number assist with building a whole school responsibility for learning. Sharing of assessment via Google Drive and meetings with stakeholders also assisted with purposeful monitoring of student growth, in particular, identifying students who needed acceleration. An analysis of assessment across the year led to the development of various agreed practices to support teaching and learning in our classrooms.

Priority Improvements for 2016

Plans for 2016

To choose and use effective assessment to drive the teaching and learning for each student.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Developing a collaborative approach towards assessment, including standardised testing.
- Documenting an agreed practice for the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy guided by the NSW English K–10 Syllabus, and the Literacy & Numeracy Continuums K–10.
- Staff analysing our data and our current teaching and assessment practices. This will be undertaken as a whole staff and in stage teams, facilitated by the K-6 Literacy and Numeracy Focus Teachers and the Principal.
- Documenting and sharing school assessment data via data walls and Google forms.
- Using tracking results more effectively to meet the needs of all students.
- Working collaboratively with our Kinder - Year 2 and Years 3 - 6 Literacy and Numeracy Focus Teachers.
- Using Mathematics Assessment Interviews and Extended Mathematical Understanding assessments to guide the teaching of Number in all classrooms.
- Differentiating assessment in Number groups in infants and primary classes.
- Evaluating current reading comprehension strategies.
- Focusing on the research of Professor John Hattie.



To build the collective capacity of all staff.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- Continuing to keep 'Modern Education' – 21st Century Learning as a priority and on the agenda.
- Professional discussion between colleagues particularly in Stage meetings.
- Giving teachers time to explore new and innovative technological experiences.
- Whole School Professional Development Days with a focus on History and English (First Steps in Writing, Reading and Spelling).
- Offering staff choice in professional development experiences and topics.
- Teachers taking on leadership roles in light of their experience and interests with Information Technology, Religious Education and Extended Mathematical Understanding (EMU).
- Using technology and time management effectively to focus on learning.
- Implementation of the NSW Syllabus.
- Principal and Assistant Principal undertaking professional learning via the Mini Certificate of Gifted Education, in partnership with the University of NSW.
- Further imbedding the high yield practices of case management, data analysis and learning walks into the culture of St John's.
- Developing school wide practices to support the consolidation of Genius Hour within the culture of St John's.

To build our Catholic Identity as St John's Parish Primary School.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- The transformation and implementation of our updated St John's Parish Primary School vision.
- Celebrating St John the Apostle, Mary Mackillop and Catherine McAuley's feast days.
- Acknowledging and understanding the previous Catholic traditions of St John's Parish Primary School (facilitated by the Religious Education Coordinator).
- Providing support material (visuals and information) for the school community relating to our past history and traditions i.e. St John the Apostle, Mary MacKillop and Catherine McAuley (Sports Houses).
- Daily Religious Maintenance via whole school prayer, in particular the Angelus.
- Continuing and strengthening current school practices of Making Jesus Real, Mini Vinnie's and Altar Serving.
- Developing our relationships with Kids Matter and Interrelate.
- Creating social and liturgical opportunities for the parish and school to celebrate together.



To transform our school learning environment.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- SRC continuing to design the garden on the first level of the playground by adding more plants etc.
- Creating a whole school action plan/timetable for using the garden by classes/groups.
- SRC line marking the end of day line up areas (walkers, pick up, bus etc).
- Consulting with the school community regarding beautification projects.
- Constructing two dual purpose courts for basketball and netball.
- Continuing to use Positive Partnerships on the playground.
- Auditing of current classroom furniture.
- Professional learning in best practices and action research of school learning.
- Onsite visits to a school with 21st Century learning spaces.

PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER 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

During 2015, St John's Parish Primary School parents were engaged via parent surveys, morning teas and brainstorming sessions to gain information for the direction of St John's. Topics of discussion were our current school uniform and possibilities for additions to the uniform, current Homework Policy, the P & F committee, and a reflection on 2015 and development of strategic plans for 2016.

Overall our parents are very happy with the communication approaches our school embraces and were particularly pleased with the school's 21st Century Learning focus. Strategies suggested for further improvement were adaptations to our Homework Policy, continued staff training, and continuous improvement of the playground area and the grounds including third level construction of a shade structure and seating. It's pleasing to see that the school's 2016 goals align with the parent community goals.



Student Satisfaction

Students showed high levels of interest and enjoyment in all areas of school life. All students were proud of St John's and they all agreed or strongly agreed that school helps them in their understanding of the Catholic faith. The majority of students surveyed thought their teacher encouraged them to learn to the best of their ability. Most students felt comfortable approaching someone at school if they needed help.

Teacher Satisfaction

Staff indicated that the school has a positive working atmosphere and were satisfied with the academic performance of the students. All staff felt extremely or moderately safe working at St John's. Most staff felt the feedback the Principal provided was extremely or moderately useful. There was a mixture of opinions as to how much attention the school provided towards assessment. A majority of staff thought there was the right amount of attention targeted towards standardised tests, however, there was a mixed response with the minority of staff thinking there either wasn't enough attention or believing there was too much attention directed to assessment.

FINANCIAL REPORT

A full copy of the school's 2015 financial statement is tabled at the Annual General Meeting of the School Committee. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

This financial information is based on data provided in the Commonwealth Financial Questionnaire.

School Financial Information for the 2015 year is detailed below:

RECURRENT AND CAPITAL INCOME			RECURRENT AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	
Commonwealth Grants	Recurrent	\$387,398	Capital Expenditure	\$1,528
Government Capital Grants		\$0	Salaries and Related Expenses	\$1,586,757
State Recurrent Grants		\$1,305,862	Non-Salary Expenses	\$508,463
Fees and Private Income		\$231,878	Total Expenditure	\$2,096,748
Other Capital Income		\$19,776		
Total Income		\$1,944,914		

Notes



St John's Parish Primary School Annual School Report to the Community 2015

Commonwealth Recurrent Grants include recurrent per capita grants and special purpose grants.

Government Capital Grants include all capital grants received from the Commonwealth and State governments.

State Recurrent Grants include recurrent grants per capita, special purpose grants and interest subsidy grants.

Fees and Private Income include diocesan and school-based fees, excursion and other private income.

Other Capital Income includes building levies and capital donations used to fund capital expenditure.

Capital Expenditure includes expenditure on school buildings, furniture and equipment.

Salaries and Related Expenditure includes all salaries, allowances and related expenses such as superannuation and workers compensation insurance.

Non Salary Expenses include all other non salary recurrent expenditure covering resources, administration, operational expenses, utilities, repairs and maintenance.

