Annual School Report
2012 School Year

Mt St John’s Primary School

Mt St John’s Primary
LEARN, GROW, CELEBRATE

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About this report

Mt St John’s Catholic Primary School is registered by the Board of Studies (NSW) and managed by the Lismore Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the ‘approved authority’ for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report to the Parish School Community for this year provides the parish 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 to the parish school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance to the parish school community during the year and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school’s Strategic Management Plan and Annual Plan.

The Report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the Catholic Schools Office. This Report has been approved by the CSO which monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NSW Board of Studies requirements for Registration.

This Report complements and is supplementary to school newsletters, year books and other regular communications. The Report will be available on the school’s website by 30 June 2013 following its submission to the Board of Studies.

The contents of this Report are able to be discussed at various parent forums and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 66572552 or by visiting the website at www.dorplism.catholic.edu.au
Principal's Message

The primary purpose of Mt St John's Catholic Primary school is to support the members of the parish community in providing a faith formation for their children. The school fosters a commitment to the individual person and provides opportunities for academic, cultural and sporting achievement. Mt St John’s offers students a Catholic education based on the teaching of the Church and within the context of a strong faith community.

Our parish school continued to provide many opportunities for the faith and spiritual growth of the students as well as opportunities to excel in academic, cultural and sporting areas. All of these areas combined to ensure that our school’s mission was lived out daily in the life of the school.

The students’ achievements and accomplishments were showcased throughout 2012. Student work was proudly displayed in classrooms, on school noticeboards, in the school office and on class webpages. School achievement was highlighted and celebrated at many school assemblies. Our focus was to continue to build on the reputation that Mt St John’s has earned as an exemplary school. The following list provides an indication of the school’s academic achievements:

- The speeches written and delivered by Year 5 students seeking election as School Captains were of an exceptionally high standard. The content was well-thought out and considered, while the speeches were delivered with poise, confidence and maturity.
- Stage 3 students were involved in Robotics enrichment activities with students from St Mary's in Bellingen, St Patrick's in Macksville and St Mary's in Bowraville. These activities were held over three days, with representatives from all schools working together to build and program robots to move and follow commands.
- The NSW Year 6 Religious Education test saw one student receive a Distinction and three receive Credit certificates. This was a great result from a cohort of eight students.
- Cross-stage integrated learning units were organised for both the London 2012 Olympic Games and the Christmas season. Both units saw mixed groups of students across all stages working together to explore and learn about both topics.
- The “Mini Mounties” orientation to school program for pre-school aged children was expanded this year. A thirteen-week program commenced in the latter part of Term 3 and continued weekly. Both students and parents were able to orientate themselves to school life.

There were many opportunities throughout the year for our school to be represented at community and cultural events. The following list provides an indication of the school’s cultural program and community involvement:

- Dance Fever inter-school challenge.
- ANZAC Day march and Remembrance Service.
- Visits to and from Dorrigo Pre-School.
- Schools Clean Up Day.
- Performance at the Dorrigo community carol evening, “Carols on the Hill”.

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- The school camp-over was held again after a two-year break during construction work. A great social event saw many people enjoy dinner around the camp-fire and a small group camp the night on the school playground.

Students performed well at various sporting events in the year. The following list provides some examples of sporting highlights:

- Our school had representatives at Clarence Zone, Diocesan and State levels in the following sports: swimming (PP5 relay team), Cross Country and Athletics.
- Dorrigo hosted the Clarence Zone Cross Country event for the first time. It became a great community event and was held at the local golf course, which proved to be both a spectacular location and a testing course. Thanks go to Mr Grant Lawler, who coordinated this event, and the many parents and community members who assisted.

There were many people who assisted in the school's quest for excellence. In particular special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. Mt St John's is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people.

Greg Ryan
Principal

A Parent Message
As the logo states ‘A small school with a big heart’ is how Mt Saint John’s Catholic Primary school is perceived, providing numerous opportunities to all students, in all areas of their learning.

As a representative of the Parents and Friends Association (P&F) I believe the teachers apply a high level of professionalism in all aspects of their work. In the past year I have noticed an increase in students attending Mt Saint John’s as a result.

Fundraising is an essential component in acquiring and improving our school facilities. In 2012 many fundraising events occurred; street stalls, winter warmers raffle, cake trolley, bulb orders and calendars. Thank you to the parents, friends and wider community for your ongoing support. Furthermore, raised money went towards much needed improvements in the canteen and supporting the year 5/6 excursion to Sydney.

Our canteen co-ordinators Sally Duckett and Allison Davies did a great job in maintaining and organising rosters and orders to ensure our canteen was operational. In addition to operating the canteen, Sally and Allison provided refreshments for the zone cross-country which was held at the Dorrigo Golf Club. Parental involvement was in abundance with ‘many hands make light work.’

As mentioned the zone cross-country was held in Dorrigo last year. Many local organisations provided assistance, including the Dorrigo RSL, Dorrigo Golf Club, the National Parks and local SES.

Usually a Christmas raffle is organised however last year Mt Saint John’s families donated presents to the Saint Vincent de Paul Christmas appeal, helping local families in need.

Our Parent Assembly representatives Cath Hartin and Di McGuigan kept up the good work last year keeping parents informed on social issues relating to their children’s wellbeing.

Lastly many parents are involved in helping at our school which I believe is a reflection on the school as a whole, teachers, parents and students working together.

Melina Lawler
President,
This Catholic School

Dorrigo is a small rural community situated on the edge of the New England Plateau, on the mid north coast of New South Wales. Students come from the town itself, and from surrounding areas including Ebor, 30 minutes driving time from Dorrigo. Essentially a farming community, other employment opportunities include State Forests, National Parks and Wildlife Service, tourism and town support infrastructure.

We are a Kindergarten to Year 6 Catholic primary school of the Mary Immaculate Mother of God Parish, Bellingen, and a systemic school of the Lismore Diocese.

Opened by the Presentation Sisters in 1924, the school has a rich tradition of providing a Catholic education for the local community. The school retains its status as a small school. It commenced with 55 students in 1924 and had an enrolment of 37 students at the 2012 Commonwealth Census.

In 2012, the school was divided into three multi-age class groups covering the seven primary school grades.

Our goal is to live out our School Vision and live the Mission Statement.

Our Vision: To be a community of learners and believers where the whole person is nurtured in mind, body and spirit guided by the hand of God.

Our Mission: To create a community of learners by fostering the uniqueness and potential of each individual, challenging them to be open to God’s plan for their lives.

Mt St John’s is a faith community of the Dorrigo community, the parish of St Mary’s, Bellingen and of the Diocese of Lismore.

We express our Catholic identity through the Religious Education program, daily prayer, classroom sacred spaces and liturgical celebrations.

The parish school uses the mandated Diocesan Religious Education curriculum and the resource text, “To Know, Worship & Love”. Catholic life and culture permeates school life with 2.5 hours of religious education taught formally each week. The implementation of the Diocesan Daily Prayer guidelines supports the school’s prayer life. The purposes of this parish school are centred on Catholic Education in the Diocese of Lismore, the Foundational Beliefs and Practices – The Essential Framework. This Framework underpins all policy, planning, roles and processes within the parish school. Our aim is to increasingly integrate this statement into all aspects of parish school life. Religious Education is always given priority in our school and classroom curriculum and planning.

The parish school Mission Statement highlights the nature and calling of the school.
Mt St John’s caters for children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>K</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>TOTAL 2012</th>
<th>TOTAL 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous count included in first two rows</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBOTE (Language background other than English) count included in first two rows</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are currently 37 students enrolled in 3 classes.
School Curriculum
The school provides a comprehensive educational program based on and taught in accordance with the Board of Studies syllabi 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.

The school continues to work towards developing 21stC pedagogy. Interactive technology is available in each learning space and staff members mentor each other to develop their skill levels.

The introduction of two iPads and six tablet devices has broadened the ICT capability of the students and staff.

The use of green screen technology and video production has also been a feature of the school this year.

An assessment of all students’ fundamental movement skills took place in Term 4 and will be used to commence a FMS program in 2013.

Inquiry-based cross stage units of work were completed to investigate the topics of the 2012 London Olympic Games and the Christmas season. This K-6 approach allows the younger students to be mentored by and work cooperatively with older students.

Student Performance in National Testing Programs
The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3 there were six achievement bands with Band 6 being the highest level of attainment. In Year 5 students were placed in achievement bands from the highest Band 8 to Band 3.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data, space and geometry. In Year 3, 7 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 5 students.

The following data indicates the percentage of Mt St John’s students in each band compared to the state percentage.

The Commonwealth Government has set minimum acceptable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages.

In Year 3, students who achieved Band 3 or higher have achieved above the minimum standard. In Year 5 those students who achieved at Band 5 and higher have achieved above the minimum standard set by government.

At Mt St John’s, school and student performance is closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office led workshops and information sessions on NAPLAN and the associated tests.
Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of students in bands 1 to 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BAND 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td>26.4 42.9 23.8 42.9 20.6 0 15.6 0 10.1 0 3.5 14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td>15.9 0 41.3 28.6 22.3 28.6 13.8 28.6 5.0 14.3 1.7 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spelling</strong></td>
<td>30.1 28.6 20.2 28.6 25.4 28.6 13.4 0 7.5 14.3 3.4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar and Punctuation</strong></td>
<td>33.7 57.1 22.0 28.6 19.0 0 12.7 0 7.4 14.3 5.1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number, Patterns and Algebra</strong></td>
<td>13.9 0 29.3 14.3 20.5 57.1 23.8 14.3 9.2 0 3.4 14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</strong></td>
<td>12.6 0 28.5 28.6 22.1 42.9 23.8 14.3 8.1 0 4.8 14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Numeracy</strong></td>
<td>17.7 0 21.2 28.6 27.8 57.1 20.2 0 9.3 0 3.8 14.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Year 5 NAPLAN results in Literacy and Numeracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy</th>
<th>Percentage of students in bands 3 to 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BAND 8 7 6 5 4 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>13.6 33.3 21.5 33.3 24.5 0 22.8 16.7 10.0 16.7 7.7 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>8.7 16.7 14.5 0 28.8 16.7 34.1 50.0 8.4 16.7 5.5 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>16.5 0 24.5 66.7 26.1 0 17.9 16.7 11.3 16.7 3.8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>20.7 16.7 14.5 50.0 23.5 16.7 20.8 16.7 12.8 0 7.8 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number, Patterns and Algebra</td>
<td>16.9 16.7 14.0 0 26.3 33.3 25.1 33.3 10.8 16.7 6.9 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurement, Data, Space and Geometry</td>
<td>13.9 16.7 15.4 16.7 26.8 33.3 28.2 16.7 11.2 16.7 4.4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>15.8 16.7 15.4 16.7 28.0 33.3 23.9 16.7 11.8 16.7 5.2 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results displayed in the tables show that the students have performed well in these assessments.

Top two or three band results in literacy were very pleasing in both Years 3 and 5. This was evident in Reading, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation.

The data indicates a need to focus our development on Writing to move students up from middle band results.

Numeracy data also indicates a need to investigate, moving students from the middle bands to higher achievement bands.

These results will be analysed further to inform and guide the direction of curriculum development and student learning.
Teacher Standards and Professional Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Those having formal qualifications from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Those having graduate qualifications but not a formal teaching qualification from a recognised higher education institution or equivalent.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Those not having qualifications described in 1 or 2 above but having relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate relevant knowledge.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of staff identifying as indigenous employed at the school.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Total number of non teaching staff employed in the school.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All teachers have been involved in professional development activities during the year. These activities are designed to develop the skills and understandings of staff so as to improve student outcomes. Professional development can take many forms including whole staff development days, subject specific in-services, meetings and conferences.

Whole staff development day professional learning activities in 2012 were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Development Days</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional Learning Communities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gavin Griff / CSO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary learning Framework</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>CSO / School Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>School Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Curriculum</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>School Executive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally staff attended either singly or in groups a range of professional development opportunities including:

- Developing numeracy strategies
- Enrichment in the classroom
- Religious Education
- Educational Leadership
- Information & Communication technologies
- Writing strategies
- Fundamental Movement Skills
- Formative Assessment.

The professional learning expenditure has been calculated at $3579.84 per staff member. This figure has been calculated by CSO and reflects expenditure on casual release days and professional development activities in particular categories.

**Teacher Attendance and Retention**
The average teacher attendance figure is 96.74%. This figure is provided to the school by the CSO. There were no significant staffing changes last year.

**Student Attendance**
School attendance is always high. The Class Roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each term. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by classroom teachers. Parents are requested to provide a note to the teacher immediately the child returns to school. The principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations the principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases students and their parents meet with the Principal to discuss their leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2012 was 95.9%. School attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance rates by Year group</th>
<th>Kindergarten</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
<td>95.6%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>96.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Policies

School policies are reviewed regularly. In 2012 the following policies were reviewed, updated or newly created:

- Excursion Policy
- Maintenance Policy
- Lockdown / Critical Incident Policy
- Evacuation Policy.

Enrolment Policy

Every new enrolment at Mt St John’s requires parents to attend an enrolment interview. The interview provides an opportunity to learn more about the educational experience provided by the school, specific school procedural policies and present school expectations.

Preference for enrolment is given to children of baptised Catholics. It is a condition of enrolment that all children will participate in class religion lessons and activities, as well as prayer celebrations and school and class Masses.

Children who turn five by 30 June are eligible to apply for enrolment in Kindergarten. Enrolments for Kindergarten children are called for in the year before commencement. Other enrolments are accepted throughout the year if there are vacancies in the classes concerned.

A copy of the enrolment policy is located in the school office or it can be accessed on the school’s website. The School Enrolment Policy explains the Parish enrolment guidelines.

Student Welfare Policy, Pastoral Care Policy

“Pastoral care is central to the ethos and identity of a Catholic school and it is essential that pastoral care for students be given a high priority. The role of schools as an educational institution is to encourage excellence, the pursuit of learning and the care of all individual students. The primary purpose of schools is to promote the full physical, social, intellectual, emotional and spiritual development of students. The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ’s teaching: this is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic School. (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, n9.)” (Guidelines for Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools, CEC NSW)

The following headings highlight the broad dimensions of pastoral care at Mt St John’s:

- School climate
- Affirmation
- Prayerfulness
- Communication
- Environment
- Participation
- Parental involvement
- Special programs
Examples of these dimensions working in our school are: comprehensive and inclusive approaches to teaching and learning, fair and just assessment practices, values education program, health-promoting programs, peer support activities, school and class award systems, liturgical and prayer life of the school, stimulating classroom environments, orientation and transition programs, behaviour management plans, parent participation and local community interaction, the Making Jesus Real program.

**Discipline Policy**

Our discipline policy is grounded in both our Core Values and Code of Conduct statement.

Each class agrees upon rules, at the commencement of each year, under the headings of Safety, Learning, Respect and Self-Responsibility.

Students at Mt St John’s are expected to follow all school rules. The safety and learning needs of the students are paramount. If misbehaviour occurs the following strategies will be used: rule and behaviour reminders, time out, teacher-student conferences, lunch-time reflections, behaviour notes sent home and parent meeting.

If the behaviour is of a serious or repeated nature it may result in in-school suspension, suspension from school or expulsion.

**Complaints and Grievance Policy**

The School Handbook provided to each parent on enrolment contains a section on parent-teacher contact. This school welcomes parent-teacher contact and suggests mutually acceptable times for interviews to be arranged outside of class teaching time.

Early in each year, an insert in the newsletter asks parents to contact the school if there is a matter to be resolved. If a meeting with the class teacher does not resolve the issue, parents and teachers are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Principal.

A full copy of the Diocesan Parent and Care-Giver: Concerns and Complaints Policy is available on the school website.

**School Determined Improvement Targets**

Each year the school develops an Annual Plan drawn from the five year Strategic Plan. 2012 was a very rewarding year. Listed below are a number of goals and priorities that the school focused on during the year. The parish school’s main goals and priorities were to:

- Participate in a School Review and Development process
- Develop Numeracy Blocks and investigate pedagogical practice in Mathematics
- Promote senior student leadership initiatives
- Implement a school marketing plan.
Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

The values of respect and responsibility lie at the heart of Catholic schools, and underpin all policies and procedures. Students, teachers and parents are regularly reminded of the school’s commitment to these and other school values by newsletter items, assembly messages and by the nature of our interpersonal relationships. In 2012 our core values were used in decision making processes identified by the school community. Many of the awards presented to students throughout the year are indicative of these values. Respect and responsibility are fundamental to the way we act and treat each other at our school.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The school uses a variety of methods to gauge parental, student and teacher satisfaction with school operations. The school understands the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. Last year the following formal and informal opportunities allowed the school to test reaction to decisions, policy and school procedures:

- Invitation, through newsletter, to provide feedback
- Formal survey
- Discussion of school issues at P & F meetings.

As part of the School Review and Development process, all community members were surveyed and given the opportunity to speak with the validating panel that conducted the review. The information gathered formed the basis of our 5-Year Strategic Management Plan, which will commence in 2013.

Financial Information

Do not complete this section. This section will be completed by the CSO Finance and Resources Consultant. It will be added in direct by the CSO. This section cannot be completed until our accounts are audited, usually around March. Leave the black text as it stands in this document.

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Lismore Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2012 is presented below: