



Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn
CATHOLIC EDUCATION OFFICE

ST MARY'S WAR MEMORIAL SCHOOL

West Wyalong, NSW

2014 Annual Report



SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

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This report was prepared by:

Robyn Akehurst

PRINCIPAL

MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Principal's Message

St. Mary's War Memorial School community is made up of dedicated, caring and loyal parents and staff. Our actions ensure that the students are happy, safe and well cared for in a Catholic educational environment that lives out the core business of nurturing growth. We offer our students spiritual leadership and work closely with our parish to ensure the school is operating as an effective Catholic School. Teaching and learning focuses on educating hearts and minds using best practice pedagogy that ensures our students are confident and are engaged in learning that prepare them for the challenges of tomorrow. The extensive use of technology further enhances student learning with a 1:1 student computer ratio. This year a senior teacher received a Canberra Goulburn Catholic Education Award for Excellence for his work in this field.

School Board Message

Assisting with the budget and monitoring the financial performance of the school is one of the primary functions of the Board. St Mary's continues to have a strong culture of careful cost control and sound administration. In 2014 the Board implemented a policy to assist parents and staff to communicate more effectively, and worked towards the finalisation of an information technology strategy to ensure the students and the teaching environment were moving towards best practice in terms of innovative technology. The Board continues to review the governance and procedures that are relevant to Board operations. The Board values the relationship the school has with the parish and wider community and acknowledges the quality work of the students and the staff and the significant contribution of the Parents and Friends Association.

Student Representative's Message

The Student Representative Council takes responsibility for voicing concerns of the student population as well as raising funds for our World Vision sponsor child with special events that allow participation by all students. This year all senior students have had designated leadership roles which carry special areas of responsibility. The groups have assisted with liturgy, ICT, school sport resources, fundraising and raising awareness with the student population of other people who need our prayers and support.

SCHOOL FEATURES

St Mary's War Memorial School is a Catholic Primary School located in West Wyalong. The school caters for students in Kindergarten - Year 6, and has a current enrolment of 102 students. Students attending this school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities consisting of 60 male and 42 female students; 2 indigenous students; and no students with a Language Background other than English (LBOTE).

The school employs 17 staff comprising 11 teachers and 6 non-teaching staff, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including office administration, learning support, tuckshop manager, cleaning and grounds maintenance. No staff identify as Indigenous.

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

St Mary's was founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1897 and became a War Memorial School when the present building was constructed and opened in 1959. The School Board and P & F Association have an important role in the life of the school. Through effective communication they are able to influence school policy and the direction the school takes in many important matters. The financial contributions gained from fund raising activities of the P & F are very much appreciated. The P & F also support the community via social events. The students look forward to the annual themed disco. Students at our school have participated in many interesting and challenging co-curricular activities. All students attended Life Education sessions and met Happy Healthy Harold. They have also travelled to other schools to enjoy concerts and performances by peers. We welcome visiting performers and this year the students participated in a very educational and interactive drumming workshop.

In 2014 we have joined with other Catholic schools in our area in the ACU Aspirations Program to allow students with an interest, and expertise, in Maths and Science to extend and share their skills and knowledge. A highlight of our year is the annual whole school concert that allows all students to perform on stage. Over the years we have observed that the students have certainly grown in confidence and stage craft. Our school choir is not only very active in the community but was also very successful in the Western Region Choir festival. School sporting carnivals for swimming, cross country and athletics saw students progress to represent the school both at Western Region and Archdiocesan levels. Four teams of students entered the Catholic Primary Schools Basketball Championships with the Junior Girls team winning Division 1. We also enter teams in Trent Barrett Shield and Mortimer Shield competitions. Fun and friendship was the theme for AFL, netball and cricket gala days with other local schools.

Students have achieved success at credit and distinction levels in the University of NSW Competitions. Our annual book fair was an exciting time with students and staff celebrating their love of books and reading. Many students also participated in the Premier's Reading Challenge. Students also have participated in the Archdiocesan Public Speaking competition. All students prepared art works for display at the local West Wyalong Show. As in other years the students were very proud to be invited to participate in the local Anzac Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies. To end the year all students have the opportunity to participate in a swimming program conducted by qualified swimming teachers. We have formed very positive relationships with St Anne's at Temora as a way of providing families with a day school option for secondary Catholic education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St Mary's War Memorial School follows the Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum, *Treasures New and Old*.

The School community regularly participates in class, whole school and parish Masses and Liturgical celebrations throughout the year. We begin our assemblies and gatherings with prayer. Preparation for each Sacrament (Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation) occurs in the classroom and through meetings conducted at Parish level. Staff have the opportunity to participate in reflection and spirituality days. The parish and school support each other with fund raising activities. This year we participated in a very successful Christmas Box campaign. Our Parish Priest is very active within the school in an educational

role but also as a pastoral leader showing care and concern for all and guiding us in faith development. Making Jesus Real (MJR) peer groups are very popular within the school. The groups consisting of 10 students from Kinder to Year 6 look at ways they can live as Jesus would wish. The students also enjoy Easter and Advent activity days.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT - NAPLAN

School and National Mean Scale Scores

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	419	402	412	426	402
School	423	384	394	419	401

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	501	468	498	504	487
School	561	491	536	515	523

Proportion of students at or above the National Minimum Standard

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	94%	94%	93%	94%	95%
School	92%	77%	77%	85%	100%

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
National	93%	90%	93%	93%	93%
School	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Proportion of students in each Achievement Band

YEAR 3	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Band 6	39%	8%	23%	23%	8%
Band 5	8%	30%	8%	39%	23%
Band 4	15%	15%	39%	15%	23%
Band 3	31%	23%	8%	8%	46%

Band 2	8%	15%	23%	8%	0%
Band 1	0%	8%	0%	8%	0%

YEAR 5	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar & Punctuation	Numeracy
Band 8	22%	11%	11%	33%	11%
Band 7	22%	0%	44%	0%	33%
Band 6	56%	33%	33%	33%	33%
Band 5	0%	56%	11%	33%	22%
Band 4	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Band 3	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Students at St Mary's War Memorial School have continued to show pleasing results in numeracy. We believe that this is directly a result of the focus we place on maths and a number of initiatives we have taken over the past few years that are now imbedded in the teaching and learning of numeracy at our school. Our work in literacy has been rewarded with Year 5 students showing considerable growth from Year 3 in Reading.

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.ceocg.catholic.edu.au/parents/Pages/GeneralPolicies.aspx>

Enrolment packages are available from the front office. We usually have vacancies in all classes and we enrol throughout the year. Executive members of staff are readily available to answer questions and conduct tours of the school.

Attendance Policy

The staff of St Mary's War Memorial School are responsible for ensuring that all students who are of school age and are enrolled at St Mary's War Memorial School attend on a regular basis. It is compulsory in NSW, according to NSW Act for all students between the ages of 6 and 17 to attend school. If a student is absent from school for four days and no explanation is received executive staff contact families.

We encourage students to attend school by emphasising how important school is for their growth in learning and future happiness; for their friends to remain in contact and that we miss their company when they are not at school.

Pastoral Care Policy

Our purpose is to provide an educational climate that allows students to learn together to achieve their personal best. At the heart of Pastoral Care is the concern for the spiritual,

intellectual, social, physical, emotional, aesthetic, moral and cultural well being of each person and that justice for all is achieved. We believe that all are loved by God and as a school community it is our duty to be liberators, leaders and shepherds. Pastoral Care must endeavour to involve and enrich all of the members of our community and is the responsibility of each member of the community. It is the right of all members of the School community to expect and receive Pastoral Care. Making time for others and affirming each individual develops a sense of personal worth and can make us all feel that we have gifts to offer the School Community. 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 War Memorial School Pastoral Care 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

School priorities in 2014 focussed on planning more effectively for teaching and learning. The teachers have worked together to explore the Understanding By Design process. All teachers have reported that this work has enhanced their professional capabilities by encouraging them to fully explore syllabus documents when planning learning and assessment. In 2015 the school will further enhance the use of ICT. Our school improvement focus will be on the further development of literacy and numeracy teaching and learning. These projects are supported by Outer Regional School Support grant from the Catholic Education Office.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Professional Learning

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

The school held five whole staff days in 2014. The content of these days was as follows: teachers evaluating their professional practice and setting goals and learning plans; further development of ICT in the classroom; implementation of the new NSW English syllabus and resource management.

Teacher Qualifications

All teachers are qualified as required by the relevant State and Territory bodies.

TEACHER ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

The average teacher attendance rate during 2014 was 92%.

The teacher retention rate from 2013 to 2014 was 91%.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The average student attendance for the school during 2014 was 79 %.

School attendance rates disaggregated by Year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance rates by Year group

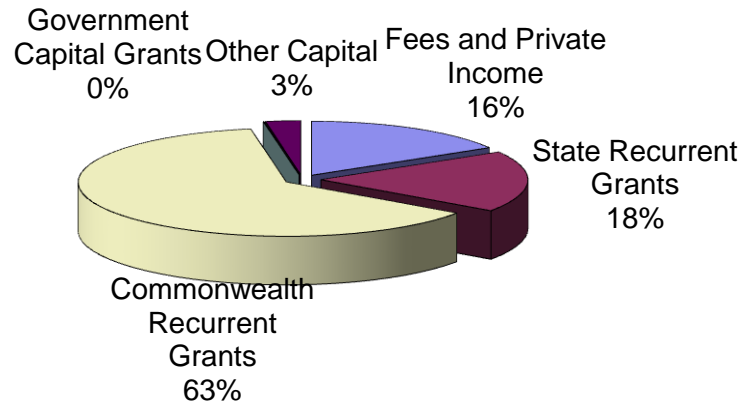
Kindergarten	79%
Year 1	78%
Year 2	80 %
Year 3	77%
Year 4	77%
Year 5	81%
Year 6	78%

PARENT, TEACHER AND STUDENT SATISFACTION

Parents at St Mary's School recognise that the care given to students is fantastic. The children are taught about love, respect, and Christian behaviour. The standard of teaching and learning is excellent. The students look tidy in their uniform and are happy to come to school and are happy to learn. All staff are approachable and open to discussion. Students value their friendly teachers and peers, how everyone cooperates and are good sports. They also value the high level of resources, especially the oval and iPads, available for learning and play. Feedback from teachers indicate that they see all the students as wonderful, that as a staff they support each other and everyone is happy to work in this cheerful environment. The teachers see themselves as committed to their roles and believe that all students are capable of achieving. The teachers are all skilled in using technology in the classroom and are focussed on creating a school that is recognised as having a high level learning culture and Catholic ethos. The teachers also appreciate the support given to the school by the parents and the parish community.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

St Mary's West Wyalong - Income



St Mary's West Wyalong - Expenditure

