Annual Report

St Joseph’s Primary School, Finley

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The School
The 2012 school year provided many highlights for the students, families and staff of St. Joseph’s. Midyear a group of our students headed off to participate in the Tournament of Minds held in Wagga Wagga. After a fantastic performance by the groups in their long term challenge and spontaneous challenge they returned to school with an honours certificate. We were all very proud of their efforts, as were they. We also had some excellent individual achievement with Kelsey Hislop, a year 4 student, taking out the regional finals of the Lions Club Public Speaking Competition.

St. Joseph’s is a small school in the South West Deanery of the Wagga Wagga Diocese. There are 65 students in four classes ranging from Kinder to Year 6. Finley has a population of approximately 2000 and is situated in a rural community in the Riverina district. It is with pleasure that I present our 2012 Annual Report for St. Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, Finley.

Catholic Identity
The school has continued to work closely with Father Martin Cruickshank and the St Mary’s Parish in providing opportunities for the students to continue their faith development. In early August the students from Year 5/6 participated in the Sacrament of Confirmation which was a fabulous celebration of the spiritual journey of our students and their families. When thinking about this special event in their lives it is important to focus on the positive and guiding influence of Fr. Martin Cruikshank. Our school and parish are blessed to have someone who genuinely cares for and values every member of the community. A clear example of this is when listening to Martin’s homilies where he interprets the Gospels in a way that helps us all to see how we can be people of faith in today’s world. We also provide many opportunities for students to participate in masses through the school year. There were many highlights during 2012. One particularly memorable event was the Year 4/5 ‘Blessing of the Animals’ mass. Many family pets and farm animals came to school to receive a blessing from Father Martin.

Each and every day we aim to ensure that each student has the opportunity to grow academically, spiritually, physically and emotionally. At St. Joseph’s we celebrate diversity and provide for each child an education that recognises their individual abilities, gifts and interests and fosters within them the Gospel values of love, compassion and forgiveness. Each week we recognise and acknowledge the qualities that the students identify as being Jesus like through our Principal’s award. Our Year 5 and 5/6 classes have continued to learn about how we can make Jesus real in our everyday lives through the ‘Making Jesus Real’ program. They have learnt to take ownership of their actions, words and choices and to be aware of the impact they can have on others. This program together with our Principal’s award has helped to create an atmosphere where the students know and can articulate what it means to be a loving, compassionate and forgiving member of the St. Joseph’s community.

Our Vision
Our Vision is to provide a quality education in an environment that supports the welfare of all. Our community promotes strong Christian values, faith development and family
involvement in each aspect of our school.

**Our Mission**
We believe that St Joseph’s School, Finley is a Faith community within St Mary’s Parish where:

- Christ is central and all members are encouraged in their faith journey to empower them to be able to make a difference in the present and future world/society.
- There is a commitment to strive for excellence in education therefore ensuring that all children will work towards their potential.
- There is respect for the dignity and uniqueness of each person in order to cater for the individual needs of all children, and foster their whole development—spiritual, moral, social, emotional and intellectual.
- The atmosphere of the school community clearly reflects that Gospel values are endorsed and witnessed by teachers, students, parents and all of the members of the Parish community.

**Exit Outcomes**
When the boys and girls at St. Joseph’s have completed their schooling with us, we (the parents and staff) would like for them to:

- have experienced God and Church and have developed a knowledge of our faith and the values that our religion stands for
- be independent, flexible and cooperative workers who are capable problem solvers, risk takers and decision makers
- be active participants in life who have experienced the responsibility of leadership
- be happy and proud of themselves and be confident to share their talents and skills with others
- be respectful of others and their differences
- be willing to have a go and do their best
- be competent readers, writers and mathematicians
- be competent users of technology and have an appreciation of the arts
- have developed an understanding of the world around us
- have knowledge and understanding of good personal health
- be lovers of life and learning
- appreciate the value of family and have experienced good role models here at school
- be prepared for life beyond St. Joseph’s.

**A Message from key School Bodies**
The St. Joseph’s School parent bodies brings together representatives of all those within the parish who are concerned with the work of the Catholic School.

**Chairman’s Report ~ School Council**
I would like thank all board members for their time and effort over the past twelve months. We are certainly in challenging times but I appreciate everybody’s positive attitude in promoting the positives of our school and all that it offers.

Over the past year we have been able to work within our budget which we could only do from the efforts of our board, teachers and school community.

We have been very fortunate with government funding and we are still seeing some grants coming through with the last one being the solar grant which, over the 2012 school year, has been installed. We are now reaping the benefits of this financially as well as educationally as our children learn
about the importance of working towards a sustainable future for our environment. We should be very proud to walk around our school and see what it has to offer. It is definitely an environment that our children can learn and grow.

I would like to thank Veronica Braybon and her team for all their hard work and effort in the last 12 months. Veronica has certainly set a challenge for herself and her team and should be congratulated on all her efforts. An example of this was the schools involvement and achievement in events such as the Tournament of Minds and Lions Club Public Speaking Competition as well as individual sporting achievements.

I would like to thank Father Martin Cruickshank for his continuous commitment to St. Joseph’s. He takes things in his stride and makes things happen in and around our school and local community. He is a well respected member of our community in and out of school. We are very fortunate to be able to have him lead our children. His rapport with them is evident when they participate in mass.

I would like to thank our Parents and Friends President Paul Doyle and the committee and congratulate them on all their fundraising efforts this year. It is such an important part of our school community and the running of our school. Even with our decreasing numbers a good example of our school community spirit was the number of helpers that came and helped at the annual Finley Tractor Pull. We have also established some new fundraising ideas which have been very successful for our community. These included catering at clearing sales, raffle nights and a Chef’s Toolbox evening.

Andrew Chesworth
Council Chairperson

**Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing**

St. Joseph’s Primary school has participated in BST Literacy and Numeracy since 1998 and in BST Writing since 2001. Our participation has continued as these assessments have changed into the NAPLAN. The school monitors the NAPLAN Data each year and uses that information to inform its learning and teaching practices for the upcoming year.

During 2012 our students maintained results at or above state average in most areas of testing. In Year 3 the majority of students performed well above the state average in all areas of the testing. Our Year 3 students were greater than 50 scale points above state average in numeracy. Half our Year 3 group placed in the top two percentage bands for writing. Our Year 5 group demonstrated consistently good results in all areas tested with expected growth from Year 3 to Year 5 in most areas.

**Professional Learning**

During 2012 our whole staff have continued their professional learning in the program ’First Steps in Writing’. During the year teachers participated in workshops, collegial visits and professional discussion and planning meetings to improve their understanding of children’s development in writing, how to best meet the individual needs of students, how to provide rich learning experiences and how to evaluate learning to ensure progression. The teachers are incorporating this into their daily programs. Staff members have also continued to develop their understanding of new
technologies which has been evident in how we incorporate iPad technology into our daily class experiences.

Teaching Staff
The NSW government requires that this report detail the number of teachers in each of the following categories:
A) have teaching qualifications from a recognised higher education institution within Australia
B) have qualifications from a recognised higher education institution within Australia but no formal teacher education qualifications
C) have relevant successful teaching experience and appropriate knowledge but no formal teacher qualifications.

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<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>6</td>
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Workforce Composition
The staff of St. Joseph’s consists of 6 female teachers. Along with this we have 1 teacher’s aide and our school secretary.

Student Attendance
Student attendance rates for each Year level and the whole school

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Attendance %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>94.19%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>92.82%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>96.64%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>94.27%</td>
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<td>Year 2</td>
<td>95.39%</td>
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<td>Year 1</td>
<td>89.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kinder</td>
<td>94.25%</td>
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Student Non-Attendance
Electronic Roll used and monitored. Non-Attendance is followed up through teacher and parent communication and then through the school secretary.

Enrolment Policy
Our Enrolment Policy serves as a guide to the Principal and Parish Priest in implementing the Enrolment Process throughout our school. St Joseph’s accepts families with any cultural or religious background. Enrolling parents understand and accept that the children attending our school are involved in all activities including our Religious Education Program.

Our enrolment policy and procedure is linked directly to the Diocesan Enrolment Policy.

Characteristics of the Student Body

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<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Indig’</th>
<th>LOTE*</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>65</td>
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*Language background Other Than English

School Policies

Discipline
The community of St. Joseph’s are committed to endorsing the gospel values of justice, inclusion, reconciliation, respect, trust and honesty. It is based on the belief that we have respect for and are responsible for all members of our school community.

(refer: Catholic Schools Office, Wagga Wagga Discipline Policy)

Student Welfare
The community of St. Joseph’s are committed to endorsing the gospel values of justice, inclusion, reconciliation, respect, truth and honesty. A safe and secure environment is developed when all members of the school community respect the individual’s rights and freedoms, responsibilities and duties, as well as responding to the needs of students, staff and community. (refer: Catholic Schools Office, Wagga Wagga Discipline Policy)
Complaints and Grievances
The community of St. Joseph’s are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment. This is characterised by fairness, mutual trust, respect and reconciliation. (refer: Catholic Schools Office, Wagga Wagga Pastoral Care Policy)

Changes to School Policies
At St. Joseph’s we continually assess and evaluate these policies on a yearly basis. These have included the school excursion policy, student supervision policy and the evacuation procedures.

Imagery Targets
During 2012 the staff of St. Joseph’s has continued to implement the R.E. syllabus ‘Sharing our Story’. The Year 5/6 students continued their involvement in the Making Jesus Real program.

We have continued to review and analyse NAPLAN data to guide the implementation of teacher and learning programs to cater for individual needs. We regularly discuss and develop projects and programs that aim to improve outcomes in targeted areas. These have included opportunities to extend students who demonstrate skill in various areas. One such program was Tournament of Minds which enabled a group of talented students to develop solutions to challenges. We were very proud of their efforts.

As a whole staff we worked through the process of school accreditation and evaluation. During this our school policies, procedures and programs were evaluated. While this process can seem a little daunting it was in fact a great affirmation of the school staff and how they go about providing the best for the students in our care. From this we have identified areas that we will continue to review and improve in the coming year.

As a school community we have continued to meet the requirements of legislation through participation in senior first aid course, ‘Keep our Kids Safe’ ~ child protection information and anaphylaxis training.

During 2012 we utilised our Country Areas Program funding to incorporate an arts program that included artist studies, creation of artworks based on artist techniques and art appreciation components.

We also participated in the CAP network initiatives of ‘Rising Generations’ ~ a senior program aimed at developing leadership, communication, cooperation and planning skills. The children utilised these to prepare projects for implementation at school. They then met with students from our CAP cluster to share their achievements.

We have continued to utilise a growing variety of technologies into our daily programs. During late 2012 iPads have become a daily fixture in our students lives as a tool to support their learning or to take them into a new creative realm.

During 2012 the teachers have begun to utilise the skills and strategies learnt throughout our training in the program ‘First Steps in Writing’ by immersing their students in rich experiences and providing the tools that help to develop their individual skills at their specific phase of development.
Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility
Respectful behaviour and responsibility are promoted on a daily basis. Posters are displayed throughout the school, developed by students and staff, and are referred to in general conversations and are lived by all community members. We promote awareness of these qualities through our weekly Principal’s award. Over time this award has clearly become something that the students aspire to. They have also begun to nominate other students for this award because of the great things they see others doing in our classrooms and on our playground. When asked what they believe the principal’s award is identifying, their responses included the qualities of inclusiveness, welcoming behaviour, thoughtfulness, helpfulness, responsibility, leadership, care, commitment and respect to name a few. This award also clearly links to the ‘Making Jesus Real’ program which identifies and promotes these qualities also.

Strong community involvement is encouraged through a variety of activities; ANZAC Day, local events, visits to the Retirement Village, parish events, inviting community to school for productions, artworks etc.

Community Satisfaction
The following information has been provided to the school. It has been a valuable gauge for determining the level of satisfaction the community has with our school.

Parents
My child is usually happy at St. Joseph’s Finley.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>%</td>
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Students
I am usually happy at St. Joseph’s Finley.

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tr>
<td>82%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3%</td>
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Staff
I am usually happy at St. Joseph’s Finley.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
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Financial Statement Summary

About This Report
This annual report was generated in collaboration with the Principal, the School Staff, School Parent Community and the Catholic Schools Office of Wagga Wagga.