THE SCHOOL

School Vision Statement
Mater Dei Catholic Primary School is a Christian environment where the relationships between staff, children, parents, clergy and the community are underpinned by Gospel values.
Mater Dei Catholic Primary School is a faith community that is committed to the development of the whole person.
Mater Dei Catholic Primary School is committed to developing life long learners who will become contributing members of society.

Patron and Logo
Our school name “Mater Dei” is Latin for “Mother of God”. This means we have a special devotion to Mary, Mother of God, who is our school patron. Our school motto, “One in Spirit” is something we try to instil within the school community.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
The school has worked closely with Father Plunkett and the Sacred Heart Parish in providing opportunities for the students to continue their faith development. Sacramental programs were the main focus for our Year 2 (Reconciliation), Year 3 (First Holy Communion) and Year 6 (Confirmation) classes. The children and teachers put a lot of time and effort into preparation for these sacraments and were joined by family and friends to celebrate these special occasions.

Class and whole school masses are held regularly in our school and the infants paraliturgies are always a favourite with parents and grandparents. Fr Ledinich has continued fortnightly visits to classrooms to work with teachers in Religious Education.

The pastoral component of our faith saw children raise over two thousand dollars for the missions, project compassion and other charitable organisations throughout the year.

A highlight of our year was the Golden Jubilee celebrations for our much loved parish priest Father Plunkett. Celebrations included a joint mass and BBQ with Sacred Heart and Mater Dei Primary Schools in August and whole parish celebrations in October. These celebrations were a worthy tribute to a man who has given so much spiritually and pastorally to so many in our community.

SCHOOL POLICIES
Our School continues to develop and review policies on each of the curriculum areas as well as policies on enrolment, programming, assessment, homework, student welfare, technology and many other areas. Copies of all of these policies are kept in the School Office and parents are welcome to view them.
INFORMATION ON KEY SCHOOL PROGRAMS
Diocesan recommendations now ask schools to present at least one Key Learning Area Policy for review by a Diocesan curriculum review team. Mater Dei presented two KLA’s for review, Maths and Creative Arts. The feedback from the review team reflected the work put in by staff in preparation for the review. As a staff we will work on recommendations given by the review committee.

All teaching Staff participated in a review of the Diocesan Policy – Today’s Children Tomorrows Adults to gain a deeper understanding of the Principles and practices.

CURRICULUM FOCUS.
A significant focus for professional development in the curriculum area was in assessment. The need to incorporate balanced assessment into classroom practice was emphasised and work was begun on developing criteria-based assessment to assist teachers with the introduction of a new reporting system in 2006.

THE ARTS
The children have been exposed to a good variety of musical activities through specialist teacher Marg Harris. Across the grades the children explore, create and perform different styles of music.

Students in our primary grades continue to take advantage of the opportunity of musical instrument tuition through Mater Dei Catholic College. With this tuition comes the chance to be part of the Junior Band. Other children learn the keyboard here at school under the instruction of Mr Chapman.

Children in all grades took part in our end of year production “It’s a Miracle” which incorporated lots of song and dance. This Christmas story was presented to delighted parents at our end of year celebrations.

Interested children from Years 3-6 had the opportunity to participate in the Wagga Choral Festival which brought together choirs from all Wagga Schools to entertain audiences at the Civic Theatre.

Many students in our school continue to take advantage of speech and drama tuition through Angie Crosthwaite. Children here were given the opportunity to complete eisteddfods, Restaurant Theatre, Karaoke evenings, Speech Decathlon and ASCA exams.
Angie’s expertise was also utilised in working with classroom teachers to prepare classes for eisteddfod items where we achieved outstanding success.

Stage 2 & 3 children were also provided with Dance tuition through Mina Saville. Years 3 & 4 focused on Hip Hop and Funk and Years 5 & 6 on classical and jazz.

**SPORT**
Children in our school were involved in a variety of sports during the year. Carnivals for swimming, athletics and cross country were held in Term One. The children participated with great enthusiasm and spirit with Bowyer house being the dominant house this year.

Many children attended Diocesan trials in Australian football, netball, rugby league, hockey, soccer, cricket and touch football. We had our first State representative in a number of years when Bridget Webster was selected in the NSW Girls cricket side who contested and won the Australian Championships held in January. This was an outstanding effort from a very talented and dedicated young cricketer.

We also had three children selected in MacKillop teams, Mitchell Nicholson in swimming, Dougal Howard in athletics and Isobel Carroll in Touch Football.

All classes participated in Gymnastics for one term which they really enjoy.

The boys in Year 5 & 6 enjoyed the opportunity to participate in the Mortimer Shield, Paul Kelly Cup and a Rugby Union gala day. Our Year 5 & 6 girls participated for the first time in the Aus-tag competition held in conjunction with the Mortimer Shield. The boys performed very well in the Mortimer Shield making the semi-finals of the Riverina Division. The children in Years 3 & 4 participated in the Walla Rugby Day.

A combined Mater Dei/Sacred Heart team also made it to the semi-finals of a state –wide Rugby Union team.

Our annual netball trip to Sydney saw our year 4 and Year 6 teams achieve great success with both teams winning their divisions against other Catholic Schools from across the state.
GENERAL AND SPECIFIED SCHOOL INITIATIVES.

Following the success of the Open Day last year for prospective kinder students we have added this to the Information evening and orientation day as part of the Kindergarten Orientation process. This opportunity was taken advantage of by many prospective families who found it most beneficial.

The Student Representative Council continues to give the children of our school a voice on school matters. Members of the SRC have also assisted with the organisation of a number of fundraisers and events for charity.

The Peer Support program was run in the school again this year with Year 5 children being trained as co-leaders with the Year 6 students. This year’s module was *Taking Opportunities* which focuses on resilience and pastoral care.

Mater Dei took part in a weekly chess competition against other Wagga schools. Our teams involved certainly enjoyed the challenge.

Our Year 2 class continues to work with the Wagga Wagga Council and the Riding for the Disabled in creating a wetlands area adjacent to our school.

The children in Year 4 participated in national tree planting day by planting native trees and grasses on the second playground along the boundary between our school and Mater Dei Catholic College.

PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT LEARNING

The school continues to focus on early intervention and hence have an emphasis on extra support in the early years at Mater Dei. Kate Le Brocque is utilised as a Resource Teacher in the Infants grades working with classroom teachers in meeting the needs of children. Reading Recovery is another program aimed to support children in Year One experiencing difficulties in the literacy area.

2005 saw a huge focus in the purchases of various technology to assist learning in the classroom. Purchases included 18 computers and 3 laser printers in classroom blocks for localised printing.

Links with MDCC this year have allowed our Stage 3 children access to computer laboratories where classes are able to work. We access these computers on Friday afternoons to work on specific projects or tasks while the College children are at sport.

Staff involvement in SNAP & ELLA marking, which is the Year 7 equivalent of basic skills testing, has given our Stage 3 teachers (Year 5 & 6) an insight into the skills children entering high school will require.
EQUITY PROGRAMS

As part of our HSIE studies each class selects another culture to study. Cultures that are studied include Aboriginal, Korean, Balinese, Egyptian, French and Chinese. This enables children to gain a greater understanding of other cultures from countries within our region.

PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS

Peer Support was provided again with the focus for the unit being resilience. This program which brings together students from K-6 in small groups and is led by Year 6 students aimed at providing strategies for children to become more resilient. Besides building these skills, the structure of the groups allows students to build up a network of support across the grades.

Our buddy system continues to be a successful way to orient new Kindergarten children into our school. Children in Year 5 and 6 buddy with children from Kinder. The older children certainly relish this opportunity.

The Life Education Van visited our school again in 2005 and it provides an opportunity for children to look at appropriate health and lifestyle choices that will affect their long term well-being.

Students with disabilities again received funding from the Catholic Schools Office to allow teacher assistants to work with them in classrooms to enhance learning.

Children who enjoy the challenge of higher order thinking skills were given this opportunity through the Tournament of Minds competition. The competition involves children working together to solve problems in a collaborative manner with team-mates and then present their solutions in a ‘creative manner’.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The state wide Basic Skills Testing program gives our school an indication of student performance in literacy and numeracy. Whilst these tests are given in Year 3 and Year 5 only, they certainly encompass skills taught beyond the grades. The testing provides feedback of each child’s results in Reading, Language, Writing, Number, Measurement and Space.

It was most pleasing to note that Year 3 and Year 5 classes as a whole performed above the state average in every one of these components. Whilst this is most encouraging, we as a school will look at the feedback to our school to guide teaching.
Many children also took the opportunity to challenge themselves by competing in the University of NSW competition in English, Maths, Science, Computing, Spelling and Writing. Our involvement with these saw our school achieve many distinctions and credits but most importantly it gave many students the opportunity to experience a different and challenging form of testing.

Although an extra curricular activity in our school, many of our children achieved outstanding results in the Australian Speech and Communication Association exams which are held in conjunction with the tuition that Angie Crosthwaite does in our school.

**STAFF ACHIEVEMENT**

Year One and Year Three teachers from our school were involved in SENA Numeracy Professional Development throughout the year which focused on providing the training and time for thorough assessment of children and the planning of specific learning and teaching activities to meet their needs.

Staffs were recognised in the Curriculum Review process for the standard of their class programs which reflect learning and teaching in the classroom. All staff was also inserviced in CPR, and Child Protection

All teaching Staff participated in a review of the Diocesan Policy – Today’s Children Tomorrows Adults to gain a deeper understanding of the principles and practices.

**SCHOOL RENEWAL**

Every year the school, through consultation, must determine priorities for development in categories including Policy, Administration, Professional Development and School Facilities. Priorities for our school included the building of three new classrooms to cater for our increasing numbers, looking at whole school assessment, developing a plan for tracking student progress through the Stages, and trial and review of scope and sequences formulated in 2004.

4. **SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

4.1 **School Enrolment and Attendance Profile**

The continued double intake of Kindergarten students in 2005 saw our enrolments grow from approximately 223 in 2004 to approximately 248 this year. It is anticipated that the school will continue to grow until it becomes double–stream from K-6.

4.2 **Structure of Classes**

Classes are divided into the seven different grades, with all classes except Kindergarten and Year One being single-stream, with a maximum class size of 30. Few spaces at all are available in any of the classes from Year 2 to Year 6.
4.3 **Staffing**
Our school staff consists of ten permanent full-time teachers, three part-time teachers, two teachers assistants and four support staff. All of these personnel have the appropriate qualifications required to fulfil their duties in our school.

4.4 **Parent Involvement and Participation**
An outstanding characteristic of our school is the significant parental involvement within our school community. This was evidenced in the magnificent response to P&F fundraising activities throughout the year which saw almost $30 000 handed over to the School Board.

Other involvement included, classroom assistance, canteen, sports carnival assistance, excursions, other fundraising events, School Board, P&F, Canteen committee, school banking, uniform shop, book club, office volunteers, and book covering sessions, social evenings and working bees.

4.5 **Community Use of School Facilities**
A variety of community groups took advantage of our school facilities throughout the year including Lakeside Revellers cricket teams, primary school aged netball teams and MDCC for sport and training purposes.

4.6 **Financial Statement Summary**
This data shown below is a summary of Diocese of Wagga School System income and expense and includes income and expense from all system schools.
4.7 About the Report
This report has been compiled by the principal with the assistance of appropriate school and Diocesan personnel and encompasses educational and associated activities of our school community in 2005.
The above report has been made a compulsory requirement to all government and non-government school beginning in 2004. Copies of this report are to be accessible to all school parents, the Catholic School’s Office in Wagga and appropriate government bodies.

Regards,
Danny Malone
Principal.