2005 Annual Report

School Name St Michael’s Cooalamon

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1. School Profile

1.1 Introduction

St. Michael’s is a co-educational Catholic School providing quality education to Catholic and non-Catholic children from Coolamon and districts.

St. Michael’s is a Learning Community functioning under our Vision and in the belief that children need support and challenge for learning to take place. The relationships developed between staff and students form the foundations to our approach to teaching and discipline.

This report is an indication of the year 2005 at St Michael’s Primary School.

1.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2005:

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LBOTE*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
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*Language background other than English

1.3 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established an Enrolments Policy which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese. The full text of this policy can be found at:

http://www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

Staff Profile

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
b) have qualifications from a recognised higher education institution but no formal teacher education qualifications
c) have relevant successful teaching experience and appropriate knowledge but no formal teacher qualifications.

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<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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2. Catholic Life and Mission

2.1 Catholic Heritage

St Michael’s exists to:

- SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF JESUS CHRIST;
- SUPPORT THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF COOLAMON;
- EDUCATE THE CHILDREN ENTRUSTED TO OUR CARE IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE CURRICULUM WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT, ALL THEIR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS.

To spread the message of Jesus Christ

- We strive to create an atmosphere enlivened by the Gospel spirit.
- We develop the knowledge, understanding and love of God through systematic and co-ordinated religious instruction in the truths revealed by Christ and taught authoritatively by the Church.
- We emphasise the importance of prayer, both personal and formal, and foster this through daily prayer for staff and children.
- We strive to live the Gospel values and show our commitment to these values through a community learning, loving and serving each other.
- We support the missionary role of the Church. We provide practical support for the missions of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

To support the growth and development of the Catholic community of Coolamon.

- We acknowledge the leadership role of the pastor and encourage and welcome his input and presence within the school.
- We acknowledge the central role of the parents in the education of their children and attempt to have them involved in the formulation of direction for the school and policy development.
- We participate in the Liturgical Sacramental life, the Devotions and other celebrations, which characterise the Faith life of the local Catholic community.

To educate the children, entrusted to our care, in all aspects of the curriculum, and take into account their entire individual needs.

- We implement an effective educational programme, consistent with all current guidelines and educational thinking, which allows the child to gain knowledge and understanding in all areas of the curriculum, through a careful step-by-step progression.
- We endeavour to broaden the children’s horizons so as to fully prepare them for life and enable them to take their place in society.
- We endeavour to provide the children with the basic skills with which they can critically adapt to their ever-changing environment.
- We endeavour to identify and promote talented children and staff so as to make most use of those talents, both for their own benefit and the benefit of others.
- We endeavour to identify and assist those children who have learning difficulties and provide them with a supportive environment so that they can experience success and improvement in their skill level.
- We endeavour to develop within the individual child a sense of responsibility and decision making abilities, which are appropriate to the primary age child.
- We endeavour to become involved with the local community in any appropriate activities as a means of encouraging the children to become effective citizens of our community and our country.
2.2 Liturgical Life
This year the children have participated in the sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Each ceremony was a beautiful spiritual event and the children took on these sacraments of initiation with reverence and great maturity. During the year we celebrated many School masses with the children involved in reading, singing and playing musical instruments. The School also participated in raising money for the Missions through a mufti day where the 5/6 children organised activities for the whole school to participate in and to think of those who are less fortunate than themselves.

2.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese
The school is an integral part of the Parish as the Parish is an essential part of the school. We have a very good relationship with our Parish Priest Fr Tony Loth who is very supportive of the school and its initiatives. Our link with the Diocese is also very important as they provide us with the support needed to implement quality learning and teaching within the school.

2.4 Religious Education Curriculum
This year as per usual we utilised the Parramatta Diocese Document ‘Sharing Our Story’ within the school.

2.5 Catholic Worldview
We had a number of different fundraisers during the year which the school supported in looking at the social welfare of humans around the world. The Lenten program saw money being raised for those with less resources than ourselves in third world countries through Project Compassion. In October we concentrated on the work of Catholic Missions around the world and raised money during Mission week. The environment is an important world issue at the moment and through the curriculum, we followed the teachings of Pope John Paul II, “Humanity has disappointed divine expectations…….humiliating…….that flower garden that is the earth, our home. It is necessary, therefore to stimulate and sustain ecological conversion.” (January 2001)

2.6 Parent Participation
At St Michael's we encourage parent participation in all aspects of school life. Our parents are welcome into the school at all times as we have an open door policy. Parents are invited to join us for celebrations, masses, plays, carnivals and any other event we have at school.

2.7 Professional Learning in Catholic Life and Mission

The Diocesan Policy on Professional Requirements for the Accreditation of Teachers of Religious Education can be found at:

http://www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm
3. Pastoral Care

3.1 Diocesan Policies

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established Pastoral Care and Discipline Policies which are implemented by all schools in the Diocese. The full text of these policies can be found at:

http://www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm

The implementation of these policies is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.

3.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy

As per requirements our school follows and implements all Diocesan Policies.

3.3 Pastoral Care of Families

The school as well as the parish plays an important part in the pastoral care of our families. The school has a pastoral care policy which can be located in all policy folders at school and on the Diocesan policies web page. We aim to assist families pastorally in the best way we can at all times.

3.4 2005 Initiatives

We had a visit from our prospective Kinder children for 2006 on three occasions this year, which was enjoyable and eye-opening for both students and parents alike. We have twenty new children starting Kinder next year and they will have the advantage of having their own class. With the culmination of a terms hard work on zoo’s and animals, technology and Australian history, we had a whole school excursion to Melbourne where we visited such attractions as Scienceworks, Melbourne Zoo, Melbourne Aquarium, Melbourne Museum and other attractions. Both students and parents who attended had a fantastic time and were a part of a wonderful learning experience.

3.5 Resolving Issues

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has established a Complaints Handling Policy which is implemented by all schools in the Diocese. The full text of this policy can be found at:

http://www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au/policies.htm

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.
4. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

4.1 Curriculum Overview
This year our focus has been on consolidating our learning and teaching practices in Mathematics, Creative Arts and Literacy. We will continue our focus with these curriculum areas at the beginning of next year before moving on to Religion.

4.2 Approach to Teaching and Learning
This year, our approach to teaching and learning has been one of introducing new and exciting ways of implementing the curriculum covering visual, kinaesthetic and auditory styles of learning in order to develop the whole child.

4.3 Significant Initiatives
The proper installation of the reading hour, writing hour, and the maths hour have enhanced what is being taught in the classroom.

4.4 Student Achievement

Literacy
This year we had some very pleasing results with BST and writing competitions. Students from St Michael’s received 1st & 2nd place in the local RSL writing competition and the children participated in many different writing competitions throughout the year.

Numeracy
Mathematics has been an area which we have really targeted this year and so far we are seeing good results through Basic Skills Testing and other forms of formal testing. This is an ongoing project in our school and we hope to see pleasing results in future years with the learning and teaching that we have implemented in this area.

Targets for 2006
Our target for 2006 is to have in place a well rounded curriculum being undertaken in each classroom with students engaged in optimal learning. Again like all years we endeavour to improve in results in external formal tests.

4.5 Information, Communication and Learning Technologies
We have adopted information, communication and technology as a major initiative in our school and we had the new block set up with internet access this bringing the school to have at least four ports in each classroom. Both the children and staff have been brushing up on their skills over the year and we hope to keep moving forward in this area with the purchase of laptops next year to institute whole class lessons.

4.6 Professional Learning
Professional Learning in 2005 revolved around Mathematics, Creative arts and Literacy. We had two teachers participate in the Diocesan Numeracy Project (SENA) in 2005 and with inclusions, we will have three staff members who have completed the training in class in 2006. The staff also completed Mathematics modules run by the Diocese in order to fulfil the requirements for a Mathematics review in the year. This year one staff member participated in training to conduct art as therapy within the school and our staff in general completed the modules for Creative Arts in order to be ready for a creative Arts review in 2006.

Literacy was another curriculum area which we addressed in a professional manner in 2005. We are lucky to have an LLTC facilitator on staff and we utilised her skills in second term when we had an intern in the school who worked on her class, which gave her time to work with all staff on an individual basis sharpening up literacy teaching and learning.
4.7 Optional

The Arts
Music lessons continued this year through The Wagga School of Music once a week. Although this is voluntary, quite a few children are involved and utilised the specialist music teachers. We also had the formation of a School Choir this year who performed in the Eisteddfod in Wagga taking out first place in their division with a very entertaining performance. The school in conjunction with St Joseph’s Junee participated in the Musica Viva program and had visits from musical groups B’tuta and Sirocco who provided very entertaining performances.

Sport
Once again 2005 has been a very busy year in regards to sport. Term One saw all three swimming carnivals held; School, Deanery and Diocesan in which St. Michael’s had representatives in all three. The school also held our cross country in which we ran through Kindra Forest from this a number of students were selected to compete at the Diocesan carnival in Narrandera. A number of students attended winter sport trials, AFL, Netball, Soccer, with a great deal of enjoyment and enthusiasm. Term two saw our Athletics carnival held. The students practised the various events during physical education and sport time to give them knowledge and skills about each event before the carnival. From this carnival we had 37 students attend the Country Deanery Athletics. This was a very enjoyable day for the students, a number qualified for the Diocesan Athletics in Albury. Term three and the Diocesan Athletics carnival was held. St. Michael’s had a number of representatives travel to Albury to compete. If term three wasn’t busy enough, we also had Airborne Gymnastics travel out every Friday for sport. The students from K-6 were involved in a variety of gymnastic programs to develop their skills in this area. This is a ten week program which the students really look forward to.
5. Extra Curricula Program

This year saw the introduction of the Active After School Sport Program in the school. This Government run initiative was held two afternoons a week and was organised by two members of staff. The program involves getting children active through participating in fun activities and also concentrates on eating in a healthy manner. The program was embraced by families and next year we hope to have the program run by parents with trained instructors working on a rostered rotation.

Strategic Initiatives

5.1 2005 Priorities and Achievements

In 2005 our biggest priority was getting our building works completed and the rooms resourced. Although the rooms are not completely resourced yet we do have the structure to move ahead. We are very grateful for the support given with this process from the Federal Government, Block Grant Authority, & St Michael’s Parish.

Our development of our Mathematics and Literacy programs in the school throughout the year has been very positive but we see this as an ongoing project which needs to be consolidated each year.

5.2 2006 Priorities and Challenges

Our priorities and challenges for 2006 revolve around catering for the needs of our students in a growing environment. Our school population has risen from 76 students in 2004, to 91 students in 2005 to 109 students in 2006. Although we have new buildings to cater for the numbers, we still need to provide the resources needed to cater for the extra students. This is an ongoing process which the school, school council, parish and parents are looking to address.

The investing in our schools program will be put to great use next year with many initiatives to improve the learning environment of the children being undertaken; including, new technology, new carpet and paint in older rooms, shade structures, new bubblers, cement paths and white boards being placed in older rooms.

The P&F have set the goal of raising funds to put a sprinkler system in place on the top oval and enhance the grass cover which will be of great benefit to the students. It is a very exciting time at school at the moment as we are progressing forward.
6. Parent Participation

Parents play an integral part in the dynamics of our school and are very much a part of our success.

The parents have been busy raising funds to improve resources within the School. Again we have been able to purchase some new readers, Library books, Science resources, and new sports equipment for the children with the money supplied by the P&F. The P&F also purchased our new desks and chairs for the students, which have been put to great use already. The support that is given comes from the wonderful efforts, ideas and energy of P&F members and the staff and students are truly grateful. Our gardeners who appear from time to time making sure our grounds are looking great have been wonderful.

We have an open door policy at our school and parents utilise this to keep all forms of communication for the benefit of their children in place.

This year our parents joined us on our School excursion to Melbourne. Our parents had a fantastic time with their children and got a good insight and became a part of the learning process. We have also had many different days where parents have been invited into the classroom for special programs. We are very grateful for the support we get from our parent body when we have carnivals, working bees and liturgies.
7. Financial Report
The School has been able to keep its head above water financially this year but will need to adjust the fees for next year as our expenses are increasing and we feel that we need to meet the needs of the children through added resources for classroom use.
The School does not work as a profit making venture, so all funds that come in go straight back into the School buying resources and paying for the general upkeep.
The following statement is based on a Diocesan level. The financial statement for 2005 is as follows:

Financial Statement Summary
This data shown below is a summary of Diocese of Wagga Wagga School System income and expense and includes income and expense of all system schools.

Income
- School Fees 8%
- Other Fee Income 5%
- State Government Recurrent Grants 21%
- Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants 66%

Expense
- Salary and Related Expenses 85%
- Non Salary Expenses 15%
8. About This Report

This report format is in its third year at our School and has been compiled by the principal and staff of St Michael's with the support of parents and students. As with last year the report has come mid year. We delay its publication as we have to put the Diocesan financial report in as required by the Government. The main focus behind the report is to reflect on the school year, keep the community informed of the direction the school is taking and to highlight achievements within the school community. I would like to thank everyone within the school community for your support of St Michael's School as we progress forward.

Yours in Christ

Paul Jenkins
(Principal)