2005 Annual Report

St. Patrick’s Primary School

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School Profile

Vision and Mission
At St. Patrick’s Primary School Holbrook it is recognized that we are part of a Catholic Community in a rural area.

In the Spirit of the Sisters of St. Joseph we are a welcoming school community that continues to develop an environment where by:

- The person of Jesus Christ and Gospel values will be evident
- Children will be challenged to develop to their full potential spiritually, emotionally, socially, academically, physically and culturally
- We acknowledge and respect the individuality and uniqueness of each member
- We work in partnership with the Parents, Parish and the wider Community.

St. Patrick’s School, Holbrook is a catholic primary school located on the Hume Highway, 540 kilometres south of Sydney, in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga. The school was originally staffed by lay teachers until the arrival of the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1892. The Sisters remained up to the end of 1985 with the first lay principal commencing in 1984.

As enrolments initially grew, so too did the need for improvement in teaching and learning resources and student services. Improvements included the administration wing comprising staff room, principal’s office, toilet facilities and tuckshop. Various other physical improvements to the school in the past decade include:-

- All purpose weather shed
- Adventure playground equipment
- Cementing between major buildings
- Landscaping of front and rear gardens
- CASTnet computer cabling providing internet access to all rooms

Our local historical significance provides many of our Catholic families with a third or fourth generation of presence within our school. The result of which is a pride and passion with which they hold ‘their school’.

History aside, St. Patrick’s continues to maintain enrolments in a town that is generally reducing in population. To achieve this it is important that we continue to keep abreast of both current trends within education and Board of Studies syllabus requirements. We have also highlighted four areas that are relevant to our current position. These are:-

- the continuing ability to learn and teach to deliver the best possible services to our children and our parents
- to be compliant with the Board of studies in both curriculum and school environment
- the smooth and structured delivery of educational services which include pastoral care and the inclusion of the wider community while catering for the needs of both ends of the educational spectrum
- to be competitive in the education ‘market’ in order to give parents a clear, viable choice of educational systems

Student Profile
In 2005 the students are divided in three groups, based equally on educational stages and weight of numbers. In total St. Patrick’s has 66 students, with an exact 50/50 split of girls to boys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K/1</th>
<th>19 students</th>
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<tr>
<td>2/3/4</td>
<td>26 students</td>
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<td>5/6</td>
<td>21 students</td>
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Staff Profile
St. Patrick’s staff consists of the following: - principal, two full time and two part time teachers and a secretary employed for 25 h.p.w. All teaching staff has teaching qualifications from a recognized higher educational institution, with all holding a Bachelor of Education as a minimum standard. We are fortunate that three teachers are trained or training Reading Recovery teachers whilst three hold certificates in Religious Accreditation.

Highlights 2005
- Implementation of 95% School Renewal commitment with an emphasis on educational outcomes and policy.
- Successful commitment to the registration process and a report that reflects the changes that have occurred over the past five years.
- The first time hosting of Albury Deanery Mass.
- Improvements in our learning technologies and the acquisition of 21 apple computers.
- Participation in community events such as Holbrook Flower show, Community Art Show, Holbrook Festival, Henty Field Days and Community Anzac Day commemoration.
- Bernie O’Connor Cricket, Football and Netball sporting events.
- Maths Olympiad for Years 4, 5 and 6.
- School Anzac and Remembrance Day celebrations.
- Creative Art exhibition and school musical production “A Kids Summer Nights Dream”.
- Improvements to rear landscaping and playing field.

Catholic Life and Mission
Catholic Heritage
St. Patrick’s has a vision that reflects the Church and Diocesan policy. It also reflects the staff and community’s input from 2000 through to today. The statement reflects Todays Child, Tomorrows Adult (a document put out by the Catholic Schools Office).

Our Mission and its practical application provide the school with a happy, cohesive, stimulating school which allows both staff and students to interact comfortably.

During Term 4 we initiated the process of change in our religious education and pastoral responsibilities policies in light of assessing and reporting to parents, and a visit to our school by a Diocesan invited Student Behaviouralist. As a result St. Patrick’s will continue to focus on these important initiatives in 2006.

During March, the Diocesan Director visited the school to outline the Commission’s vision for the future of Catholic Education. Representatives from Tarcutta, Tumbarumba, Culcairn and Holbrook were invited to listen and gain an understanding of the driving philosophy behind the everyday workings of a Catholic school.

Liturgical Life
St. Patrick’s hosted the beginning school year Deanery Mass for the first time in this school’s history. This was a true celebration of the combined schools commitment to the priorities of education for the forthcoming year. Bishop Hanna, Fr. Warren, the leadership team, Principals, staff and parents renewed their enthusiasm for vibrant, healthy and Christ centered Catholic schools.

The students of St. Patrick’s actively participate in a wide range of prayer and liturgical celebrations. Senior students are supported in learning how to plan and lead these celebrations throughout the year. We are fortunate to have students able to provide support and participation in all aspects of these liturgies. Traditionally, the fifth Sunday of the month has been allocated to St. Patrick’s School to provide readers, altar services and offertory for the parish. This has the dual outcome of strengthening the bond that exists between church and school, whilst giving the parish the opportunity to know that the spirit of God is alive in the younger members of our parish.
We celebrate the contribution St. Patrick has made, particularly as our school bears his name. Our school mass on St. Patrick’s Day reflects the spread of his influence to the community of Holbrook. Mass is followed by a ‘green inspired’ morning tea. Parents and friends are always invited to all the activities that take place up until lunch time.

A highlight of 2005 was the naming of our combined library, assembly and computer room the Mary Mackillop Centre, with permission from the Mary Mackillop Centre in North Sydney. Our school took the opportunity that marked the ten year anniversary of the beatification of the process by which canonization of Mary Mackillop can take place, with a liturgy in her honour. This was of particular significance to us as the school was served so well by the Sisters of St. Joseph for over eighty years.

The students of St. Patrick’s contributed over $250 to the various mission events during 2005. Through its Project Compassion and Mission Week activities, students gained an insight into the lives of children in developing nations. The students have a greater understanding of the disparity between nations and in their own way made a contribution of financial support and personal awareness of the problems that exist in our world.

Nineteen children made their First Reconciliation on 18th June and four children received Eucharist for the first time on 11th September.

**Pastoral Care**

At St. Patrick’s the Pastoral Care Policy is being revisited to ensure the care of all members of the school. Specific programs and policies that have been implemented include the development of a draft Behaviour Management Policy, a support statement of bullying and harassment, social skills programs, Centacare programs and the acknowledgement of achievements and special events.

St. Patrick’s participated in a range of community programs that fostered social responsibility and provided many social opportunities for families.

**School Implementation of Diocesan Policies**

During 2005 St. Patrick’s revisited twenty six priority areas of Diocesan Policy. As a result twenty policies have been re-written. These fall into the areas of Administration and Management (eleven policies) Curriculum (five policies) Pastoral Responsibilities (four policies)

Within these categories, new policies include Copyright, Chemical Safety, School Council, Occupational Health & Safety, Sun Smart, Child Protection, Critical Incidents, Canteen, Maths, Religious Education and Creative Arts.

Registration and review of these policies took place by representatives of the Diocesan Leadership team on 20th September, 2005. The report, given to the Principal, was in turn distributed to the staff and reported on in detail to the School Council.

Diocesan policies can be viewed at [http://cso.wagga.catholic.au/policies](http://cso.wagga.catholic.au/policies)

**Enrolment Policy**

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga has a draft enrolment policy and procedures that are followed by our school. It exists to assist schools in the equitable provisioning of enrolment applications within the mission of the Catholic Church. Key features include:

- Common enrolment period and application forms available from individual schools
- Priority to families who are supportive of the life, teaching and religious practice of the Catholic Church.
Special consideration may be given to individual cases and situations as determined by local circumstances.

Student Welfare and Discipline
Catholic schools are places of belonging, respect & justice, hope, celebration and quality learning & teaching.

They are based on the dignity of the whole person and provide witness to Gospel values as a means to living out daily life. These values are captured in the Diocesan and Schools’ Pastoral Care Policy. The school based policy provides information on programs to support students and families, approaches to discipline, creating a safe school environment, codes of conduct and suspension & expulsion guidelines.

Complaints and Grievances
Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga are committed to a safe and supportive environment, characterized by fairness, mutual trust, respect and reconciliation. Any parent, student or community member who has a complaint or grievance has the right to have this addressed.

The key elements of the school’s complaints handling procedure and what a community member may do if they have a complaint are detailed in the Diocesan Policy Document.

Excellence in Teaching and Learning
Curriculum Overview
Religious Education is a high priority area at St. Patrick’s and is taught to all students in the school. During 2005 the teachers contributed to the religious education of the students through lived and taught behaviours. By Term 4 we were working towards a new assessment and reporting process that will be fully implemented by June 2006.

Building on the excellent achievement in Numeracy and Literacy in 2004, the school worked towards the establishment of a whole school monitoring plan. This started with an inventory of literacy and numeracy resources and developed into a policy that supports a whole school monitoring system. This process will further complement the work undertaken by the Reading Recovery teacher in literacy and be formalized in the new 2006 reporting to parents documents.

Reading Recovery continues to be a vital component of St. Patrick’s literacy program. During 2005 St. Patrick’s trained another teacher in this Diocesan initiative. In 2005 four students were discontinued from the program, a percentage of 30% for the total of enrolled Year 1 students.

Numeracy continues to remain a high priority area of learning. The staff of St. Patrick’s has completed five modules in maths programming developed through the Learning Support Team in Albury. Resources to the value of $500 were purchased to complement the teaching of mathematics. Staff from Stage 1 and Stage 2 was trained and completed surveys in the Count Me in Too program initiated by the Catholic Schools Office. These staff will continue with the Early Numeracy Assessment Schedules.

Creative Arts saw two highlights for the year that combined community and school. The St. Patrick’s Art Show held in Registration Week was a tribute to the creative efforts of all students. On display were examples of ceramics to paint, sculpture to collage, made at school as a direct result of creative art lessons.

In Term 4 the senior students performed a musical titled “A Kids Summer Nights Dream” for the parish and school community. This was a rich source involving the students in all aspects of production and performance.
Student Achievement

The school uses a variety of assessment strategies at key points in the learning framework. These include teacher observation, portfolios, projects and presentations. The school also participates in the state-wide literacy and numeracy testing program for the purposes of diagnosing individual learning needs and reviewing whole class teaching programs. Information on student progress is communicated on a regular basis and external test results are discussed with parents on an individual basis annually.

Basic Skills Tests

There were three Year 3 and ten Year 5 students who sat the 2005 Basic Skills Test which assesses aspects of literacy and numeracy in a standards framework. Year 3 student’s results are reported in Bands 1 to 5 whilst Year 5 results are reported in Bands 1 to 6 - Band 5 and 6 respectively being the highest.

Year 3 Literacy: 67% of students were in Band 1 and 2 with 33% of students in Band 3, 4 and 5.
Year 3 Numeracy: 33% of students were in Band 1 and 2 with 67% of students in Band 3, 4 and 5.

Year 5 Literacy: 10% of students were in Band 1 and 2 with 40% of students in Band 3 and 4 whilst the remaining 50% achieved Band 5 and 6.
Year 5 Numeracy: 0% of students were in Band 1 and 2 with 30% of students in Band 3 and 4 whilst the remaining 70% achieved Band 5 and 6.

Overall trends indicate that girls performed better than boys in aspects of literacy and numeracy in Year 5, however the cohort of Year 3 was skewed by insufficient numbers to determine a trend.

Primary Writing Assessment

There were three Year 3 and ten Year 5 students who sat the 2005 Primary Writing Assessment.

In Year 3, 67% of students were in Band 1 and 2 with 33% of students in Band 3, 4 and 5.

In Year 5, 10% of students were in Band 1 and 2 with 50% of students in Band 3 and 4 whilst the remaining 40% achieved Band 5 and 6.

There is evidence of significant learning gains between Year 3 2003 and Year 5 2005 across all skill areas.

University of NSW Tests

Students were given the opportunity to sit for the University of NSW Educational Competition in Mathematics, English, Science, Writing/Spelling and Computer Skills.

We acknowledge the students for their preparedness to undertake a demanding regime of testing. The results were most pleasing with the following achievements:-

Science
Participation - 4; Credit – 5; Distinction – 3.

Mathematics
Participation – 11; Achievement – 3; Credit – 6; Distinction – 1.

Computer Skills
Participation – 9; Credit – 4; Distinction – 2.

Writing
Participation – 5; Credit – 5; Distinction – 1.

English
Participation – 11; Credit – 6; Distinction – 1.

Spelling
Participation – 9; Credit – 4.
Parent Participation.
The parent body contributes significantly to the educational, spiritual and financial existence of the school. 2005 saw the Parents & Friends Association and the School Board merge to form the St. Patrick’s School Council. A constitution was adopted at the June meeting with an interim executive being voted in for a six month period.

In 2005, over $12,000 was raised, $9500 which went directly into the school budget with the remaining $2500 being carried over for the 2006 school year. The major fundraising activities included:-
- Henty Field Days catering $4000
- Wedding and clearance sale catering $2500
- Rotary dinners $3500

The remaining $2000 was raised through raffles, stalls and social evenings.

The School Council contributes to the weekly maintenance of the school grounds through a maintenance roster. To supplement this a working bee is held once per term to address any major areas of concern on O, H & S issues.

Parents are invited to the school on a weekly basis for Mass, morning tea and assembly. This is well attended with an average of twelve parents taking the opportunity each week.

Parents staff the school canteen on a voluntary basis each Monday. Our policy dictates a healthy canteen serving only those foods approved by NSW Health and Department of Education.

Extra Curricula Program

Intensive Swimming Program / Swimming Carnivals
All children participated in this program of eight lessons during early February. Also in February a successful school swimming carnival was held. A total of eighteen children represented our school at the Albury Deanery swimming carnival with each swimmer producing a magnificent performance, often winning their heat by producing a personal best time. From this ten students went on to represent our school and Deanery at the Diocesan Swimming Carnival at Leeton. As a result of their efforts four boys represented Wagga Diocese at the Mackillop Swimming Carnival in Sydney.

Athletics Carnival
Our school athletics was held at Alexandria Park Albury on 5th April. From this a team of twenty students represented our school at the Albury Deanery athletics carnival, and two students went on to the Wagga Diocese Athletics Carnival held in August and continued onto the Mackillop Athletics Carnival in Wollongong.

Cross Country Carnival
Our school cross country was held on Holbrook Golf Course which is always a great venue. Fourteen students traveled to Narrandera for the Diocesan Cross Country on 11th May and from this three students qualified for the Mackillop Cross Country carnival at Eastern Creek.

Talent Quest
A school talent quest, organized by Year 6, was held on St. Patrick’s Day. Entry was by gold coin donation with proceeds going to support Project Compassion.

Excursion
Students in Years 5 and 6 traveled to Milton for a three day educational experience. This visit included trips to Aboriginal sites, museums and a fishing village.
Strategic Initiatives
2006 Priorities and Challenges

Vision and Mission Statement
It has been six years since the staff and community of St. Patrick’s School have developed their vision and Mission policies. In this passage of time, 50% of the staff has changed, and as a consequence it is time to reflect and develop a new Vision and Mission Policy. At this stage, we would look to CSO personnel to assist in facilitating the initial processes with the Catholic community.

Pastoral Responsibility
A focus for 2006 across Curriculum, Religion and Policy will be the area of pastoral responsibility. Driven by our Vision and Mission Statement and incorporating the Federal Government’s Safe School Framework, significant effort will be placed in developing a coherent and practical Policy. (This will include Robert Pereira in the area of bullying, Peer Support, Behavioural Expectations and Norm Setting).

Reporting
With guidance from CSO, 2006 will focus on the mandatory requirements for reporting the progress of students, to parents.

Key Learning Areas
The English and Religious Education areas will be proposed for curriculum review. Particular focus in these areas will be Scope and Sequence, Programming and Assessment.

Basic Skills
In 2006 we intend to use the information from Basic Skills Testing to play a more significant role in our expectations of students.

Reading Recovery
It is hoped that Reading Recovery will feature prominently in our early literacy intervention program.

Leadership and Administration
As a result of Government changes to reporting, we will put into place a system of identifying and tracking students in key education areas from Kinder to year 6. Data will be obtained from both standardized testing and teacher evaluations. Using SAS2000 as a basis, either individually or as a system, investigate the assessment and reporting documents, standardized across the school.

Annual School Report
We plan to develop this report into a substantial information and promotional document for the school.

Technology
There is a need for greater understanding of MyClasses in the CASTnet system.

Professional Development
The best resource we have at this school is our teaching staff. However, apart from the inservices driven by CSO, very little time is devoted to external professional bodies. In 2006, we will strongly promote two staff members attending the State Maths Conference.

Road Safety
It has been some time since the school has focused on the issue of road safety. This includes all forms of transport – bus, bike, walking. With the assist of CSO staff, we would undertake a review of current practice, legislation and if necessary modify our current practices.
Spiritual
In 2006 we will look at one or more staff members undertaking the Journey program to continue spiritual growth. We would also encourage those staff members who have not yet undertaken Religious Education Accreditation to do so, whilst encouraging senior staff to consider further studies in Religious Education.

Resources and Facilities
Investing in our Schools
The main focus for 2006 will be the grant application for Investing In Our Schools. The main area of need is again the kindergarten room and the girls’ toilet block. To compliment the computers we acquired in 2005, we will commence a process of networking and internet availability to have up and running MyClasses for students.

Class Resources
A formal request to the Fundraising Committee of the School Council will be made for funding for class resources in the Reading, English and Religious Education sectors. The amount will vary between $500 and $1000 to compliment the resources that already exist in the classrooms.

Maintenance Plan
As a result of the formation of the School Council in 2005, the development of a new School Maintenance Plan will be undertaken. This will need to cover weekly through to annual maintenance issues around the school and to involve as comprehensive as possible the parent population. This Maintenance Plan may also include a component to take up the shortfall of our successful grant application.

This report was prepared and written by Tony Kent, Principal.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT SUMMARY

![Income Pie Chart]

![Expense Pie Chart]