1. School Profile

1.1 Introduction

As the professional response of Marian Catholic College Griffith to the College community, this Report gives an account of some aspects of life and records changes and developments at the College, as well as being one of the ways in which we account to the local Church and to various Government departments.

The College is in partnership with parents, sharing with them in the education of their children. Giving an account is fundamental to this partnership and this is done in a variety of ways, for example in the weekly newsletter which includes acknowledgment of student achievements, College news, reports from the College Council and Parents and Friends Association. Other examples are articles in the local and Diocesan newspapers and in the Parent Handbook given to every parent and available on the College website where the College Prospectus can also be found.

Reports for 2002 to 2005 are to be found in the corresponding College magazine and on our website. The Principal’s report, printed in the 2006 magazine, is a summative reflection on the five year period 2002 – 2006.

The focus of the curriculum is a creative, flexible and proactive response to the learning needs of this particular community and is the local interpretation of the Diocesan direction articulated in Today’s Children, Tomorrow’s Adults.

Priorities for 2006 have been:

- Managing the College during a major development and refurbishment process

1.2 Student Profile

The following information describes the student profile for 2006:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>LBOTE*</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>239</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language background other than English

One obvious characteristic of the College is the rich mixture of cultural backgrounds that can be found among our students and staff, and which derive mainly from Italian, Indian, Pacific Islander, African, Afghani as well as Anglo Saxon origin. There is an Australian Indigenous enrolment of 0.8%. Many of our students (31%) live in a household where adults speak to them in a language other than English.

A second characteristic of the College population is the significant proportion of students with an identified learning disability (6.3% of the College population).

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

www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

The implementation of this policy is monitored by the Catholic Schools Office.
1.4 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2006 the College continued its internship programme for a total of two teachers. One of these is now fully qualified and the other, a graduate, will complete recognised teacher education qualifications early in 2007. This programme has been running at the College for the past five years and is similar to both Commonwealth and State Governments’ strategies to attract university graduates with a variety of academic expertise into the teaching profession. One experienced teacher has successful industry experience and background.

The remaining staff is well qualified, with eleven holding Masters’ qualifications or better and nine with a Graduate Certificate or Diploma in Religious Education in addition to their other teaching qualifications.

1.5 Teacher Attendance and Retention

The federal Schools Assistance Act 2005 requires that each school report on the average attendance rate of staff members in a given school. The end figure is determined by calculations including certain periods of absence due to sickness, personal carers leave, leave without pay, special leave and accident/workers compensation leave. An attendance rate of 96.2% was achieved in 2006 by staff at Marian Catholic College, Griffith.

1.7 Student Retention Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>Years 7-10</th>
<th>Years 10-12</th>
<th>Years 7-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apparent</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A significant number of students from the College undertake TAFE courses, gaining apprenticeships or employment at the end of year 10.

2. Catholic Life and Mission

2.1 Catholic Heritage

The Sisters of Mercy and Marist Brothers together with local priests established and expanded the College as a place where young people could learn about their faith and take part in the sacraments, as well as receive an education comparable to that offered at any other school. It is on the legacy of the Sisters and Brothers, and of the community that supported them, that the College is built, and “Marian” in its name is because of the honour both the Congregations give to Mary the Mother of God.

Action in 2006:

- Bishop Hanna presided at a special Mass to celebrate the College name and bless new College symbols.
- The staff reflection day was based round the work and charism of the Sisters of Mercy.

For ongoing action:

- Use the resources for curriculum provided by the Sisters of Mercy.

2.2 Liturgical Life

Action in 2006:

- Reflecting the faith of the College families and with support from the priests, formal prayers and rituals were enhanced and increased to mark
significant milestones in the life of the students of the College.

2.3 The School in the Life of the Parish and Diocese
The College is seen by the Griffith community as an integral part of the Catholic life of the parish. The Parish Priest of Griffith is a member of the College Council, which also includes a representative of the Parish Council.

Action in 2006:
- Weekly Sunday Mass celebrated in the College hall was well attended by parishioners who also made use of a classroom for children’s liturgy.
- The College hall was used by the parish for its First Communion liturgy and by the parish primary school for its discos.

For ongoing action:
- Seek representation of the Yenda/Yoogali/Hanwood parish on the College Council.

2.4 Religious Education Curriculum
As the philosophy of Marian Catholic College is based on growth in spirituality, Education in Faith is a compulsory study, as is a positive and active participation in retreats, religious ceremonies, worship and community service, all of which are part of the everyday life of the College.

Action in 2006:
- A review of Religious Education programmes was commenced in the light of recently introduced Diocesan Guidelines.

For ongoing action:
- Continue the review commenced in 2006.

2.5 Catholic Worldview
The College’s Mission Statement states that the College participates in the mission of the Church to transform the world into the family of God. We do this through our connection to the local community, through focus on social justice and through concern for the wider community.

The involvement of the College in GEBAC with TAFE and the other secondary schools in the Griffith region, enables the group as a cross sectoral venture, to secure government funding to co-ordinate work placement for Stage 6 VET students, for School to Work Programmes and for projects to assist indigenous students. GEBAC also oversees the Stage 6 Link Day which makes available a wide range of joint HSC-TAFE courses to students.

Action in 2006:
- Students continued to be generous in their support for Marist and Mercy Missions and fund raising for other charities such as Red Shield and Legacy appeals and were actively involved in Riding for the Disabled.
- Visual arts students in Stage 5 took part in the community mural project at Kalinda Special School.

For ongoing action:
- Develop a strong community service ethic in stage 5 students through a roster system similar to that which operates in year 12 for Riding for the Disabled.
- Continue the active contribution of the College to the local community through GEBAC.

2.6 Parent Participation
Parents understand and are regularly reminded of the central Catholicity of the College. The College works in partnership with families and the Griffith parish in providing meaningful liturgy on major Church feasts and times of special celebration at the College, to which all parents are invited.

Action in 2006:
- Regular reminders in the College newsletter have resulted in a greater attendance of parents at major College liturgies.
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:
www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

Action in 2006:
- All College staff participated in a retreat day.
- Staff engaged in professional learning on core Diocesan documents.

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:
www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

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

3.2 School Implementation of Diocesan Policy

The College works towards relationships that are characterised by respect for the dignity and uniqueness of each person and by justice, love and sharing. Implementation of Diocesan Pastoral Care and Discipline policies contribute towards this work.

3.3 Pastoral Care of Families

A strong sense of belonging to the local community and of collaboration with parents, many of whom are former students of the College, facilitates the relationship between the College and its parents.

The College Counsellor provides support for families and liaison on family issues with other agencies.

Student Home Room groups are made up of students from all year levels, reflecting a family structure and encouraging senior students to care for year 7 students and new arrivals at the College.

Year Co-ordinators, the Assistant Principal and the Principal contact parents regularly to check the reasons for student absence, to keep in touch with students who are seriously ill, and with their parents to communicate improvement in a student’s application or behaviour and to discuss ways of preventing small problems becoming serious.

3.4 2006 Initiatives

Action in 2006:
- College policies for Pastoral Care and Discipline were reviewed in the light of Diocesan policies.
- Two Anger Management workshops were run for groups of boys and girls.
- Bullying was targeted through a Brainstorm Production presentation and visit from police.
- Parent education about cyber bulling was addressed through the College newsletter.
- Three sessions of the Rock and Water Programme were run by a trained teacher for selected groups of boys.
- One further staff member was trained in the Rock and Water Programme.
- Year Co-ordinators attended inservice in student management run by Robert Pereira.
- The College Counsellor was trained in implementing the RAP programme.
- The Assistant Principal trained in the Why Try Self Esteem programme sponsored by Rotary and implemented the programme with year 9 students.
- A job skills programme was developed to replace the STEP programme, for which government funding has been discontinued.
Staff were involved in professional learning in Boys’ Education, “Success 4 Boys”, a cluster initiative of schools in the Diocese.

For ongoing action:

- Reintroduce the RAP programme under the leadership of the College Counsellor.
- Enable the SRC to further expand its activities and responsibilities.
- Enhance the training of student leaders, especially House Leaders and Prefects.
- Continue professional learning for all staff in pastoral care and student management skills appropriate to the multicultural nature of the College’s student population.

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 www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

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

4. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

4.1 Curriculum Overview

The curriculum includes Education in Faith (Religion Studies) and Personal Development, as well as leading to the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate, according to the rules of the NSW Board of Studies. It aims to provide education for the whole person, for life now, for responsible citizenship in adult life and for life beyond this life.

Courses offered by the College are outlined in the College prospectus and details and requirements of courses at each stage are listed in the handbooks distributed at the beginning of years 7, 9 and 11.

4.2 Approach to Teaching and Learning

The approach of the College to teaching and learning flows from its commitment to creating an atmosphere where each individual is lead to his/her full potential and where the dignity and uniqueness of each person is respected.

The College addresses the teaching and learning needs of our diverse population through a curriculum which is differentiated and adjusted accordingly. Special emphases are literacy and numeracy in all KLA’s, provision for gifted students, an emphasis on curriculum areas that are relevant to the local community, its culture and interests.

The language other than English is Italian, reflecting the roots of much of the local Catholic community. Areas of particular strength through the College are in the Creative and Performing Arts, particularly Visual Arts and Drama.

ELLA and SNAP results (see below) confirm the challenges to learning experienced by those of our students who live in households where adults speak to them in a language other than English.

Special needs students are welcomed at the College; there is expert Special Education teaching and support staff to develop and implement special programmes.

The curriculum aims to overcome the geographic isolation of Griffith by encouraging students to take part in as many State and National wide learning experiences and competitions as possible.

The College also addresses the range of learning needs and interests of our students by offering a wider choice of subjects than is usual in a school of its size. The curriculum structure allows for one elective in year 8; broad subject choice is achieved in Stage 5 by the combination of elective classes across years 9 and 10 and accessing the Open High school especially for languages; in Stage 6 (years 11 and 12), strategies such as a reduction in face-to-face teaching, timetabling classes outside normal College hours and making use of opportunities offered by other education providers enable very small groups
or individual students to study courses of their choice. In year 12 in 2006, for example, 48 students presented a total of 39 courses for the HSC. This range is only possible because of great flexibility in course delivery. Of the 39 courses, the College taught 22 face-to-face and supervised another delivered by distance education. The Griffith Link programme enabled our students to study a further 16 subjects.

Communication between parents and teachers about student progress is encouraged: parents are welcome to contact the College at any time with concerns; an interim report is sent at the end of the first term of enrolment at the College; written reports are sent at the end of terms 2 and 4; formal opportunities to discuss progress take place at the end of terms 1 and 2.

4.3 Significant Initiatives

Action in 2006:

- 2006 was the first year of the College in the Diocesan Education System and was marked by familiarisation and compliance with protocols for Diocesan Accreditation and Registration.
- Staff participated in Curriculum Reviews in other Diocesan Systemic Secondary Schools.
- Two KLA co-ordinators undertook review of their work and were given high commendation for their achievements by the external appraisal panel.
- Students at risk took part in a Jobskills programme, which included individual work placements.
- Ten students from the College took part in the Commonwealth Youth Pathways programme which targets students at risk of not completing an appropriate level of education. Of these, two made a successful transition from school to work.
- The Gifted and Talented programme aimed to help year 7 students develop independent learning skills and to engage them actively in their learning. This programme included:
  - Withdrawal of 15 students for a mathematics enrichment programme,
  - A six week programme for 20 students to engage in a self directed project.
- The across year level Gifted and Talented programme included:
  - An artist in residence in the Visual Arts Department,
  - The HSIE Mastermind Challenge in both years 9 and 10 and in years 7 and 8.
- Individuals and groups of students had opportunities to take part in activities for Maths Week; in competitions in English, Mathematics, Writing, Geography, History, Commerce, Information Technology, Language, and Public Speaking, in the Mock Trial, the NSW Youth Parliament, the Constitutional Convention and the Model United Nations Assembly.
- Year 12 Ancient History and Italian students travelled to Italy in January on a cultural visit.
- Students accessed guitar lessons from visiting teachers.
- HSC Design and Technology projects together with the Visual Arts works were exhibited at the College and, for the second year running, a D& T project has been preselected for inclusion in the State-wide, DesignTECH exhibition of HSC works.

Literacy

The ELLA testing, done early in year, is an indication of the level of students as they enter the College and provides us with a basis for programmes based on the strengths and weaknesses of individual students and groups of students.
ELLA testing in 2006 showed that:

- 2 students were below the State benchmark for writing and 5 for reading,
- The average results were above the State average in all areas (writing, reading, language, overall literacy),
- This pattern is true for both boys and girls,
- The average for our LBOTE (language background other than English) students was below the State LBOTE average.

**Action in 2006:**

- All students entering year 7 were tested in the first three weeks of the year and the results used to form tutorial groups for approximately 25 students with special needs in literacy.
- Targeted tutorial assistance was given to students from all year levels, including 11 Afghani refugee students who joined the college during the year.
- An extra stream in Year 9 English was created because of the needs of a group of South Pacific Islander students.

### Numeracy

SNAP testing of year 7 students at the start of the year gives numeracy information of similar use as ELLA testing.

SNAP testing in 2006 showed that:

- 23 students were below the State benchmark for numeracy,
- The average results were above State average in all areas (number, measurement, space, data, patterns and algebra, overall numeracy),
- This pattern is true for both boys and girls,
- The average for our LBOTE students is below State average for LBOTE students.

**Action in 2006:**

- Consistent after school tutorials were provided by teachers.
- The College continued the practice of giving priority to the structure and staffing of classes to assist students in numeracy development.
- Despite numeracy weaknesses identified in students entering year 7, Mathematics was once again identified as a College strength in the analysis of the HSC results.

### School Certificate

**Results not available till end of 2006**

### Higher School Certificate

**Results available in Dec 2006 and John de Courcy analysis in 2007**

### Targets for 2007:

- Prepare staff for the cyclical curriculum review of KLA areas.
- Implement systematically the year 11 study profile commenced in 2006.
- Develop Life Skills courses for two year 8 students and one year 7 student with moderate disabilities.
- Strengthen the Literacy/Numeracy Committee.
- Promote Literacy Week more strongly, using the material at a later time if it does not arrive on time.
- Continue to provide opportunities for staff to engage in ELLA and SNAP marking.
- Continue to run extra streams in year levels where this would advantage literacy.
- Take a proactive approach to communication with feeder primary schools especially St Patrick’s School.
- Increase the number of parents attending interviews following reports.
4.4 Information, Communication and Learning Technologies

Action in 2006:

- As a result of the entry of the College into the Diocesan System, the Computer network was upgraded to accommodate Castnet and staff were inserviced in its use.
- Smart Boards were introduced for each KLA and staff were inserviced in their use.

For ongoing action:

- Prepare for ESSA.
- Continue the ongoing programme of replacement of computers with new machines in computer laboratories.

4.5 Professional Learning

Action in 2006:

- Four teachers new to the profession were given professional support in line with the requirements of the NSW Institute of Teachers.
- Staff participated in professional learning in assessment of and for learning (the NSW agenda), criterion referencing in grading and determining grades (the National Agenda) and boys’ education.

For ongoing action:

- Provide appropriate professional support to all staff new to the College, to teaching staff new to teaching and to staff newly appointed to management positions.
- Continue staff professional learning in literacy, numeracy, NESB learners and teaching special needs students, especially for staff new to the College.

4.6 Optional

Action in 2006:

Compliance

- Three staff meetings addressed compliance issues related to the entry of the College into the Diocesan System.
- An audit by the RTO showed that provisions for teaching and learning in VET courses are highly satisfactory.
- OH&S policies and procedures in all areas were audited by the CSO and were assessed as satisfactory.

5. Extra Curricula Program

The College offers a rich variety of Extra-Curricular Activities which are described fully in the College prospectus on our website.

6. Strategic Initiatives

6.1 2006 Priorities and Achievements

- A strategic plan for the development of the College buildings and grounds was put in place during 1995 and reviewed in 2002.
- 2006 saw the final stage of the development: both the CAPA (Visual Arts, Drama and Music) Centre and the Science laboratories were upgraded and extended; the girls’ toilets, senior classrooms and locker bays were all extended and refurbished.
- Beautification of the grounds has included signage, additional gardens, tree plantings, seating and shade areas.
- In an attempt to address ongoing concerns about the congestion on Wakaden Street at the start and close of the school day, additional parking and bus bays were built. Negotiations with the Department of Housing are underway to transfer a small parcel of land which leaves the way open for future construction of a student exit onto Macarthur Street.

6.2 2007 Priorities and Challenges

- Attend to urgent and substantial refurbishment of classrooms especially
in the 70’s and 80’s block. This is to be done in January 2007.

- Implement a cyclical maintenance system for the whole College site.

- Plan for appropriate redevelopment of the convent site, which is parish property but is in close proximity to the College. Sections of this building, originally constructed as a residence for the Marist Brothers, have been always used by the College and at present the Convent houses the Learning Support Centre.

7. **Parent Participation**

The College is inserted firmly in the local community. Parents play significant roles in the life of the College especially as members of the College Council and in the Canteen.

The College Council advises and supports the Principal in the formation and education of the students as well as in the overall management and forward planning for the College. Although the Council does not involve itself directly in the internal operations of the College, it is an important way in which the expectations of the parent community can be communicated to the Principal.

The College Canteen is far more than a supplier of lunches to students and a fund raiser for the College; it is an invaluable point of contact between mothers and the College and a source of mutual support for those who attend as volunteers. In 2006 approximately 25% of mothers worked as volunteers in the Canteen.

Some of the ways in which effective communication between parents and teachers is facilitated are listed in other places in this report.

**Action in 2006:**

- Six Parents served on the College Council which played a major and decisive role in the development of the College buildings and grounds.

- In addition to the annual parent nights to provide support and information at transition points in the curriculum (year 6, year 8 and year 10), an additional information night was provided on HSC requirements by the Board of Studies.

- Additional support was given to parents whose first child was beginning College through special bulletins from the Year 7 Co-ordinator and in the reformatted weekly newsletter.

- Regular information and invitations resulted in an increased number of parents attending Assemblies, Awards Ceremonies and major College liturgies.

8. **Financial Report**

*Alan Sara will provide this information after the end of the financial year on January 31, 2007.*
APPENDIX A

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

System Income 2006

- Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants: 57%
- State Government Recurrent Grants: 21%
- School Fees: 14%
- Other Fee Income: 5%
- Capital Income: 3%

System Expenses 2006

- Salary and Related Expenses: 73%
- Non Salary Expenses: 20%
- Capital Expenditure: 7%
The total income and expense of the school, that is included in the above, is shown below.

### Income
- School Fees: 11%
- Capital Income: 13%
- Other Fee Income: 5%
- Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants: 50%

### Expenses
- Capital Expenditure: 34%
- Salary and Related Expenses: 49%
- Non Salary Expenses: 17%