Annual Report

St. Joseph’s School, Narrandera

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**Introduction**

On behalf of the staff of St. Joseph’s School I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their hard work and commitment to making St. Joseph’s the highly successful school that it is. I would particularly like to thank the staff, the children and their parents and Father Tony for their continued support.

Graeme Urquhart
Principal

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**1. The School**

**The School**

**Our Vision**

In keeping with the evangelising Mission of the Catholic Church, that is to “carry forth the Good News to every sector of the human race”, St. Joseph’s School is a faith community, learning together, building the kingdom of God.

**Our Mission**

This shared Mission, arising from our Vision, is our commitment to our school community. Mindful of the circumstances of others, we will endeavour to meet the needs of our school community by:

- Providing a Religious Education Program, which enhances knowledge, understanding and practice of our Catholic faith tradition and one which will lead to a life of truth, love and service
- Creating a Catholic Community where all members treat each other with respect, take risks, take pride in themselves and each other, and, care about each other and recognise that everybody’s ideas and concerns are important
- Valuing the role of parents as primary educators of their children and encouraging their involvement in the life of the school
- Ensuring that Gospel values reflected in the total curriculum are obvious in the daily activities of the school community
- Promoting peace and love
- Being inclusive
- Reaching out to those in need
- Encouraging all members to grow spiritually and live out gospel values
- Treating each other with honesty and respect in a supportive and caring atmosphere
- Recognising, fostering, appreciating and celebrating cultural diversity
- Teaching a comprehensive and balanced curriculum in the Key Learning Areas
- Fostering learning as a lifelong process, providing learning opportunities and resources to cater for individual needs
- Engaging children in their learning and decision making processes
- Providing a happy and safe environment, which encourages student and teacher experimentation and risk taking to ensure the success of all
- Incorporating a range of learning styles, which enhances each child’s development
- Providing an education for students, which will prepare them for a life in which they will work collaboratively with others, exercise judgement, apply complex and diverse bodies of knowledge, continue to learn and to generate creative solutions to problems
- Promoting and continually renewing knowledge and skills through personal and professional development
- Promoting a responsible attitude towards care of the environment
- Reflecting on our practice of all of the above

**Religious Education**

Another busy year has gone by with the School Religious Education program undergoing further adaptations in line with the new curriculum. Mrs Denise Duck stepped down from her role as REC at the end of 2005, to concentrate on classroom duties. One of our existing staff members, Mrs Robyn Petty was appointed as the new Religious Education Co-ordinator. We would like to congratulate and thank Mrs Duck for all her hard work and dedication to this important position, and wish Mrs Petty success in her new role.

This year saw many new and important events in the Religious calendar. Bishop Hanna announced Blessed Mary MacKillop as our Diocesan Patron, and the school participated in a wonderful celebration in honour of her installation. As our newly founded Patron, we felt it appropriate to once again honour Mary on her Feast day, 8th August with a School Open Day. This was an opportunity to celebrate Mass, followed by an open invitation to all to join us in the classrooms and on the playground as we opened our doors to Narrandera in the educational spirit of Mary MacKillop.

In accordance with the introduction of the new Religious Education Syllabus, Bishop Hanna requested all teachers in the Diocese submit student work samples, giving him the opportunity to view elements of the students’ work, thus allowing him to become more familiar with the practical interpretation of the syllabus. These
were submitted prior to both first and second semester reports.

As the feast of our school Patron Saint, St Joseph, coincided with the John O’Brien Festival, we were able to enjoy the talents of poet Geoffrey Graham as well as celebrate with a meaningful Prayer Service in the Church. This Prayer Service was very capably presented by our Year 6 School Leaders.

Our students were able to be part of the whole town celebration of Holy Week, when we attended the Combined Church’s presentation of “Grunt, the Musical”. This was a wonderful performance, which explored the life of Jesus, presented through song.

In May we had our Mother’s Day Mass. This was a great opportunity to say “thanks” to our wonderful mothers, and acknowledge their love and support.

Once again this year, we had a busy Sacramental Program. 33 students received their First Holy Communion in June on the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. Most of these students were in Year 3, however one Year 5 student and two Narrandera Public School students joined our classes to prepare for this Sacrament. Bishop Hanna visited us at the end of July to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to the Year 6 students. Recently most of the children in Year 2 have received the Sacrament of Penance.

We are very grateful to our school community for their generous support of our different appeals. This year we have raised money for St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal, Project Compassion, Sisters of St Joseph Outreach Programs and Children’s Mission. Our thoughts and prayers went out to the victims of Cyclone Larry, and the students enthusiastically participated in fund-raising activities to assist the Catholic School at Innisfail, which had sustained major damage. Overall, our wonderful school community has donated a total of $2427.15 throughout 2006.

Each year we call for volunteers to assist with Altar Serving at Mass on the weekends. This year, we were delighted with the strong support we received from the students in Years 3-6. Sr Mary, who generously gives of her time each week, very capably trains these students. We wish to thank Sr Mary and all those who have worked hard throughout the year to assist in the area of Religious Education.

We thank Fr. Schipp for his continued support of our school.

The Arts
Culturally 2006 has been a very successful year for our school. Under the guidance of the class teachers our children performed very successfully in the Leeton Eisteddfod. They have had opportunities to entertain at different community functions and venues including Carols by Candlelight and the John O’Brien Bush Festival.

St. Joseph’s School has a reputation for promoting the arts and encouraging its students to take opportunities to pursue their interests and develop their talents.

Sport
Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country carnivals were the focal events for 2006.

Galvin House, won both the Swimming and Cross Country Carnivals, while Hartigan won the Athletics Carnival.

Eight representatives attended the MacKillop Carnival in Canberra in 2006.

St Joseph’s finished well in the Diocesan Cross Country Carnival with Megan Flynn and Prue Walsh representing the Diocese at the MacKillop Carnival in Sydney.

Many children competed in Diocesan Sport Trials in Wagga and other regional centres.

In Term 3 the children from Years 5 and 6 competed against Narrandera Public School in AFL football (Mathieson Shield) and netball (McCallum Shield). The Narrandera Public School won the football while St Joseph’s won the netball.

Throughout the year all classes participated in many organised sports experiences, such as netball clinics, soccer, AFL and Jump Rope for Heart.

St Joseph’s sent five teams to Sydney for the Catholic Schools Basketball Carnival. All students enjoyed the experience and represented the school very well. The students were extremely competitive at this level.

In Term 4, Year 5 and 6 students played the Public School in cricket and were successful in retaining the Dick Goss Shield.


Liam Hiscox won the Duck Shield for Sports person of the Year and Liam Hiscox and Zachary
Heckendorf won a Wagga Diocesan Sporting Award for Outstanding Participation in Sport for 2006.

School Initiatives
At St. Joseph’s School, Narrandra, we have been successful in gaining funding to implement professional development from the project ‘Success for Boys’ for 2007. St. Joseph’s was also the recipient of an Investing in our Schools Grant focussing on building up Information Technology in the school and refurbishing the Library. In addition to the 2 above-mentioned grants, our school has also been successful in gaining a Community Water Grant.
The Kindergarten Orientation Day was held over two days in 2006. Twenty-three children attended these days.
St. Joseph’s students were proud representatives and participants in the community Anzac Day March. Our students played important roles as wreath layers and prayer readers.
Other local events our school students participated in were Parish Celebrations, John O’Brien Festival, St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal, Operation Christmas Child, The Leeton Eisteddfod and Remembrance Day.
During Term 4 all classes commenced daily fitness sessions.

School Policies
At St Joseph’s School, Curriculum Policies have been developed for all Key Learning Areas: Mathematics, English, Science and Technology, Human Society and Its Environment, Creative and Practical Arts, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education and Religious Education. Copies of these policies, if required, are available from the school office.
In addition, policies have been developed for the following areas; Enrolment, Casual Teacher, Excursions, Class Assemblies, Emergency Evacuation, School Visitors, Early Pickup of Students, Complaints and Grievances Resolution, First Aid, Medication, Bookwork, Homework, Reporting, Playground Support, Playground Supervision, Computer Education and Use, Integration, Programming, Coaching of Sporting Teams, Harassment, Legal Responsibilities, Copyright, Diocesan Accreditation and Programming.

Discipline
At St. Joseph’s School we believe that children respond best to an approach that encourages and rewards positive, independent behaviour. Our Discipline Policy reflects this. Corporal punishment is prohibited.

Student Welfare
We at St. Joseph’s School believe that every child has a right to be safe and feel safe. Our student welfare policies and practices guide us in achieving these goals.

Pastoral Care
Our school is a people oriented community. We aim to celebrate and affirm the dignity of all people created in the image and likeness of God.

Dealing with Complaints and Grievances
The school has adopted an approach to resolving complaints and grievances that is based on procedural fairness. It recognises that parents/caregivers and students must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive and conciliatory way.
Parents/students with a complaint are encouraged in the first instance to contact their class teacher. If the need then arises contact with the Principal and the www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au may be appropriate.

Enrolment
NSW legislation allows for the enrolment of children who turn 5 before August 1. At St. Joseph’s School, parents seeking to enrol their child / children who turn 5 after May 30 are advised of possible implications.
The closing date for enrolment is advertised in the School Newsletter, the Parish Bulletin and the Narrandra Argus.

Diocesan policies on enrolment, discipline, student welfare, complaints and grievance resolution can be found at the Catholic Schools Office Wagga Wagga by following the link below.
www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

School Council
We finished 2005 with some uncertainty in regards to the school’s total enrolment, knowing that this could have an impact on total staffing levels. In the end we commenced the year (2006) with 200 students, 22 of whom were Kindergarten children.
Apart from academic and sporting successes, some of the highlights from 2006 were securing the Investing in our Schools Grant, which will be used to upgrade the Library and IT resources, the Community Water Grant and the Success for Boys Grant.
I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the School Council, our school staff and our Principal. We have had a great year this year and I’m sure with your continued support and commitment, 2007 will be even better.
John O’Mahoney.
School Council President.
2. Information on Key School Programs

Curriculum Focus
The curriculum foci at St. Joseph’s School during 2006 were Creative and Practical Arts and English, Writing in particular.

Programs to Support Learning
Reading Recovery is a literacy intervention programme for Year 1 children. Children receive one-on-one tuition for 30 minutes every day for a period of between 12 and 20 weeks. In 2006, six children received such specialist help. In 2005 a pilot language class project began at St Joseph’s and continued into 2006. Its purpose is to provide Talking and Listening outcomes from the English K-6 Syllabus. The children targeted are those who are eligible for funding for language determined by their scores on CELF administered by a Speech Therapist; children who missed out on funding but would benefit from some additional assistance; children with significant articulation disorders. The programme is a supplementary program and works in conjunction with the assistance of a Speech Pathologist. It is supervised by a Speech Pathologist.

In 2005 five children in total were given some intervention in this form. Children chosen were from the Kindergarten class. Children were given 45 minutes for 3 days a week in 2006 spanning Terms 2 and 3. The programme will continue in 2007.

Five children receive assistance in class with Literacy and Numeracy by Teacher Assistants.

Equity Programs
ITAS and ISIEPS funding is given to Aboriginal children to assist them with their classroom work. Five children from our school are receiving this form of assistance.

Programs to Support Students
The concept of shared student leadership is an important issue at St. Joseph’s. We believe that every child has the potential to act as a leader in some way whilst they are at school. It is up to us to provide the training and opportunities for this to happen. All Year 6 students attended a Leadership Forum in Melbourne this year. During Leadership Week, teachers focussed on the qualities of leadership and how to identify and develop them. In December the students and staff voted for the children they thought had the most appropriate leadership skills and personal qualities. These children became our student leaders for 2007.

Our new leaders were introduced to the community at a special assembly. Individual Education Programs are designed, in consultation with parents and CSO Personnel, for all funded students. Classroom teachers continually modify programs to cater for the needs of students in their care.

Respect and Responsibility
At St. Joseph’s Primary School, emphasis is placed on student leadership. The senior students have many opportunities to take on a leadership role in the school.

In 2007 the staff will participate in “Success for Boys” training, and, it is hoped to commence the “Rock and Water” program for all students.

We proudly display the National Safe Schools Framework and Values for Australian Schools posters in our school. During 2007 we will conduct a Values / Respect and Responsibility Forum.

Student Achievement
Statewide Tests and Examinations
The table below indicates the percentage of students who have achieved national literacy and numeracy benchmarks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>97%</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>86%</td>
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Basic Skills 1998 to 2006
Our school has participated in BST Literacy and Numeracy since 1998 and in BST Writing since 2001. The school monitors the BST Trend Data each year and uses that information to inform its learning and teaching practices for the upcoming year.

3. School Renewal

Progress of the School Renewal Framework

School Improvement Targets
The main areas targeted for improvement during 2006, in the School renewal Framework were;

- Pastoral Care
- English including a Policy re-write and appropriate professional development
- Religious Education including a Policy re-write
• Assessment and Reporting including criteria referenced assessment and A to E reporting
• Information Technology, and,
• Library refurbishment

4. School Overview

Student Enrolment Profile:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Indig*</th>
<th>LOTE*</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Language other than English

Structure of Classes
Kindergarten - Mrs Firman
Year 1 - Mrs Duck
Year 2 - Miss Lewis
Year 3 - Mrs Petty and Mrs Aliendi
Year 3 / 4 / 5 - Mrs Hunt and Mrs O’Brien
Year 4 / 5 - Mrs Lane
Year 5 - Mr Kilfoyle
Year 6 - Mrs Stuchbery and Mrs O’Brien

Staff

Teacher Standards
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>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
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Professional Learning
The staff and Leadership Team from St. Joseph’s has been involved in a number of professional development programs including a whole School Writing Project for the MIA Deanery, CREAM Language Conference, Noatsic Alice Springs, Reading Recovery Continuing Contact, First Aid / CPR, Language Class, Creative and Practical Arts, SENA 2, Anaphylaxis Training, Religious Education Assessment, Boys Education, Criteria Reference Assessment, Gifted and Talented, Child Protection, Graduate Certificate in Religious Education, Autism Spectrum Workshop, Special Needs Conference, Jolly Phonics Grammar, Early Infants Literacy Days, and Information and Technology Conferences.

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 96.8% was achieved in 2006 by staff at St Joseph’s Primary School, Narrandera.

Parent Involvement and Participation
At St Joseph’s School, Narrandera, the Good News is carried to every sector via our weekly newsletter in which the Principal and R.E.C. communicate information and reflections. The Principal and all teaching staff encourage parents to come to them prior to issues becoming very serious. This is referred to as “an open door policy” and is reciprocated by teachers who contact parents before issues get out of hand.

Pastoral Care of students, staff and parents is evident in the way we treat each other. Parents are seen as the first educators of their children and are, thus, always welcome. As such, they are actively involved in the education of their children at St Joseph’s Narrandera through participation in the classroom Literacy and Numeracy sessions, via communication in homework diaries, sporting activities, on excursions and incursions, in the Arts, HSIE, Science and Technology, as invaluable contributors and supporters, parents are invited to attend assemblies and performances on a regular basis.

The Religious Education program relies heavily on parental support. In particular, parents whose children are involved in Sacramental Programs are invited to participate fully by attending information sessions and classroom lessons. The Parish Priest, as part of the school team, plays an active role in welcoming and informing parents.

Experts from the C.S.O. willingly lead information and participation sessions for groups of parents and, on a one-to-one basis, where necessary. During 2006, extra support has been given in the areas of Mathematics and Special Needs.

Teachers in the Infants’ Department stress the importance of parents being involved in the reading and writing program at school and at home. Group and individual tutoring is given by teachers to parents so as to give each child every opportunity to develop his/her literacy skills effectively. Follow-up contact is viewed as crucial.
We believe in working with parents in the decision making process. This is done through meeting with parents formally, or for a chat. The Parents and Friends, School Council and Parish Council are formal forums for parental involvement. Parents are surveyed to determine directions to take with the school. Responses are treated with respect with parents continuing to be involved past the initial consultation.

We aim to keep our goals and practices in line with those of the parents by involving parents in the individual programmes of special needs students, remedial or gifted, and through direct contact when students require special pastoral support for behavioural issues.

On special feast days, our school is abuzz with parents, friends and students celebrating and enjoying each other’s company.

**Community Use of School Facilities**

Other community groups used the John O’Brien Hall on numerous occasions. Elections, family celebrations, musical performances, concerts, luncheons, leadership training days, senior dancing evenings and morning teas were all accommodated.

**Community Satisfaction**

The following information has been provided to the school. It has been a valuable gauge for determining the level of satisfaction our community has with St. Joseph’s School, Narrandera.

**Parents**

My child (son or daughter) is usually happy at St. Joseph’s School Narrandera.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs Development</th>
<th>Very Strong</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
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15% 37% 48%

**Students**

I am usually happy at St. Joseph’s School, Narrandera.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs Development</th>
<th>Very Strong</th>
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20% 40% 40%

**Staff**

I am usually happy at St. Joseph’s School, Narrandera.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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**Financial Statement Summary**

See Appendix A

**About This Report**

The Principal Graeme Urquhart, together with Sharon Stuchbery, Robyn Petty, Melissa Lewis, Denise Duck, Emma Lane, Marie O’Brien, Paul Kilfoyle, Robyn Sullivan, Deb Firman, Ann Hunt, Nella Smith and Melissa Aliendi wrote this report.
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

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