2007
Annual Report
St Brendan’s Primary School, Ganmain

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Introduction

St Brendan’s Primary School is a small Catholic school situated in the town of Ganmain. Students enjoy a rural lifestyle and large play areas. It serves the parish, town and nearby countryside and has been in operation for 100 years.

The year 2007 has been a year of transition. Paul Kennedy has been the acting principal for the year and a new appointment will be made for the 2008 school year. As the acting principal I endeavoured to ensure that all the usual St Brendan’s Ganmain events went ahead as usual.

I received great support from all the staff employed at St Brendan’s

1. The School

The School

Our school motto “Launch out into the Deep” reflects our aim of reaching out to others. Our Vision and Mission statements are the heart of what we aim to live out and celebrate – our uniqueness as a Catholic School in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga.

We appreciate the contribution and dedication of the religious orders and parish priests who have supported and inspired us as religious educators. We aim to continue to instil Catholic ethos and values into all aspects of our students’ learning and nurture each individual’s talent and skills.

Religious Education

In 2007 we have continued to proclaim the Catholic faith through the school’s religious education programme, sacramental preparation, prayer life of the school and activities which foster positive, caring relationships among its members.

Students attend Mass regularly and are provided with opportunities for involvements in the sacramental life of the parish.

In cooperation with parents, who are the first educators of their children, the school exists to support parents in the education of the faith.

Students are also encouraged to develop in their prayer life through daily prayer, both formal and informal, and through programs which help them to live out Gospel values and to develop Christian virtues. Children respond generously to mission days and fundraising opportunities.

The Arts

During the year, all children are involved in the Creative Arts programs. This programme provided many opportunities for listening, performing, responding and creating music through singing, playing and movement.

This occurred through class activities individually, within a group setting and often as a whole school. There are many opportunities for children to perform such as for the senior citizens and the preschool groups.

Music

Throughout the year, children have enjoyed many opportunities to learn about and enjoy music through the music program run by Mrs Ros Guthrie. As well as singing for religious occasions, they learn an appreciation of many types of music including liturgical music. Children have the opportunity to learn the recorder or guitar in stage two or three classes.

Drama and Dance

In 2007 the children had many opportunities to use their skills in front of an audience. They regularly perform on feast days, assemblies and various school and community activities as well as within the classroom.

The highlight of 2007 year was the rehearsal and production of a play called “The Circus”. Mrs Kristie Smith was the teacher, mainly responsible for the production, with assistance from Mr Christin Macri, Mrs Ros Guthrie and Mrs Catherine Crouch. The play was performed twice publicly in the Ganmain Hall. Many people from the community attended and were very impressed with the standard of the production.

Art and Craft

Children make, critique and display and appreciate many art and craft works during their class lessons. There are many other opportunities throughout the year for them to demonstrate and develop their skills through their involvement in such things as displays.
for events and special occasions and the inclusion of art works in the Ganmain Show.

**Sport**
Students attended several sporting events this year.

- **Swimming Lessons**
The whole school was involved in a swimming program over three weeks at the beginning of 2007. Ms Mandy Moellers conducted the lessons and all the children increased their swimming skills and safety awareness.

- **Swimming Carnival**
The school carnival was held in early February. The whole school participated in this Carnival. From this Carnival children were selected to represent the school at the Deanery Swimming Carnival.

- **AFL Trials**
These were held in March and Sam Hatty and William Lawton and Caleb Noble went on the represent the Diocese at the McKillop trials in Wagga in April. Our school also competed successfully at the Paul Kelly Cup, winning three of the four they competed in.

- **Athletics Carnival**
The School athletics carnival was held in March. From this, children went on the represent the school at the Deanery athletics carnival in Wagga in May.

- **Cross Country**
Caleb Noble was successful in the Diocesan Cross Country. He came third and was eligible to participate in the MacKillop trials at Eastern Creek in June.

**School Initiatives**

In May 2007 CWA members, children & staff from the Ganmain Public School visited St Brendan’s for **CWA International Day** where they listened to two guest speaker’s talk about Malta. Morning Tea and refreshments were provided for our visitors.

**Senior Citizens** week was held in March. This year quite a number of senior citizens plus staff and children from the Ganmain Public School visited St Brendan’s. Children from both schools presented items for the enjoyment of the senior citizens. Morning tea and refreshments were provided.

Sadly early this year the **Ganmain Craft Cottage** was totally destroyed in a fire. The School held a mufti day to raise money for the cottage.

A **mission day** was held in October. There were mission games and activities. Nearly $100.00 was raised for the missions.

**Anzac Day**: The children are involved in the Anzac March each year and school captains lay a wreath at the Cenotaph on the day.

**Ganmain Public School**: St Brendan’s and the Ganmain Public School enjoy a number of shared educational activities such as the Life Education Van and Plays.

**Ganmain Show** is held in August. The school displayed art and craftwork and many children entered other work in the appropriate categories.

In 2007 a **Values Education Forum** was held at St Brendan’s. A number of staff members and parents attended. A DVD was screened on the topic and then there was a very good discussion regarding the values that the parents and staff thought were most important and how we are currently promoting these at school and how we can best promote and support then in the future.

**School Policies**

**Student Welfare** (Pastoral Care)
This policy aims to:

- Enhance positive relationships amongst the students and the school community
- Foster a positive learning environment where student confidently share their thoughts and ideas and learn to make responsible choices,
- Underpin other policies as the foundation of work with the children in our care.

**Discipline**
This policy aims to:

- Foster positive relationships within the school environment with explicit links to the vision and mission statements
- Clarify acceptable behaviour and procedures or processes to be used in the management of students in the School.
• Provide a framework for good communication between school and families with regard to behaviour of students
• Provide support for teachers and staff in the management of student within the school.

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 Catholic Schools Office may be appropriate. The Catholic Schools Office policies can be accessed on their website at www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

The complaints and grievances resolution policy is planned to be re developed over the next year.

School Council
The School Council meets monthly on the third Tuesday of each month. Representatives from the Parish, Parent body and Staff make up the members of the Board.

During this year the School Council begun implementing a 5 year strategic plan for the school and during 2007 the main projects completed have been
• Landscape and pave the area under the new shade structure
• Guttering and down pipes to water tanks
• Complete paved area under palm trees.
• Replace old cricket pitch.
• Install new storeroom and security in office area.

2. Information on Key School Programs
Curriculum Focus
In 2007 St Brendan’s School focus was on the area of Creative Arts. In September 2007 the school had a curriculum review on Creative Arts. This was conducted by the CSO.

During 2007 the teachers received inservicing on how to implement literature strategies in their class. They also attended a two day course on the marking of BST. This has been very beneficial to the teachers in helping to improve the children’s writing.

In Term four a very successful spiritual development day was held for the staff. Father Michael Kennedy led the staff on a day focusing on our personal prayer life and relationship with God.

Programs to Support Learning
At St Brendan’s we are able to offer support to children in Year One who require further literacy assistance.

Under the guidance of Mrs Ros Guthrie, children are given individual tuition in the necessary skills to advance them in Reading. This is an intensive program and the teacher attends on going professional development inservices.

Also, individual education plans (IEPs) are formulated to support and encourage children with additional needs so that they can have access to the curriculum and reach their full potential in consultation with parents and the principal and the special needs consultant.

Children have access to the library on a daily basis through class activities. These are usually set up by the teacher throughout the day under their teacher’s guidance and once a fortnight Mrs Diane Brill has assisted the children in their library skills and choice of reading materials.

The school also successfully applied for the new literacy numeracy grant. This was used to for special individual help to a student who had had some learning difficulties.
Equity Programs
In 2007 there were no new specific equity Programs. However equity for all was often spoken about and encouraged at St Brendan’s during 2007.

Programs to Support Students
During the school year the students attend session on health and safety. The Life Education Van supported the health and safety policy in the school.

Respect and Responsibility
Students are always encouraged to follow their commitment to Christ and support the ethos of the school through programs, which encourage respect and responsibility for each other. A Values Education program along with a Safe School Framework have encourage children to develop positive attitudes towards others and persistence in their efforts to care for each other.

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

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<tr>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Numeracy</th>
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<tr>
<td>100%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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Basic Skills 1998 to 2007
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.

Staff Achievement
Staff are encouraged to seek professional and personal development opportunities and further their own learning. Several staff members have attended courses and developed their own learning plans.

3. School Renewal

Progress of the School Renewal Framework

School Improvement Targets
In 2007 St Brendan’s Primary School focus for improvement included
- Finalise writing on Creative Arts policy and the Curriculum Review of Creative Arts
- The full introduction of electronic roll marking
- Values Education forum
- Professional development in BST writing criteria
- Some changes to the reporting and assessment introduces in 2006
- Improvement to the playground and school office as well as building maintenance.

Major Grants Received:
St Brendan’s was successful in obtaining $20,000.00 from the Investing in our Schools New Element 2007 funding.

This has enabled the school to finish landscaping and paving, purchase seating for undercover area, school welcome sign and install an all weather synthetic cricket pitch. These items were all part of the 5 year Strategic Plan.

4. School Overview

School Enrolment
Enrolment Policy
St Brendan’s Primary School’s Enrolment policy aims to provide equitable placement for students seeking a Catholic education and to ensure that the requirement of State and Commonwealth legislation are met. Our enrolment policy is supported by the Catholic Schools Office Enrolment Policy which can be accessed at www.cso.wagga.catholic.edu.au

Student Enrolment Profile:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Indig’</th>
<th>LOTE*</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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*Language background Other Than English
Structure of Classes
St Brendan’s classes are structured as follows:

**Morning Session - Monday, Tuesday & Thursday**
- Early Stage I and Stage 1 - Years K, 1
- Stage 1 & 2 - Year 2, 3, 4
- Stage 3 - Years 5 & 6

**Afternoon Session - Wednesday & Friday**
- Years K, 1, 2 & 3
- Years 4, 5 & 6

Staff
Teacher Standards

At St Brendan’s School all teaching staff have teaching qualifications from a recognised higher education institution.

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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<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
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Professional Learning

Throughout the year, teacher and staff attended professional development days provided by school and also enhanced their knowledge and skills through other self-directed learning. Some opportunities for professional development were:
- Insights into Autism
- Reading Recovery Training
- Continuing Contact
- Early Literacy
- SENA Testing
- Beginning Teachers Program
- Curriculum Review
- Children’s Writing Workshop
- Basic Skills Assessment
- BST writing marking
- Assessment and Reporting Training
- SAS Reporting

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 97.8% was achieved in 2007 by staff at St Brendan’s Primary School, Ganmain.

Parent Involvement and Participation

In 2007 we were once again very encouraged by the tremendous support of parents and their involvement in the life of St Brendan’s School. This was evident in the working bees, catering activities and fundraising which the P & F organised.

St Brendan’s relies heavily on the financial support from the P & F to help with the day to day costs of running the school. In particular, the Debutante Ball held in March each year is a gala event which relies heavily on the generosity of the parents. This is usually very well attended and a highlight of the social calendar in the community.

In 2007 the P & F organised a very successful “It Take Two” function which involved many people from the community. Part of the proceeds from this event were donated back to the community eg: Ganmain Preschool, Craft Cottage, Public School, Stalls at the Hall markets and street stalls are held throughout the year to help raise needed funds for the school.

Community Use of School Facilities

The school facilities are used by a number of community organisations. The Parish, Legion of Mary and other organisation hold meeting etc at the school. Parents and the community are welcomed on to the school grounds for many activities during the year. With the greatly improved facilities and features established in 2006 we are very proud of the overall visual appeal the school presents in the town.
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 Brendan’s School.

Parents
My child (son or daughter) is usually happy at St Brendan’s School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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Students
I am usually happy at St Brendan’s School

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<tr>
<td>75%</td>
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Financial Statement Summary
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.
The total income and expense of the school, that is included in the above, is shown below.

### About This Report
This report was written and prepared by the Acting Principal, Mr Paul Kennedy in consultation with staff members and parents of St Brendan's School.