1 The School

1.1 The School
We believe we are a community of learners and that working together will ensure the best outcomes for our children.

We remind parents that they are the first educators of their child and we encourage strong relationships between home and classroom. Our participation within the community, supported by strong classroom and whole school programmes will ensure all students achieve at our school.

Our school is linked to our wider education community. Our Diocesan document Today’s Children tomorrow’s Adults guides our actions. At St Joseph’s Culcairn we are conscious of the need to teach our children to be Spiritual, Inquirers, Thinkers, Reflective, Adaptable, Knowledgeable, Communicators, Collaborative, Principled, Caring, Global Citizens, and Healthy. It is our desire for children to continue their lifelong learning in these key areas.

Our Vision and Mission statements are both due for evaluation in 2008. Continued reflection to the community during our School Council meetings School Support Group meetings and through the school newsletter have helped ensure our Vision and Mission statements have a voice and purpose.

1.2 Religious Education
Children in St Patrick’s Parish Culcairn prepare for the reception of sacraments with Parish delivered Sacramental programmes.

In 2007 our Year 3 students prepared for their First Communion.

As our Sacramental Programmes are Parish based this has lead to our students completing their sacramental preparation as a group after school. Father Terence Mahedy, Parish Priest delivers our Sacramental programmes and this retains the link from Parish to home to school. Sr. Marie de Pores has again been able to contribute positively to our sacramental programmes as well as remain a strong presence in the school.

School liturgical life recognises and celebrates major Feast Days, the beginning and end of each term as well as special occasions as deemed appropriate.

Members of the Parish and School community are asked to celebrate with us when they can and it has been pleasing to note that many take this opportunity regularly.

Sharing Our Story is our central Religious Education programme in classrooms.

Our school has participated in the Diocesan Assessment project and has reflected our practice for teaching Religious Education against this project.

1.3 The Arts
In 2007 our focus has been Dance. We completed a programme of learning that allowed students to put on a dance concert. We worked in class groupings. We thank Danielle for her leadership in teaching our students to dance.

Classroom and whole school music programmes, health hustles, movement development, drama, end of year presentations and performances, all contribute to The Arts in our school. Excursions including to the Albury Art Gallery, Scotts Sydney Symphony Orchestra, The Nutcracker Ballet and the National Art Gallery in Canberra have been experiences of great value.

Catering for individual talents through our Dance programme is one indicator of how we at St Joseph’s meet the needs of all at our school.

Visual art work was on display through the Culcairn show. Art work is displayed prominently in each classroom.

Music is evident through school liturgies, mass signing and carols. Community opportunities to perform include our annual contribution to singing the National Anthem for the ANZAC Day service and our end of year singing performance.

1.4 Sport
Physical activity through the school teaches our students to value their Health. It also demonstrates that as individuals we can be empowered to contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Our morning fitness programme develops these important values and attitudes.

Participation in sporting carnivals is important. We again competed in Cross Country, Swimming and Athletics Carnivals with Culcairn Public School.

Other sporting activities included football, netball, cricket and T-Ball. Our participation in the Yerong Creek Netball Football Carnival and the Rand Super 8s cricket carnival have been a highlight. Representative success in recent years continued with our relay team moving through the
Deanery, Diocesan and McKillop levels in athletics.

1.5 General and Specific School Initiatives
St Joseph’s Primary School provides many specific and general educational initiatives and activities. New initiatives in 2007 included becoming involved in the Lions Club Debating and Public Speaking competition at both the junior and senior levels. We experienced varying degrees of success and enjoyed an invaluable learning experience through this initiative.
We have continued to build on our traditional general and specific initiatives over 2007 and I list these here;
The following school initiatives highlight the opportunities we provided for our students in 2007.

Children have had the opportunity at school and classroom level to participate in School Masses, Special Liturgies, School Swimming Carnival, Deanery Swimming Carnival, MS Readathon, St Patrick’s Day, St Joseph’s Day, Cross Country Carnival, Easter Egg hunt, School Athletics Carnival, Deanery Athletics Carnival, Maths and English competitions, Diocesan Cross Country Carnival, ANZAC Day March, an Author visit at the Town Library, Book Week, Grand Parents and Special Carers Day, Yerong Creek Football Netball Gala Day, Chess Competition Trials, Quad bike display, FireEngine demonstration and safety day, Retreat Day, School Photos, Culcairn Show School Display, Gymnastics Programme, Whole School Dance programme Mufti Day for Mission Week, Rand Cricket, Life Education Van, Rotary Spelling Competition, Canberra excursion, Graduation Mass, Carol Singing and our End of Year Swimming Programme.

1.6 School Policies
Our school is registered to operate under Part 7 of the Education Act, 1990 for Kindergarten to Year 6 from the 1st of January 2005 to the 31st of December 2009. School policies are cyclically updated.
Our school has policies in place which are designed to address Student Welfare, Discipline and procedures for dealing with complaints and grievances. These policies are available for perusal at the school.

The diocese of Wagga has established 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

Our school undertook the process of school registration in 2007 and following is the introduction from this registration report.

The process of System Monitoring for St. Joseph’s Primary School is being conducted with the Principal Mr. John Carey and the staff of St. Joseph’s Culcairn by Mr. Michael Hopkinson, Mr. David Collie, Mr. Paul Wilson and Mrs. Carey Menz-Dowling of the Catholic Schools Office Wagga Wagga.

The System Monitoring panel together with the principal have participated in a validation process in response to the school’s System Monitoring Self Assessment Audit.

The System Monitoring panel is now able to make the following comments regarding St Joseph’s Primary school in relation to the requirements of the Catholic Schools Office and the NSW Board of Studies.

The Panel would like to extend its thanks to the principal and staff for the planning and preparation they have made for the System Monitoring visit.

Having completed this phase of System Monitoring, the panel is satisfied that the school satisfies the requirements for Registration.

2 Information on Key School Programs

2.1 Educational and Management Practice Evaluation – School Culture
Our School is well supported by the Catholic Schools Office. We receive the professional support necessary to build upon the good practices we have in our school.

2.2 Curriculum Focus
At St Joseph’s we focus on providing 120 minutes of uninterrupted literacy learning time and 60 minutes of uninterrupted numeracy learning time each day.

In 2007 our curriculum focus reflected the process of School Registration. It was an important opportunity to reflect on the content of all policies as well as how they are organised and delivered.

2.3 Programs to Support Learning
Implementation of technology across the school continued in 2007. All children in our school worked to develop their desktop application skills.
In 2007 we implemented several Special Needs programmes for individual students. We provided counselling to meet the needs of individuals through Centacare. We also met the needs of students through a Diocesan programme supporting our Indigenous Education Programme.

2.4 Equity Programs
At St Joseph’s we teach the important principles of equity and justice in our school. In 2007 we ensured all students enrolled had equal opportunity to access the curriculum. We ensured facilities met the needs of all students at our school.

The St Joseph’s Pastoral Care Policy allows the clear stating of how we expect people to be treated at our school and the consequences for behaviour. It is a well owned document and it again allowed clear expectations to be verbalised.

The sharing of Values for Australian schools and the Safe Schools Framework helped ensure our school is a place where students are well supported in a safe school environment.

Our School NORMS are inclusive of the whole school community and we recognise individual success through the achievement of these school NORMS. We continue to ensure that children have access to all programmes which support their needs.

2.5 Programs to Support Students
Children who need support through our Special needs programme have Individual Education Plans that meet their needs. Parents meet regularly with teachers and the Teacher assistant to discuss outcome achievement.

Our school works to ensure that Special Education Programmes meet planning and implementation. Guidelines set down by the Catholic Schools Office are met in all programmes.

Of significance was the building of our disabled toilet block during the school holidays. This facility helps to compliment all other projects that we have managed to complete over the course of the year.

2.6 Student Achievement
Book awards recognise the long term achievement of many in our school. These awards are designed to ensure consistent long term effort is well rewarded.

Our Achievement Certificates recognise effort in the classroom and the playground. Classroom and playground behaviours which reflect our school NORMS appropriately is what we value and reward. Book Awards recognise the attainment of Five Achievement certificates. Children presented with Achievement certificates and Book Awards were recognised in our school newsletter in 2007.

Children who received Book awards included: Kyle Landman, Gemma Wall, Lachlan Scheetz, Patrick Wall, Joshua Feuerherdt, Nicholas O’Keeffe, Braedon Pantling, Anna Carey and Jotika Pantling.

Of particular note this year is the success we had through external competitions in Maths and English. Students who received Distinctions and Credits in both competitions were recognised in our school newsletter.

Our Chess team competed strongly again this year having competed in Wagga Wagga.

Children have been recognised with individual awards for outstanding achievement and effort in the classroom this year. They are recognised for their consistently high standard of academic work. These have been presented with awards at the end of year assembly.

The Basic Skills test was completed by our Year Three and Year Five classes.

Year 3 Results
In Year 3 Literacy 43% of our students were placed in Bands 4-5 In Bands 2-3 we had 57% of our students.
In Numeracy 43% of our students were in Band 4-5 with 57% of students placed in Band 2-3.

Year 5 Results
In Year 5 Literacy 87.5% of students were in Bands 4—6.
In Numeracy 100% of students were placed in band 4 or higher with 50% placed in Band 6.

2.7 Staff Achievement
Staff have completed individual and school based skills training and awareness.

3 School Renewal

3.1 Progress of the School Renewal Framework
Each year the school community contributes to the construction of the School Renewal Framework. The School Renewal Framework expects contributions from the community, the school staff and other stakeholders. This document
identifies the direction the school is moving with policy, programmes, resources and maintenance.

The School Renewal Framework is reviewed towards the end of term 3 each year. The final evaluation is made available to all and planning for the following year is begun. If necessary, projects held over are properly identified and evaluated before being moved onto the next year.

The opportunity to contribute through our School Renewal Framework structure allows for equity and is designed to empower our community in the decision making that occurs at our school. It is becoming an important part of our school’s evaluation and planning each year.

Major works undertaken this year included the refurbishment of the school tuckshop including floor, new kitchen, air conditioning and painting. Installation of a new path to the netball court for more reliable access.

The biggest job occurred when we replaced all carpet through the school. A great deal of cooperation was need to get this job done. Through the School Council we have completed all jobs that we identified through our surveys back in 2006 and these have taken up much of our SRF time.

4 School Overview

4.1 School Enrolment and Attendance Profile

The enrolment profile of our school remained steady throughout 2007. In 2007 we completed the year with 47 students. This total consists of 22 Boys and 27 Girls.

Attendance was marked with several students recording high to perfect attendance records.

General attendance rates are satisfactory with all unexplained absences followed up and satisfactory explanations received.

4.2 Structure of Classes

In 2007 we had three class groupings. The following structures applied K-1, 2-3-4 & 5-6.

In K-1 there were 14 students.
In Year 2-3-4 there were 19 students.
In Year 5-6 there were 14 students.

We have 33 families who attend our school.

4.3 Staffing

The Teaching staff at St Joseph’s Primary School have the appropriate qualifications necessary to teach K-6.

Some of the areas our Staff focused on professionally throughout 2007 are mentioned now. Professional Development Days, assessment and reporting changes, working with mathematics measurement project, literacy project,

Other areas of training and development were provided through staff meetings, Professional Learning days and Parent Teacher interviews.

We continued Monday morning Prayer with Sr. Marie to help centre our purpose and this remained a necessary part of how we begin each week.

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 97.4% was achieved in 2007 by staff at St Joseph’s Primary School, Culcairn.

4.4 Parent Involvement and Participation

We have continued to support the necessary involvement of our parents through our two parental representative groups, the School Council and the Parent Support Group. Both have been active over the year.

The School Support Group has provided for our school in a big way this year. It is an important forum. Ending their service to our school community this year is long term serving president Keena McFarlane. Keena has lead from the front over many years and has served with distinction. Treasurer Sue Collins and Secretary Michelle Godde along with Tuckshop coordinator Sharon Knobel will all end their terms as at the end of this year. Sue stepped in to fill this role after being called upon by the community after having previously filled this position. Michelle has been secretary for a number of years and has contributed greatly. Sharon has ensured the tuckshop was well organised over many years and that the job of refurbishing the tuckshop was completed before stepping down.

On behalf of the school community I thank you for your service and commitment to the school.

All positions have been declared vacant.
The election of a new executive will occur at the AGM next year.

The School Council has again met irregularly during 2007. Work commitments and the drought have increasingly added pressure for a quorum to be established on the designated meeting times.

With the recognition of our Parish Priest in this area we have worked around this problem. Our work has consisted mainly in allocating our Investing in Schools Grant in 2007.

The major projects identified have been completed and these include, new carpet for every classroom, re-modelling of the library, new shedding and storage and a new ride on lawn mower. Other smaller projects associated with the acquisition of new technologies have also been implemented.

Our School Council and our School Support Group offer parents an opportunity to serve their school community.

4.5 Community Use of School Facilities

The Mary Churches Room, a hall dedicated to allowing all members of our school and community to gather and meet remains our key shared resource. It is an important building.

4.6 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.

4.7 About This Report

This report has been written by the Principal of St Joseph’s Primary School, John Carey, using information gathered over the course of the year 2007.